

T H E

COLLEGE
OMNIBUS

6th edition

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LOUIS UNTERMAYER

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Preface

THE COLLEGE OMNIBUS 6TH EDITION is a revision of *The Revised College Omnibus* (1939). Satisfactory as that earlier edition has proved, certain omissions and additions have been deemed imperative. In a world of swiftly shifting ideologies and new forms of literary expression a volume of this type must be revised, or soon be out of date.

For guidance on what changes were desirable, the editor consulted a large and representative group of teachers who had consistently used the 1939 *College Omnibus*. In important respects their advice agreed surprisingly, and was faithfully followed wherever possible.

Some outstanding selections used in earlier editions have been retained. Strachey's *Queen Victoria*, for example, would seem to be irreplaceable; Thomas Hardy as the novelist is still so highly favored by teachers throughout the country that any substitution at the present time would be inadvisable. Likewise, the section on poetry remains unchanged.

Significant changes have been made, however, in the essay, short story, and drama sections. Only eight essays have been carried over from the 1939 Edition; twenty fresh essays have been added, including two entirely new sections, "Basic Issues" and "Contemporary Topics." Five short stories of the 1939 Edition have been replaced by four new and, it is believed, better stories. Finally, in the drama section, *Air Raid* has been dropped in favor of a new and extremely pertinent full-length play, *Wings over Europe*.

The six analytical chapters, which were a welcome feature of the previous book, have been retained.

Throughout this revision it has been the editor's intention to preserve the tone and general pattern of *The Revised College Omnibus* since this has been the clear-cut preference of those users of the book who have advised us. At the same time it is hoped that the many new selections will prove to be desirable substitutions and additions for less usable selections in the older book.

The editor wishes to acknowledge with gratitude the help which many teachers of English have given him in the preparation of the successive editions of this book. Above all, he wishes to thank Professor J. M. Lothian, of the University of Saskatchewan, who acted as chief adviser during the production of this latest edition.

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Introducing the Essay

WHAT IS THE ESSAY?

Conflicts and Confusion. Until one actually attempts to devise a definition of the essay, the definition seems to offer no difficulties. An essay isn't poetry; it isn't narration; it isn't description, it isn't biography, it isn't drama. It isn't a thesis or a treatise or a monograph. Further, an essay is supposedly never of full book length, and it is usually at least moderately informal in manner. Few people would at first glance object to any of those assertions, but to most people a second glance would bring doubts and questions. If an essay isn't poetry, how about Pope's *Essay on Man* and his *Essay on Criticism*? Pope certainly meant them to be poetry, and he called them essays. An essay isn't narration? Well, then, how about Paul de Kruif's essays on Banting, Koch, and other scientists? Most of those essays are narration from beginning to end, and, what's more, most of them are highly dramatic. Walter Savage Landor's *Imaginary Conversations*, which have an essay's purpose, employ dialogue, a method belonging properly to drama. The assertion that essays are usually informal in manner is immediately weakened by the recollection of many essays that are sternly formal. And the difference between a formal essay and a treatise (or a thesis) is far from easy to define. Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* is not informal in manner; it is quite as heavy as most treatises, and it is longer than a good many books.

What a series of contradictions is here: an essay isn't poetry, but essays have been written as poetry; an essay isn't narration, but some essays are undoubtedly narrative; an essay isn't description, but Mun and Burroughs and others have written essays that are almost entirely descriptive; an essay isn't biography, but an essay about a man's accomplishments is usually biographical; and, finally, while an essay isn't drama, many essays are highly dramatic. Well, at least, the confused reader may say, one thing remains comfortably sure: the essay is expository. Away with that comfort! Professor Ralph Boas in *The Study and Appreciation of Literature* says flatly, "The real essay is never pure exposition."

What is left besides confusion? Apparently nothing. Actually almost everything. The truth is that the essay is so familiar to most of us that we have never troubled to examine it. We think we know what it is until we try to put our knowledge into words; then we discover that we are not even sure of what it is not. "Oh," we say, if pressed for a definition, "an essay is a short prose piece treating its subject in a personal way." Then we hesitate, wondering if we have spoken truth. We have, but not the whole truth. There is just

about as much truth in our definition as there is in the description most easterners offer of California.

California? Why, California is a Pacific Coast state with a remarkably salubrious climate. Flowers bloom in great profusion the year around. The natives indulge in sports, even swimming, in the middle of winter. True, all of it, but where is the mention of the hundred inches of snow covering the streets of Sierra towns, of the summer fogs in San Francisco, of the withering heat of the inland valleys, of the vast arid stretches of the Mojave Desert? Death Valley lies below sea level, and Mt. Whitney lifts its peak fifteen thousand feet above the sea. The valley and the mountain are both in California. Between the depth of one and the height of the other almost every kind of climate and topography can be found.

And so it is with the essay. Like California, it covers too much territory; it is too various to be disposed of in a sentence. It too has its Death Valleys and its Whitneys—and almost everything in between. No definition is complete, final. One can always find valid exceptions.

Students of the essay and lexicographers have devised definitions, but they are more confusing than helpful, since no two of them are in complete agreement, and since they often are in definite disagreement. One definition, for example, asserts that the essay is usually expository, while a second asserts with equal assurance that it is never expository. One definition includes scientific material; another excludes it. Sometimes the lexicographer's emphasis is on the subject matter; sometimes it is on the style. Nearly all the definitions state vaguely that the essay is brief, without giving an indication of what "brief" may indicate. There is seldom any distinction made between the personal (or familiar) essay and the formal essay, and many of the definitions are obviously based on the assumption that the formal essay is not an essay at all. A study and comparison of the definitions, with one exception, results in nothing but confusion.

The exception is the definition offered by *Webster's International*. It makes a strong effort to give recognizable qualities to the essay. In the following definition something is really said:

A literary composition, analytical or interpretative in nature, dealing with its subject from a more or less limited or personal standpoint and permitting considerable freedom of style and method. Though commonly essays are brief enough for reading at one sitting, the term is also applied to systematic works treating their subjects under a series of captions, as Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. . . . In general an essay is distinguished from a *treatise* or *dissertation* in being less systematic and formal, from a *thesis* in not being restricted to a formal argument, from *history* and *biography* in treating its subject in a single aspect rather than its whole scope.

Difference Between the Essay and Other Forms. This definition will not satisfy everybody, and in all probability its author did not suppose that it would; but it has sufficient scope and definiteness to provide a basis for a more extended analysis. The formal essay is not ignored as if it never existed, and the informal

essay is not defined as if it were necessarily light or ephemeral. Further, an attempt is made to suggest how short is *brief*, though the attempt is, of course, unsuccessful. "One sitting" really means nothing, since the reader may sit for three minutes or three hours. He may read very slowly or very rapidly. One is grateful for the lexicographer's attempt, nevertheless. He was not content with merely saying that essays are short.

Again, it is doubtful if the distinction made between the essay and the treatise, and between the essay and the thesis, will hold. An essay may be quite as systematic as a treatise or a dissertation, quite as formal, and many essays are as strictly argumentative as a thesis. Some essays are rambling, of course, but some are built on a careful, plain plan. "A Copernican World," for example, by Emery Reves, does not ramble. It states its theme in the first sentence, and then proceeds to a careful, orderly development of the theme. Though Mr. Reves is neither stiff nor dry, his manner is formal surely rather than casual or personal.

An essay makes no pretense of being exhaustive; it may present an extremely serious problem with great seriousness, but if it suits the author's purpose to deal almost entirely in generalizations, he does not hesitate to make use of them. The writer of a treatise or of a thesis can take no such liberties. His approach is scientific. His purpose is close, careful analysis or water-tight argument. He can take little for granted—except, perhaps, the interest of his audience. The reader of a scholarly treatise brings his interest with him. He is willing to endure a good deal of dull writing to find what he is after, and if the treatise happens to be pleasantly written, the reader merely congratulates himself on a bit of unexpected luck.

The essayist, on the other hand, *never* takes any such interest for granted. It is, he knows, his business to awaken interest and to hold it. And therein lies the main difference between treatises, dissertations, theses, and formal essays. The difference isn't in their subject matter. It may be exactly the same. Nor is the difference in the methods. They, too, may be the same. The difference is in the attitude of the writers as they approach their material. The writer of a thesis or treatise is determined to be *exact*, the writer of an essay is determined to be *interesting*. The difference is enormous. The essayist, of course, has much the more difficult task. That is the reason there are comparatively few good essayists and a tremendous number of doctors of philosophy. It takes no especial talent to grub out information, arrange it, and present it; but it does take talent to give interest and vitality to that same information. It isn't the material or the method that makes most theses dull, nor is it the necessary exactness; it is the dullness of the writers. Huxley and Tyndall proved that science could be made interesting to the layman, and Stuart Chase has proved repeatedly in his essays that it isn't the subject that makes nearly all textbooks on economics almost agonizing to read. Mr. Chase is no less careful of his data than are the authors of the textbooks, but he sees the human significance of the data, the drama that comes from the clash of economic forces, and he has the literary skill to make the significance and drama real. The writers of the textbooks see only the data, and often they have not enough

literary skill even to present their facts and figures clearly—let alone interestingly

Actually, of course, all knowledge is interesting if it is interestingly presented and if a short thesis—of less, say, than fifteen thousand words—is charmingly written, it can be offered to the world as a long essay, and no one will ever know the difference. The only safe distinction one can make, then, between a scientific or philosophical thesis or treatise and a scientific or philosophical essay is that the thesis or treatise is designed for a special audience and fulfills its function if it appeals to that audience as sound. The essay, on the other hand, seeking as it does a much wider group of readers, must be interesting in itself. If the thesis or treatise is pleasantly enough written to interest that wider audience, it differs in no fundamental from the essay.

The distinction made in the *Webster's International* definition of the essay between the essay and history or biography is that the essay treats only of a single aspect of a subject, while history and biography treat "the whole scope." The late Lytton Strachey, if his short biographies may be used as evidence, would probably have objected to the distinction. Certainly, in *Eminent Victorians* he did not confine himself to a single aspect of each biographical subject. True, he adopted a definite point of view in regard to each, but his point of view was equally definite in his long biography of Queen Victoria. Apparently he thought that Queen Victoria was important enough and interesting enough to merit extended treatment, while everything that needed to be said about Florence Nightingale could be said in many fewer pages. Of course, there is no reason to believe that Strachey considered his briefer biographies essays at all. One can't be sure of his intention. There is a good deal of "de-bunking" in his short biographies, and if the de-bunking was primarily his purpose, they may safely be called biographical essays; but if his purpose was primarily to reveal the *life* of each subject, we must call the short biographies, biographies and nothing else.

There is no difference between history as such and an historical essay other than mere length. If a chapter in the history is well enough written, it can stand by itself as an historical essay—and many such chapters have done just that. Thousands of people have read Carlyle's description of the fall of the Bastille who have never read *The French Revolution* from which it was taken, and anthologists of essays have found Macaulay's histories a gold mine.

"But all this," readers may well object, "is merely disagreement. Our initial confusion, which seems to have been carefully if not maliciously created, has not lifted; it has, on the contrary, grown steadily more dense." Perhaps, but it is to be hoped that at least some idea is being given of what an essay is *not*. That knowledge, though it be admittedly negative, has its value, since the essay is so amorphous that it is almost impossible to say definitely what it *is*. If we can separate it with some sureness from its allied forms, it may eventually stand forth fairly clear. For perfect clearness we must not hope, because the separation can never be made complete. Little tentacles will always cling to theses, treatises, dissertations, history, biography, and oratory. Only the strictly personal essay, such as Charles Lamb's "Old China" or "The Praise of Chimney

Sweepers," stands definitely apart, and, contrary opinion notwithstanding, the informal essay is not the only type of essay

Oratory and the Essay. In the meantime, let us make one final distinction. What, if any, is the difference between an essay and a written speech? In its printed form Burke's famous speech on the conciliation of the American colonies has great persuasiveness and power. So has Daniel Webster's reply to Calhoun. So has Lincoln's immortal Gettysburg Address. When the speeches were given, weren't they fundamentally essays recited or read?

Any orator would answer *no* to that question without need for a moment's consideration. He knows that he writes differently when he is preparing his words for print than when he is preparing them for vocal delivery. The difference is exactly the difference between a play written for the library (closet drama) and a play written for the stage. In the closet drama, everything necessary must be written; in the stage play, the greatest moment may be left to an actor's gesture. And to read, "He lifted his hand weakly in surrender," is not at all the same thing as seeing a gifted actor actually lift his hand. We may succeed, though it is not likely, in imagining the gesture completely, but we do not succeed in imagining the whole actor at that moment, the sag in his body, the droop to his mouth, the despair in his eyes—and we do not see the final moment when the hand drops. "Emperor Jones" in print and "Emperor Jones" on the stage seem almost entirely different plays. O'Neill has been careful to describe the action and to remind us in print that the drums are beating, but the reminder fails completely to substitute for the terrifying, continuous tom-tom we hear in the theatre. He based his play largely on *sound*, and without the actual sound the play loses at least half of its effectiveness.

Likewise, the orator bases his speech on sound. While he writes he listens. He hears himself *saying* the words, and like the dramatist, he may permit silence to furnish his climax. The essayist can do nothing of the kind. A dash is the best he can offer, and a dash will never turn the trick. A written line may seem quite unimpressive; delivered by a practiced orator it may be thrilling. A lift of the voice may be needed, a sudden pause, a quiet insistence on every word, or some other oratorical device. And one may be sure that when Webster and Burke wrote, they were ever aware of how those written words would sound when they spoke them. Even an inexperienced reader can prove for himself how Lincoln's Gettysburg Address takes on beauty when read aloud. To the eye the repetitions are only mildly effective, to the ear they are immortal music.

As a test let us compare the Gettysburg Address with a paragraph by Charles Lamb. If each selection is read first silently, then aloud, the difference will become immediately apparent even to the untrained ear. Lincoln's lines *speak*; Lamb's do not. First, then, the Address

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is

altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

Good writing, of course, always has a certain rhythm, and rhythmical writing can be read aloud effectively. The point, however, is this: Lincoln's address though beautiful when read to oneself is more beautiful, more genuinely effective, when read aloud. Charles Lamb's essays, on the other hand, were written for the eye, never for the tongue. He was incapable of writing a clumsy sentence, and his prose cadences are infinitely delicate; yet sound lessens the charm of his style. We offer the following paragraph from "Old China" as evidence:

Do you remember the brown suit, which you made to hang upon you, till all your friends cried shame upon you, it grew so thread-bare—and all because of that folio Beaumont and Fletcher, which you dragged home late at night from Barker's in Covent Garden? Do you remember how we eyed it for weeks before we could make up our minds to the purchase, and had not come to a determination till it was near ten o'clock of the Saturday night, when you set off from Islington, fearing you should be too late—and when the old book-seller with some grumbling opened his shop, and by the twinkling taper (for he was setting bedwards) lighted out the relic from his dusty treasures—and when you lugged it home, wishing it were twice as cumbersome—and when you presented it to me—and when we were exploring the perfectness of it (*collating* you called it)—and while I was repairing some of the loose leaves with paste, which your impatience would not suffer to be left till day-break—was there no pleasure in being a poor man? or can those neat black clothes which you wear now, and are so careful to keep brushed, since we have become rich and finical, give you half the honest vanity with which you flaunted it about in that over-worn suit—your old corbeau—for four or five weeks longer than you should have done, to pacify your conscience for the mighty sum of fifteen—or sixteen shillings was it?—a great affair we thought it then—which you had lavished on the old folio. Now you can afford to buy any book that pleases you, but I do not see that you ever bring me home any nice old purchase now.

That paragraph, so skillful it is, might be the envy of any writer, but be sure that any orator would shrink from it. The difficulty it causes a speaker does not come from the length of the sentences. Burke and Webster had a greater passion for long sentences than Lamb had. The difficulty is caused by the placing of the accents. This is not the time for a discussion of that most complex of all writing problems, prose rhythms, but it should at least be noted that accents that seem easy and natural when a passage is read to oneself often are difficult to place when the same passage is read aloud. Some writers, notably

Ruskin and Stevenson, placed their accents so that they are equally easy for the eye and the tongue; other writers, Lamb and Matthew Arnold, for example, seem to have written for the eye alone. The eye takes in Arnold's sentences easily enough, but it is difficult for the tongue to get around them. Lamb stutted and Arnold was a poor public speaker. One wonders if there isn't perhaps a special significance in these facts. Probably, but we can only wonder, because a discussion of that significance is beyond the scope of this chapter.

The difference, then, between a speech, though it may read well, and an essay, though it may speak well, lies in the difference in purpose between an essayist and an orator. The difference also between the biographer and the writer of biographical essays is a difference in purpose, as it is between the writer of theses or treatises and the essayist.

DEFINITION OF THE ESSAY

Let us now attempt a definition of the essay. First, we exclude poetry. Pope's *Essay on Criticism* and his *Essay on Man* are brilliant *tour de force*, epigrammatic essays in verse in the manner of Bacon; but they are verse first, essays second. Certainly they are too exceptional to matter. The essay is a prose form.

The essay is commonly divided into two major divisions, the formal and the personal, and within those two major divisions there are minor divisions almost beyond detection. There are many kinds of critical essays, many kinds of scholarly essays; there are whimsical and inspirational essays; there are essays that come close to being tone poems, essays that come as close to being character sketches; there are essays of manners, nature essays, travel essays, philosophical essays—ethical, metaphysical, esthetic—; there are biographical essays; essays designed to teach, essays designed to amuse, to excite, to persuade. Essays? One is reminded of Polonius's "tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral," and in all likelihood a better metaphorical description of the essay itself could not be found.

The essay is the rainbow of the literary arts, stretching in its vast arch from somewhere to anywhere. It has taken all knowledge, all thoughts, all arts, all science, to be its province, examining all of them, exhausting none of them. It touches and blends with the ultra-violet of the scholarly treatise and sweeps through every color and mood to the infra-red of poetry. It may be as formal as a minuet, as gay as a jig. It may cut through data to a conclusion as coldly and impersonally as a surgeon's scalpel, and it may be as intimate and personal as a love lyric. The essay is all embracing. It defies final definition.

THE ESSAY AND ITS TIME

The essay of the future depends upon the future. Every form of literature, as has so often been said, reflects the spirit of its time. And of all forms, the essay presents the most perfect mirror. Poetry, especially lyric poetry, is largely

INTRODUCING THE ESSAY

always concerned with the poet's emotions, and since the nature of human emotions does not change, the poetry does not lose its interest or significance. The drama, in turn, is concerned with people in action, and if the characters *are* people, we share their passions and problems regardless of whether they were created in 400 B.C., 1600 A.D., or yesterday. Yet we learn about ancient Greece from Sophocles because his thought was influenced by the life of Greece, by its attainments and limitations. Thus Shakespeare's plays mirror the life of Elizabeth's day, and Fielding's novels the life of England under the second George.

When the essay is essentially subjective, when its method is narrative or descriptive, it reflects the spirit of its age, but when the essay is essentially expository, it *presents* the problems, the ideas, the controversies, the hopes and ambitions of the age. It is, so to speak, living history. It is, therefore, of all forms most sensitive to changing ideas and conditions.

The difference between the essay of the eighteenth century and the essay of today is due not only to the change in publishing conditions but also to the change in cultural, economic, and political conditions. Moral problems, niceties of conduct, the life of the town, were all immediate concern to the readers of *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*. The eighteenth century Londoner was not battling for or against an all-important New Deal. He was not soaring into the stratosphere, dashing in fast trains and automobiles from one end of England to the other in a few hours; he was not flying casually to the continent or lifting a telephone receiver to speak to a friend or colleague in Sydney, New York, or Hongkong. His life was leisurely, in comparison with ours, simple. He had time for gossip in the best sense of that word, and many of Addison's and Steele's essays are a kind of enchanted gossip.

We take our gossip, such as it is, on the wing, snatching crumbs of it out of the newspapers as we gulp down our morning coffee. From our essays we demand something different, something, as we say, more practical. And our essays give it to us. They give it to us, and the more literary readers mourn.

The Article and the Essay. Some years ago in *The Saturday Review*, Katharine Fullerton Gerould wrote a little piece entitled "Information, Please!" in which she maintained that no proper essays are being published any more. What passes for essays, she said, aren't essays at all; they are articles. They are concerned only with facts and data, not with ideas. "The proper essay," she explained, "is not a table of facts to be committed to memory, it goes beyond facts, as the writer sees them, to truth as he sees it. . . . No first-rate essay was ever written, I suspect, into which the writer put, if only by implication, less than his whole knowledge of life."

This is limiting the scope of the essay with a vengeance, and it is restricting its use cruelly. The essay, Mrs. Gerould implied, is a delicately artistic thing, gracious in manner, philosophical, meditative, literary. Well, some very great essays are all of that; but some very great essays are also hard, cold, factual, realistic—and these are times when facts are crowding on us so fast that an essayist does well when he finds time to cull the important from the only seemingly important and to present it to us so that we can study it and understand it. Mrs. Gerould insisted that the result is not an essay but only an

article, and she made quite clear that she considered the article a very inferior form of letters.

One might ask flippantly, who cares? If the article isn't an essay, it is so like one that to most of us the difference is surely of no moment. And most of us are catholic enough in our tastes to relish both a whimsical essay on roast pig and an informative article on hogs. If the article is well written, it isn't casual journalism, as Mrs. Gerould implied. Sound information soundly presented from a definite point of view has its own literary virtue, and perhaps the greatest merit of the essay lies in the fact that it is flexible enough to bend to the needs of humanity.

We are living in a day of great promise—and great despair. With the wounds of the most devastating war in history still unhealed, we face the sole alternative of peace—not for our, but for all time—or destruction. The choice is limited. In the words of two titles in this volume, we can either establish “A Copernican World,” or we can wait, while the doom of “If the Bomb Gets Out of Hand” hangs over our heads. The best we can do is to collect data, examine it, and try to find hope and direction from it. As the managing editor of *Scribner's Magazine* said in reply to Mrs. Gerould, “This is not an age of polite letters, and writing has ceased to be the province of the cultured.” Once the world settles its differences, there will be time once again for pleasant reflection. In the meantime the new factual essay is doing noble duty.

Evidence of the need of this kind of essay and of the satisfaction of readers with it was produced by *Scribner's* when it took a plebiscite of its subscribers and found that only three per cent of them wanted the magazine to publish the type of essay Mrs. Gerould was pleading for. They wanted what they were getting because it supplied what they needed. And one may be sure that they cared not at all whether it was called an essay or an article. What, indeed, does the name matter? The essay has never been a well-defined form. If times have changed it, the change indicates merely that the essay has lost none of its youth and flexibility. When a literary form becomes set, final, it is entering the first stages of *rigor mortis*. The essay never was fuller of abundant life than it is today.

Tomorrow it will be different, because tomorrow will be different. What that difference will be, no man knows. We can only be sure that man will think—and thinking, write. The result will be essays, different from ours no doubt, more literary perhaps, but no more significant, no more valuable.

COLLEGE LIFE AND PROBLEMS

LETTER TO A SEVENTEEN-YEAR-OLD SON¹

Anonymous

Although the following letter was written during the War, it throws light on problems which are equally urgent in the post-War period

DEAR GREG
In one sense I have been planning to write this letter for several years in order to pull together for what they may be worth some notions on your choice of an occupation and how to train yourself for it. In another sense the letter is occasioned by the recent news story about Pearlstein, the Brooklyn College basketball player, who carried a couple of books but never went to class.² In still another sense the reason for the letter is the too-brief talk we had the other day when you showed me a pamphlet about an Army plan for training seventeen-year-olds in colleges as members of the Enlisted Reserve. In still another sense this is an answer to ideas you have put forward from time to time about enlisting next month. So you see you're in for a large dose of the Old Man's ideas on Life, Education, War, and What-not—especially What-not.

In a novel by Bulwer-Lytton, whose books you would not like (which is just as well), a character says "What a terrible and unfair advantage merely living longer gives a man!" It is both a wise and sad remark, one that can serve as a warning to members of different generations when dealing with each other. The oldest always know that they know more; the young always know that the old don't know enough to keep from messing up the world. Both, of course, are quite right. Progress would occur if each generation could pass on what it learned to the next and if the next picked up from there and went on. This hardly ever happens. In our day we try to hand over to specialists in schools the responsibility for telling the next generation what preceding generations have learned. On the whole this probably works better than if we tried it ourselves. But it doesn't work very well, there is a machine-like quality about it which lacks the individual touch. What follows in this letter is just an attempt to apply the advantage I have, because I have lived longer, to you, because I know you better than a teacher does, or a college catalogue, or a newspaper, or a recruiting poster.

I have not only lived longer, but have had unusual advantages for seeing

¹ From *Harper's Magazine*, August, 1945. Copyright, 1945, by Harper & Brothers. Reprinted by permission of the author.

² In February 1945 five Brooklyn College basketball players were expelled for accepting bribes to throw a game. One of them, Larry Pearlstein, had never even been a member of the College. Upon being discharged from the Army in 1943, Pearlstein simply borrowed some books from the College Library, walked around the campus until he became a familiar figure, and then went out for basketball and made the team. [Editor]

what's going on in the world. The average man gets a chance to look at the world only when his work is over. My full-time job for almost twenty years has been to try to figure it out. I get paid for the privilege of talking to almost anybody on earth, asking questions about the things they are supposed to know, and I have been given plenty of time to figure out the answers. What's more, I have carried to extremes the habit of reading books (where more answers are to be found than in the heads of one's contemporaries). I'm not sure I know many answers, and anyhow I couldn't expect you to accept the ones I think I know. But now that you are up against decisions that involve very general questions of what kind of a world it is and how to act in it, it would be wrong and lazy of me, I think, if I didn't try to pass on my ideas.

Your problem of Navy enlistment next month, or of entering the Army Enlisted Reserve, is all bound up, it seems to me, with what you're going to do later, and that's why I'll try to handle them all together. We might start with the more specific problems and work toward the more general ones.

There are three kinds of soldiers: professionals, citizens, and bums. (All this applies to Navy people as well.) Professional soldiering isn't a bad life if you have that kind of temperament. It requires a high sense of honor and duty, a low degree of curiosity, ambition, and independence. The pay is poor but the security is practically perfect. A professional soldier *can* learn almost anything. Almost none of them learn any more than they have to. General Beukema of West Point is perhaps the only one of the hundreds of professionals I have met in the past three years who really struck me as an outstanding all-round man. I have an impression General Marshall is another, but I doubt if the same could be said of many other top officers. Soldiering is a respectable but deadening sort of profession. I know lots of young men to whom I would recommend it. You are not one of them, although I can think of a lot of people who would be more unhappy as professional soldiers than you would be. If you want to be one, the thing to do is to go to West Point (or Annapolis or V.M.I.) and learn the profession from the ground up and do it right. There are some who come up from the ranks, but most of them never quite get over the strain that such a rise creates. It just isn't the best way to do it.

The citizen soldier is a very different animal. He goes into the Army because his country decides that it needs a few years of his life. (Sometimes it takes his life, but it tries not to. People get killed in other occupations, too. The element of war risk will be left out of this discussion and the Army will be treated just like coal mining or driving a racing automobile, both of which are highly dangerous.) The citizen soldier goes into an army on the terms laid down by his country. If he has good sense and normal patriotism, he goes willingly and tries like hell to make the best of it. But the young man's duty to go into the Army is like the citizen's duty to pay taxes. It is not exalted, or poetic, or heroic. In a democracy, the decision to go in or stay out (as a citizen soldier, not as a professional) ought not to be left to the individual. Leaving it to him is bad for him and bad for the country. I don't pay taxes on the basis of what I'd like to pay, and I don't pay my 1947 taxes in 1945. We have learned since the last war that "recruiting" is a bad business. We have adopted a sane, responsible attitude toward how to get the huge armies we seem to need.

Ninety-five per cent of the men now in uniform would say today that they would not enlist. The other five per cent (except the professionals) are by no means the best soldiers.

They are mostly the ones I've classified above as bums. That may be a harsh term. What I mean is young men who have an especially hard time adjusting to life, who get in trouble with the police, who haven't any purpose or sense of responsibility, and who, by and large, are having a rotten time. In peace, police magistrates give a lot of these guys a choice between the house of correction and the services. Many of them pick the services. Sometimes, but not usually, they get straightened out. In wartime this group tends to expand greatly. Perfectly decent kids can't see beyond the war, can't sit down and think their way through to a purpose. The pressures and distorted values of wartime play tricks like that on all of us, but especially on the youngsters. But a kid who joins the army before he has to in wartime, is (to put it brutally) being motivated in part by the same sort of thing that gets the young bums in peacetime. Sometimes it takes less courage to face a Jap seven thousand miles away than to face a decision about one's immediate life. Enlisting becomes the easy thing to do. I may sound ungrateful to the kids who are getting shot down to protect me, but honestly I'm not. I would be willing to make considerable personal sacrifices (and I don't mean just money) if I could somehow repay them. But I am not willing to change a fundamental belief that killing and getting killed is a damned serious business that one does only when one has to (i.e., either because soldiering is one's profession or because our country, fixing its own terms, demands it). The wild young fighter pilots are wonderful, but hardly an adequate example to follow.

The present terms are that physically fit young men go in when they are 18. I personally believe 18 is too low for most American kids because they mature very slowly. The German Army, about half of which consisted of men nearer my age than yours, was man-for-man the best one. But I will not argue the 18-year-old point with the experts who persuaded Congress. Congress has decided. It also permits youths under 18 to enlist when they have their parents' consent. I won't argue with this either. A man's real age isn't always the same as his age in years. There are boys of 17 who are older in many ways than most men are at 22. If a recruiting sergeant, an examining doctor, and a boy's parents all agree that he's one of those exceptions, then the chances are that he has as much business in uniform as the average boy of 18.

In your case, my judgment is that you are not one of those exceptions. You are maturing at about an average American rate; that is, you are now about as old as a 15-year-old Frenchman or German or a 16-year-old Englishman. This is not a personal thing that you can do anything about. It is a peculiar and rather mystifying aspect of American civilization. Nobody fully understands it; in fact we have just begun to recognize it. I think it has something to do with the fact that we live longer than other peoples and thus try to drag out our childhood and adolescence, so as to maintain the old relative proportions of the different "ages of man." It also has to do with the fact that we have a higher standard of living and can afford to drag out both the earlier and the later less economically productive stages.

Anyway, unless you change in a most unlikely way or unless my ideas change on this point, I would be against your going in. Since the law delegates to your mother and me part of the responsibility for deciding whether you ought to go in at 17, we have a duty to consider the case as citizens, not just as parents. On this point we are agents of the government, in a way, and we have tried to think about it as agents of the government. We think it is best not only for you but for the country that you stay out until the country takes you.

II

If you agree, that brings you to the decision of what you do with the intervening year. That's a tough one. I think I can understand how futile it would seem to take a year of college or do a year of work at this point, knowing that the Army and the war lie ahead. The temptation to say "Oh, hell, why don't I get it over with" must be very strong. To give in to that, however, is the easy way. What you are really up against is the tough decision that every youngster has to make of what he's going to do with himself. Most of us try to duck it. Your generation is simply faced with the old problem in a more complicated, less attractive, and more immediate form.

You can't and you don't have to decide in the next year what profession you want to adopt. But you have to work on that choice as hard as you can from here on out. You can't ignore it, Army or no Army, war or no war. You've got to find out as much about yourself as you can, but above all you've got to find out an awful lot about the world, so as to know where you fit best. Those two jobs are the real subject matter of education, in and out of schools.

A great deal has been said and written about the Army as an educational institution. The Army's job is to train men to fight. That is a highly specialized job having almost nothing to do with any peacetime occupation or with helping to fit men for civilian life. For years the posters have been saying "Join the Navy and Learn a Trade" and "Three Years in the Army Will Fit You for a Better Job." It's hogwash. I never met anybody working at a trade who had learned it in the Army or Navy. The long connection between the Army and the colleges, through the ROTC and otherwise, has been pronounced a dismal failure by almost everybody competent to judge. The colleges go along, partly under pressure, partly because some of them don't know any better, and partly to get the money the Army hands out in subsidies.

Another thing that burns me up is official circulation of the idea that young men can get in on the ground floor of industries that will expand in peacetime by taking training in such things as radar and aviation. The opportunity of any given young man in any given occupation depends not only on whether the industry will expand but on how many other young men have had the same training he's had. I think that aviation, radar, and a lot of other "war babies" are going to grow after the war far beyond their prewar levels. But not even the wildest enthusiast for those industries believes that they can possibly absorb within twenty years a tenth of the men who have been trained for them in wartime. For purposes of getting peacetime jobs, pilot training and radar training can be written off as dead losses. Men with such training will be a dime a dozen.

These reflections relate to the pamphlet you showed me and to some other

Army college training plans I looked up. I can see that it is of very real and important value to the Army that the group which graduates from high school at 16 should spend the intervening year in college. But if the Army wants to stimulate them to spend the year in this way, it should hand over free scholarships to the colleges and let the colleges work out the educational programs for that year. The plan you showed me gives the student no real choice as to college, and it mixes college life and army life in a way I believe would be psychologically harmful. The lack of choice as to colleges is important; there are some real stinkers among American colleges.

III

On the broader question of education and postwar occupation, and not with particular reference to the Army, I go wholeheartedly along with you in judging that your general bent and aptitude are along the line of the physical sciences. That's true of most American boys. Americans as a people have outstanding mechanical aptitude and a tremendous number of them want to work with things rather than with words and ideas. For every American boy who wants to be a lawyer there must be a hundred who want to be aviation and automotive engineers. As a result, most male students in American schools learn the physical sciences a lot better than they learn the word sciences. You are an example of this. The word subjects like history, English, and other languages seem irrelevant nuisances that you'll never use. Partly for this reason and partly because schools and parents do an incredibly bad job of explaining the purpose of the word subjects to boys, American education is sadly off base in terms of future citizenship and in terms of what people need to lead happy, useful lives.

Men a lot better than I am have tried to make the points I'm going to make now, but instead of referring you to their writings I'm going to try my own version. People like Hutchins of Chicago go to ridiculous lengths in making claims for the kind of education that stresses the word subjects. They give the impression that just reading Virgil and Homer and studying dead civilizations unlocks the understanding of life. They reduce the "utilitarian subjects" to the level of cooking. But the other extreme is just as bad, and has made a lot more headway in forming the actual attitude of American youth toward education.

To listen to the utilitarians you would think that human progress began with the development of the scientific method about three hundred years ago and that the outstanding achievements of man have been the invention of radio, the harnessing of electricity, and the development of modern medicine. As a matter of fact, the greatest invention of the human race is language (and thought: thinking is just talking to yourself, not out loud. You think with words, and you can't think without words).

To realize the relative importance of language suppose first of all that all the doctors in Washington suddenly died. The death rate would go up, maybe epidemics would result, work would be performed less efficiently. Within a month you would probably notice some difference in your daily life. But now suppose everybody in Washington suddenly forgot language. Work, all work, would stop. Transit would stop. All food distribution would stop. People unable to organize their food supply would kill each other to get at what food

was available. Within a week most of the population would be dead and the rest would be in Rock Creek Park grubbing for roots to eat. It's a far-fetched example, but you need one like that to point out the obvious.

It's a bad thing that there should be people like me around who don't know a volt from a velocity; bad for me and bad for the society of which I'm a part. My education was one-sided, I must admit. But it's a thousand times worse that the world is full of people who can't make a clear statement of a thought, which is another way of saying they can't think straight. Talking (either to yourself or somebody else) is a technique like building dynamos or growing turnips or removing tonsils. Centuries upon centuries went into developing the technique of talking. The finest men who ever lived gave their lives to it—and their contribution is, even in a strictly utilitarian sense, the most important. The radio is useful only because of the words and music that come over it. Radio is a marvel, of course, but compared to a symphony or a poem or a news broadcast it's just a mechanical gadget, a detail that helps us get the all-important sounds faster and more conveniently.

Not everybody has to work in words (although there are calculations indicating that in a really advanced civilization like ours about 40 per cent of the people work in, or in support of, the word occupations, as distinguished from the thing occupations.) But everybody has to know a lot about words and how to use them. I can get by without being able to build a dynamo; but the dynamo builder can't get by without words.

The next most important human developments are the sciences of politics and economics. They are particular branches of the word sciences. They are the techniques by which people organize their relations with one another. A herd of sheep follows a set of rules that are different from the behavior of an individual sheep and which can't be figured out even if you know all about an individual sheep. Sheep pick leaders, make herd decisions as to where they will graze, whether they will run or walk, and so on. Those rules and decisions, which nobody understands, are sheep politics.

Even with the tenderest care by shepherds and dogs, sheep couldn't survive without their politics. Men are their own shepherds and dogs. They don't get any help in working out their politics of how to organize themselves to survive and progress. They have to figure out every hard decision in the light of factors whose interrelation is as much more complex than radar as radar is more complex than a simple lever. Fortunately, each generation doesn't have to start from scratch. The record of politics, economics, and sociology—and of technological development for that matter—is contained in history and in art (Art, including music, is really a highly intensified kind of history. You may not believe this; sometime if you're interested I'll try to prove it to you. Give me a month's notice to get the evidence together.)

Sheep have a herd instinct that tells them to get under a sheltering bank when they smell a blizzard coming. Men have no political instinct to protect ~~them~~. Instead, we have history, which takes the place of instinct. A people which doesn't know history is like a sheep which can't smell a wolf in the wind. In a democracy a citizen cannot entirely delegate to experts his duty of

thinking (language) and his share in exercising the herd instinct for self-preservation (history).

Not all history (as I indicated in that crack about art) is contained in history books. Some of the best history is in novels. Lord Wavell, who is a damned good soldier, as Marshal Rommel found out, told the graduating class at Sandhurst, the British West Point, to learn something about history and humanity and to do it by reading good historical and other novels. One of the most important questions of our day, for instance, is what the Russian people are like. If anybody ever wrote a decent history of Russia, I haven't been able to find it. But there was a crop of magnificent Russian novelists and storytellers who told the Russians and the rest of the world about the Russian character. Almost all that the world really knows of Russian temperament, personality, and development comes from Tolstoy (try *War and Peace*), Dostoevski (too gloomy for you), Chekhov (you might like him since you liked Saroyan. Saroyan is phony Chekhov).

Whether our chances of getting on with the Russians are good or bad, they are a lot better than they would be if there had been no Russian novelists, who made Russians into real, understandable people. Russian temperament has undoubtedly been changing since the Russian revolution, there have been no great writers handling the post-revolutionary period. Russian development and foreign relations in the next fifty years will be partly determined by whether novelists and playwrights arise in Russia who can explain the Russians to themselves and the rest of the world.

The ultra-materialists and the utilitarians tend to interpret all history in terms of things. They will explain the British Empire, for instance, by talking about the British coal and iron deposits. Undoubtedly, the British Empire would have been unlikely without the coal and iron. But the Chinese had more coal and iron than the British yet they went downhill during all the period in which coal and iron were most important. If you look for reasons for the difference, one thing worth noticing is that the English language kept getting better and better, more flexible, clearer, better able to express complicated things, during all the period of Britain's growth, while the Chinese language ceased to grow, tended to break up into dialects and to be a less and less useful instrument. A good case can be made for saying that Shakespeare (responsible for the greatest single advance in the English language) had more to do with the growth of the British Empire than his contemporary, Queen Elizabeth (who was a first-rate practitioner of politics), and that either of them was considerably more important than all the scientists and inventors put together.

IV

I want to repeat for emphasis that this is *not* said to pooh-pooh the physical scientists or to try to talk you out of a field of work where I agree you belong. It is said to redress a balance in present-day American thinking, especially among people of your age. Ultra-materialism, which concentrates on things, bears a large part of the responsibility for the war and for the mess the peace is quite likely to be. On every side people say the Germans are the way they are because their standard of living was so low. The Germans themselves believe

they went to war in order to better a subnormal and unjust living standard imposed on them. Actually their living standard was one of the highest in the world. What ailed them was bad thinking, bad understanding of human nature, including their own, and an inability to present such case as they had in language that would induce other people to listen to them.

The German and American educational systems seem to be more alike than a lot of Americans realize. It's one of the things that worry me most about this country. Both our educational systems turn out enormous quantities of people sufficiently educated to be intelligent soldiers, skilled laborers, foremen, engineers, and third-rate lawyers and journalists. But as *people*, as human beings, it is doubtful if these expensively educated Germans and Americans are as wise, as happy, as mentally healthy as a French peasant or a German peasant or an American pioneer of a century ago. Obviously, the answer isn't to go back to illiterate peasantry. An industrialized world requires more education, not less. But—and this is the important thing—it requires an education that gives to a man of our time the simple human understanding that the peasant and the pioneer used to get naturally out of the lives they led and the surroundings in which they grew up.

Medicine, for instance, is a pretty good profession, especially for one of your temperament which combines a better-than-average knack of getting along with people and a mechanical and scientific bent. But too many of our American physicians, though expensively trained and full of medical information, are dull fellows and unenlightened citizens because their knowledge of people is limited to their specialty. This fact shouldn't discourage you from being a doctor, it should simply discourage you from being the kind of doctor who thinks human beings are just digestive machines with pocketbooks, or that the circulation of the blood is more important than the Constitution of the United States.

That goes for all the other fields open to you. Take farming: in your time that is going to be a far better profession than it has been for three generations. Why? Partly because of scientific advances, but these were making considerable headway in the seventy-five years ending about 1930, during which farming as a way of life kept getting more and more unattractive and insecure. The main reason is because around 1930 some smart people dealing with words and ideas (including a lot of smart dirt farmers) began to figure out what was wrong with farming and began to make some headway in doing something about it. The things that were wrong weren't on the farm itself, they weren't physical things, they were ideas embodied in tariff laws; they were complicated matters like the relation of interest rates to farm prices and the relation of the price of what the farmer sold and what he bought. Farming is a physical science, but it was politics, economics, and the language which finally expressed clearly and effectively what was wrong, that saved the American farmer, and promises to make farming a decent life again. This doesn't mean that you must be an agricultural economist or a farm lobbyist. It means that a farmer has to know enough politics, economics, history, language, and human nature to be a good farmer-citizen. You can apply this to engineering or anything else.

The world is full of wonderful technicians making \$40 a week and eating

their hearts out because the profits of their work and the direction of their work are in the hands of lawyers, bankers, politicians, and other word-artists and organizers. The world, say the technicians, ought not to be like that. So it oughtn't, but the reason why it is lies in the technicians and the way they were trained. Organization—which is done with thoughts, with words—will always be more important, more difficult than any technique in the physical field. The organizers will always get the power because they perform the hardest job. The technicians will always be slaves to the word-artists until the technicians learn how to handle people, how to think logically outside their own narrow fields, how to talk, and how to live.

It's worth noticing that in this highly scientific war almost every important leader has been conspicuously a non-scientist. Roosevelt organized the greatest industrial war effort ever seen, yet there are few Americans who know as little about the technical side of industry as F. D. R. did. Churchill is strictly a poet. He looks very deeply into his country's history, into its soul, and puts what he sees in words that make people act. His speech "we will fight in the streets . . . on the hills" is worth more in purely military terms than all the secret weapons that ever came out of German laboratories. Churchill got that way from reading Shakespeare. Stalin is a manipulator of men and ideas. De Gaulle is a fellow with an ability to make Frenchmen think he's Joan of Arc with a mustache.

v

What does this add up to in terms of the decisions that you must soon make? In the first place, it is an argument against over-specialization at an early age in engineering or any other physical science. It is a plea that in choosing a college, picking courses, and above all in your general reading and interests, you try to develop that side of you which needs most development—namely, what the colleges call liberal arts or the humanities. These are the really practically important achievements of the human race, the ones which determine whether we go ahead or back. An engineer or a farmer, as well as a lawyer or a journalist, who doesn't know a little of them is likely to be frustrated as a person and not very useful as a citizen.

You have a year before General Hershey starts breathing down your neck. Why not use it on music and history and art and language? Such studies have a most important bearing on the period of soldiering which you will apparently have to go through. The Army, except for basic training and combat (which takes up a minority of time of a minority of soldiers), is an idle life. Those stand it best who have resources inside themselves, who have the habit of reading and remembering books, of listening to and recalling music. Again, the "liberal arts" are the distilled history of civilization, and the preservation of civilization is the only thing that justifies the war: it cannot possibly be justified in terms of living standards or sheer brute survival. To justify the war one must speak of human freedom, and freedom must be more than a sound; it must be an idea that has the deepest association in one's character. To fight for freedom one must understand what it is, how it grew, who expressed it, who worked out this, that or the other advance, what endangers it and why.

It sickened me when I was in Italy to see so many of our guys going up to

battle without much idea of why. They were fighting over some of the most important ground in the history of human development. Italy is really one of the greatest laboratories in the science of human language and organization. A lot of what they were fighting for came out of the very ruins through which they crawled. But they didn't know and nobody bothered to tell them clearly what it was all about. Even the silly Jap, dying in the belief that his wall-eyed emperor is a God, is better off than a soldier whose education is so defective he doesn't have any idea what he's fighting for.

What college you go to is important but not as important as the attitude with which you go. I assume you read the Pearlstein story. We all got a laugh at this guy walking around a campus and never attending a class or cracking a book. Probably his Polish ancestors would have given their eye-teeth for his chance to get into a college. Yet in one generation, so bad is our system of explaining education to the young, the Pearlsteins produce an offspring without enough curiosity to sit through a lecture. I think about half our high school and college students are Pearlsteins. Let me say again that it is not the fault of the Pearlsteins but of the schools that the Pearlstein attitude develops. But every individual Pearlstein must accept the responsibility for not learning. Bad as they are, the schools have the stuff on tap. You can get it if you look for it.

It may take you quite a while to digest this. Don't try to accept or reject it right away. Let it rattle around a little and jot down some comments or points on which you might like further examples or argument. Above all don't worry about yourself. You're doing fine. If you weren't I wouldn't bother to write such a long letter to you.

Love,

C. B.

B. S. C.¹

by Emily Hahn

Emily Hahn, who was born in St. Louis in 1905, graduated as a Bachelor of Science from the University of Wisconsin in 1926 and actually put the degree to good use by working for a time as a mining engineer. However, she is better known today as a writer. Among her books are *The Soong Sisters* (1941), *Mr. Pan* (1942), and *China to Me* (1944). She spent a number of years in China before and during the war, and was, in fact, interned there by the Japanese. She returned to the United States on the *Gripsholm* in December 1943.

MY CAREER as a mining engineer has this much in common with many success stories—it was founded on an accident. Otherwise, there is no comparison, because mine is not a success story. As an engineer, I have been a flop, but there were a few glorious weeks, back in 1926, when it might have been otherwise. Flushed with the glory and the triumph of my B.Sc., excited by the publicity which I received as the First Woman Graduate

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Engineering From that moment until graduation, I completely forgot that I had not always, from my earliest youth, intended to become a mining engineer. Every day offered fresh reason for forgetting. I was awfully busy for the next three years, up to my neck in mechanics and drafting and calculus. It was enough to make any girl forget a little thing like Art.

One afternoon soon after my argument with Shorey, I attended my first class in surveying. We met indoors to get our instructions. I sat on a separate bench a little way off from the men, and none of them looked at me. The instructor, too, avoided my eye in a sully manner. He explained, with chalk on a black-board, the simple rules for running a line with a hand level. Then he announced, "We will now go to the instrument room and take out our equipment. You people choose your partners for the term—surveyors always work in pairs. Go ahead and divide yourselves up."

He leaned back in his chair behind the desk. There were fourteen men in the class, and in two minutes there were seven couples. While the other students got up and scrambled to make their arrangements, I just sat still, wondering where I went from there.

"Well," said the instructor, "let's go and get our instruments."

We straggled after him and waited as he unlocked the storeroom. The levels we were to use, the type called "dumpy" levels, are heavy, metallic objects on tripods. Seven men stepped up and took one apiece, and then, as the instructor hesitated, I walked over defiantly and picked up an eighth. The instructor rubbed his chin and looked at me furtively. I looked at my feet.

"Damn, I was sure we had an even number in the class," he said. "I guess Bemis has dropped out."

Fourteen men and I stood there tongue-tied, impatient to bring all this to an end. Then I noticed a tall, lanky boy, who had not been in the lecture room, leaning against the door looking on, a good-natured sneer on his freckled face. He now gathered his bones together and shambled over.

"Aw," he said gruffly, "I'll take her. What the hell!"

"Oh, there you are, Bemis. O.K.," said the instructor, loud in his relief.

Bemis picked up my level and tripod and, with his free hand, waved me toward the long rod which one man of a surveying pair always carries. "Come along," he said. "I know these things. I've already run a few, working in the summer." He turned and started to walk out, and after a second, during which I stared at him registering eternal devotion, I scampered after him. Behind me there was a loud general exhalation of relief and wonder.

Reginald Bemis—for Reginald was his name—found out all too soon that his responsibility was not temporary. Whatever whimsical impulse of kindness had pushed him into his offer vanished when he realized that he was stuck with me for the term, but once he learned this bitter fact, he decided at least to bring me up the way I should go. He had worked in open-pit mines before coming to the university, and it was typical of his scornful attitude, that of a veteran miner, that he hadn't deigned to come to the explanatory lecture. He was one of those gangling, undernourished boys who work their way

through college; he waited on table at a hash house when he wasn't in class, and got good marks and had a future. As a surveyor, he knew his business as well as our instructor did. By the time we graduated from the dumpy level to the transit, Reginald and I had the best record of any pair of engineers for our reports and drawings. None of this excellence, obviously, was due to my talents.

Not that I didn't do my share of the heavy work I did. We took turns carrying the cumbersome instruments. Sometimes our trail led us to a very public spot, and when passersby suddenly noticed that I was a female—that took a moment or two, for I wore khaki coveralls most of the time—Reginald became very touchy. The minute a stranger paused to take another look at me holding up the rod or squinting laboriously into the transit, Reginald would make such ferocious noises and wiggle his fingers at his nose so insultingly that the passersby would soon move on. His attitude was brutal but right, and I tried to show him that I appreciated it.

One evening, near the end of the surveying course, as we plodded along through snowdrifts toward the instrument room to turn in our equipment, I said to Reginald, "Excuse me for saying so, but you've been awfully nice. I don't know what I would have done that day if you hadn't said you would take me along for a partner."

"You was all there was left," said Reginald gruffly.

"Yes, but you didn't have to go on with me after that day. It must have been very hard sometimes."

"You ain't kiddin'," said Reginald, with deep feeling. "You know what they was calling me all year? Her Choice—that was it. Once I hadda fight a guy."

"It's a shame," I said. "But anyway, I've learned how to survey."

"Oh, you ain't so dumb," he admitted. "Only trouble with you is, sometimes you don't think straight. It's like you was dreamin'. Like today, when we couldn't find that bench mark. You just stood there with your mouth open while I went around kicking snow up, trying to find it. Lazy, that's your trouble."

"I'll try to do better," I said.

"Anyway," remarked Reginald cheerfully as we entered the door, "the worst is over. I got only one more week with you."

"You've been *awfully* nice," I repeated.

I knew one of the geology professors socially, as it happened, and though I never crossed his orbit in an official way, I did drop in on him once in a while to unburden my soul. He gave me a piece of advice early in the game. "These boys are just afraid you'll interfere with their daily routine," he said. "As soon as they realize you don't, it will be all right. They've got some idea, for instance, that they'll have to be careful of their talk when you're around."

"You mean," I asked, brightening, "that there are words I don't know?"

The professor ignored this and said warningly, "Don't pay any attention, no matter what they say. Don't expect special privileges just because you're a woman. Try to let them forget you're a woman. Pretty soon everything will be all right."

As a result, I trained myself to keep very quiet and to maintain a poker face wherever I was in the college. The mining-engineering course was a stiff one, and we were all too busy to indulge in any feud, anyway. Now and then, however, some complication cropped up. I was excused permanently from one lab course because there was no ladies' room in that building. I was also formally excused from the gymnasium classes the other coeds had to take, on the ground that I got enough exercise just learning to be an engineer. The khaki coverall garment I wore for surveying and ore dressing had to do for more orthodox classes as well, and I could see that my French teacher didn't like it, but she never complained.

It was at this time that I acquired the name Mickey as a permanent label. It was a nursery nickname of mine which had been more or less forgotten by everyone but Mother. The engineers heard it and adopted it as a more acceptable, masculine-sounding name than my real one, which was hopelessly ladylike. Of course, there were brief flareups and resentments now and again. Some of the boys were unfair, I felt. At the beginning of a math course, one of them yelled at me, "You'll never be able to get through this! You're a girl!" Yet at the end of term, when he asked me what grade I had and I replied exultingly that I was in the first five on the list, he said, "Huh, that's just because you're a girl you got that mark." It was irritating, but after all I *had* stuck my neck out. I continued to keep mousy quiet, and our mechanics instructor finally said to a friend, "You know, I've been dreading the day that girl would have to come to my lectures. But now that she's here, she's—why," he said in astonishment, "she's quite a lady."

As I look back on it now, I am amazed that I passed any of those examinations. Half the time and energy I should have given to my work was used up in the effort to prove that I could hold my own without being in the way. I was painfully self-conscious. My professor friend's words had sunk in so deep that I couldn't get them out of my head or my behavior. I took it as an insult when some absent-minded engineering student so far forgot himself as to hold open a door for me or stood up and offered me a chair. In time, though, most of these little frictions wore away. The one serious problem was the matter of field trips.

Field trips are study journeys into the country. Students, both of mining engineering and geology, go out with instructors and wander about looking at rock formations, geographical features, mines, or whatever they are interested in at the time. Of course, I went out on the small trips that were over in one day, but from the longer trips, including one expedition to mines in the West, which took up a whole summer and taught the boys how to work in the tunnels, I was barred. It was simply impossible to surmount that obstacle. The Wisconsin state legislature couldn't help me this time, because the State of Montana would have kept me out of its mines. How, then, was I to qualify for my degree?

I figured something out at last as a substitute for the mining experience. I went up that summer and stayed with relatives who had a farm in Michigan. Every morning I went out with a hand level and a Brunton compass and ran lines back and forth at half-mile intervals, straight across the township, until

I had made a respectable contour map of the region to take back to the college. The authorities studied the map, smoked a few pipes over it, and unanimously voted to give it the status of the summer's field work the boys had put in. Perhaps this really definite triumph went to my head a little. Perhaps the summer of walking alone under the Michigan sun had sweated out of me my hard-won humility. Anyway, that autumn, the beginning of my final year, I was in a mood to fight my great, all-out battle with the Geology Club.

Again, it wasn't my fault. I didn't start it, the men did. They should have known that the sign they put up on the bulletin board in Science Hall would be enough to knock me off balance. A stranger would not have understood. All the sign said, in formal lettering, was that the Geology Club was holding an extra-special meeting that night for two purposes—first, to introduce the semi-yearly crop of newcomers to the group, and, second, to hear the highly respected visitor, Professor Such-and-So, world-renowned expert on volcanoes or coral reefs or something, deliver the first of his series of lectures. But someone had added a significant line in red pencil: "Women not invited."

I recognized this as an insult aimed directly at me. No other woman would have been crazy enough to want to go to a Geology Club meeting. The sign was the worse for being unnecessary. I knew perfectly well I wasn't invited, I had not been invited, repeatedly, for three years. They had thrashed the matter out many times. I always pretended not to know, but it was an old grievance, because all members of the mining-engineering courses had heretofore automatically been invited to become members of the Geology Club. Once I showed up, though, the Geology Club members maintained that they were not a formal institution of the college but a social organization, and, as such, didn't have to abide by the cruel law of coeducation, which forced open their lecture halls to the female sex. True, I did belong to the Mining Engineers' Club—we held our meetings in the ore-dressing laboratory and cooked hamburgers in the blast furnace—but that club, said the geologists, was different, somehow—more entangled in the web of the educational setup. The geologists claimed that their taking mining engineers into their club was a voluntary courtesy, and they said that they preferred not to extend it to me. Inviting me would, they said darkly, establish a precedent.

For three years I had silently accepted this argument, because I was, thank God, a lady, and besides there didn't seem to be any way around it. This red-pencilled message, though, affected me strongly. I was as angry as I had been that long-ago day in the dean's office, back in those prehistoric times when, for some reason, I wasn't yet studying engineering.

It wasn't fear. I hadn't been bothering the old Geology Club. Yet there the men were, jeering and making faces at me in this bulletin-board announcement. Rub it in, would they? I'd show them!

My eyes narrowed as I read the sign through for the fourth time. Somebody had slipped up. Professor Such-and-So had been invited by the college faculty to give that series of lectures, and, as one of the college students, I was, of course, entitled to hear the entire series. Entitled? Why, I was probably *required* to hear them. Not that I had ever felt any particular emotional yearn-

ing for information about volcanoes or coral reefs or whatever it was. That was not the point. The point was a matter of principle. The point was that the Geology Club, in thus selfishly arrogating one of the visiting professors' lectures to their own session, sacrificed their standing as an amateur social organization. They had made themselves, at least for the time being, one of the college classes, and that class I was entitled by law to attend. I was a perfect lady, all right, but just the same I decided to visit the Geology Club that night.

The most painfully uncertain people are the ones who seem poised and self-assured. I walked into the club meeting as bold as brass, but the slightest push would have upset me, and my old pal, the friendly professor, quite unwittingly almost administered it. As I made my way past the rows of dismayed, silent, flummoxed men, he shouted in a whisper, "Biavo!" It took a gigantic effort to finish the walk, to sit down demurely in an empty chair, to pretend that nothing at all extraordinary was happening. This was my first overt rebellion. Just when I had almost captured the good will of the college, too, and was so near to graduation and release. Just when they were about to confer on me the ultimate honor, the priceless boon of indifference.

The visiting lecturer saved my face, though he couldn't have known that, by climbing to the platform and breaking the tension. The ensuing hour must have gratified him, for the whole roomful of young people sat in a dead hush while he told us about volcanoes—or was it coral? If some of the graduate students hadn't been polite enough to ask a few perfunctory questions at the close of his talk, he would have noticed a strain in the atmosphere, but the amenities were properly observed, and after a vote of thanks he said good night and left us alone to wash our dirty linen.

The club president, a kindly soul named Clyde, took the floor and went through a few formalities—minutes of the last meeting and a brief résumé of the club's aims, for the benefit of the new members. Then he said, "It's our custom, just to make things less formal, to ask the men who are new to the club to introduce themselves. I'll call on them in order of seating. Mr. Blake?"

"Class of twenty-eight," mumbled a scarlet Mr. Blake. "No other clubs. Transferred this year from Michigan College of Mines. Majoring in petrology."

Everyone grew quieter and quieter as the introductions proceeded. I wasn't just quiet, I was rigid. Were they going to pretend that I wasn't there? If Clyde skipped me, I would have to make a demonstration of some sort. I would *have* to. I held my breath until I nearly strangled. Clyde's eyes fell on me and he cleared his throat.

"Since our friend Miss Hahn has taken the bull by the horns," he said, "I will call on her to introduce herself to our new friends."

Everybody let out his breath a little; the crisis was postponed. I stumbled to my feet and duly made my recital. The meeting proceeded without interruption. Clyde finished up the official business of the meeting by announcing that it was the evening for collection of dues. If the members would kindly pay their dues—a dollar a head—to the treasurer, he said, we would be able to proceed with refreshments—the customary coffee and vanilla wafers.

We stood in line, with our dollars in our hands, and that was when the

trouble started. When I reached the collection table, the treasurer shook his head. "Can't take it," he said.

"Why not?"

"Well, uh . . ." The unhappy boy swallowed hard, and then in desperation raised his voice. "Clyde! Come over here, will you?"

It had all been arranged in advance, evidently. Clyde came over and took my arm with a sort of reluctant affection, and said, "Come on out in the hall, Mickey. I want to talk to you."

I pushed his hand away. "Talk to me here," I said.

"Come on, Mickey. Do me this favor, won't you?"

We marched out between serried ranks of embarrassed young geologists.

"It's this way," said Clyde miserably. "A bunch of us tried to—I mean, this thing came up again, the way it always does, last week, and though I personally, and some of your other friends, tried to persuade the fellows, the thing is—"

"All right," I said abruptly. "Here's my dollar, anyway. Take it for wear and tear on the bench. Nobody wants to—" To my horror, it suddenly became urgently necessary to be alone. My unhappy nature had played me false. Whenever I am keyed up to violent anger, tears begin to flow. I ran down the hall, completely routed. This was disaster. I had committed the one unforgivable sin. I had been feminine. I wanted to kick myself for shame. I wanted to die.

What happened after that is public knowledge. Clyde walked slowly back into the clubroom and shook his head in misery when the boys asked him what had happened. "Was she awfully sore?" they asked. "Did she make a scene? Did she say—"

"Oh, gosh," said the president, "don't talk about it. She—she *cried*."

"Cried?" Appalled, they stared at each other. Cried! They lowered their eyes, unable to meet each other's gaze.

Somebody proposed a vote. There and then they voted.

A half hour later I was sitting in the study room at Science Hall, huddled in my chair, despair clutched round me like a blanket. There Clyde found me and brought the news. Practically unanimously, I had been elected a member of the Geology Club. One lone man who still stood out against me, admitting that his attitude spoiled the record, was yet unable to give up his convictions, and so he had left the room while the vote was taken. Public opinion had demanded that he do this.

"And in conclusion," Clyde said to me, "permit me to say that I'm sure all the fellows are *awfully* sorry it all happened."

Though stunned, I managed to say a few gracious words of acceptance, so that Clyde would leave me the sooner. I needed solitude, I had a lot of re-orienting to do. I sat a long time at my desk, looking backward at a three-year program of mistaken strategy. It was the friendly professor, I realized, who had started me off on the wrong foot. Well, it was all right now. I knew better now. Just in time, too.

I blew my nose and started to search my briefcase, diving far down, trying to find a long-forgotten pocket mirror.

OXFORD THROUGH AMERICAN EYES¹*by Ralph M Carson*

Ralph M. Carson, a New York City lawyer, was a Rhodes scholar at Oxford, and president of the Oxford Union.

IF THE American university student would place himself in the position of the Oxford undergraduate, he must imagine the University organization with which he is familiar swept away. Instead of the central campus and the huge buildings devoted each to a separate branch of knowledge, let him imagine the fraternities enlarged so as to include practically the whole student body, each housing some instructors who are both members of the fraternities and teachers of the University. Let the University be composed of these glorified fraternities, which are the units of residence and play and study. Let him imagine this University to be a dominant factor in American life. It is one of the two oldest in the country, and has an ancient reputation for learning. Its graduates fill the halls of Congress, its college tutors are occasionally members of the Cabinet, the leading public men of the nation are bound to it as alumni or as fellows, its experts are called to Washington to advise on national policy, and in the last century it has given five Presidents to the United States. If the American will imagine his University thus organized, possessing this prestige from of old, and wielding this power in the country today, he will have the rudiments of the tradition for which Oxford stands in England. The three great facts in that tradition, which I think will best explain Oxford to American students, are the organization by colleges, the resulting type of student life, and the power with which Oxford embodies the past in today.

First, for the organization. Oxford University is little more than the sum of its colleges. Of these there are twenty-two, though one ranks only as a "hall," a form of organization which is still earlier. The first genuine college, and the foundation of the collegiate system at Oxford, date from A.D. 1270, when Walter de Merton established Merton College. The first quadrangle, which set the form of building for the Oxford and Cambridge colleges, was the so-called Mob Quad of Merton, built thirty years later, but still two centuries before the discovery of America. Although University College and Balliol may claim to be prior in actual date of founding, it was Merton College which fixed the plan and idea of the colleges that were added to Oxford by private benefactions in continuous stream down to 1874. The twenty-two foundations thus established in effect constitute the University. Each accommodates from 150 to 300 undergraduates, so that, together with some less closely related bodies (two Nonconformist colleges, a workingmen's college, the women's houses, and a non-collegiate group), they care for the four thousand-odd undergraduates in residence at Oxford. Their heads serve in

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rotation as Vice-Chancellor; the fellows on their foundations make up the governing councils of the University. Their alumni, when Masters of Arts, sit in Convocation and Congregation as the University Legislature. Despite the reforms of Royal Commissions, college finances remain separate from University finances; thus, Magdalen, with its £100,000 a year, can almost roll in luxury, while the University, with all its arts as a mendicant, can barely assemble the funds to maintain its magnificent Bodleian library. The buildings of the Bodleian, the examination schools, and the new museums and laboratories are University property; but the rest of the academic buildings of Oxford, the many gray quadrangles, the chapels, the halls, the separate libraries stored often with rare old books, belong to the several colleges. The two official proctors, who are supposed to walk the streets at night, lest any undergraduate go without his gown, serve as University authorities, but they are in fact merely fellows of two colleges, chosen in rotation.

Thus, in the normal course of things the Oxford undergraduate meets the University as a university seldom in his career—once when his college presents him for matriculation, again when he takes University examinations, and finally when his college dean presents him in Congregation for his degree. All his other relations at Oxford are with the college he has chosen. It regulates his life in detail. It decides whether to admit him, it provides his rooms, either in college buildings or in “digs” out in town; it requires him to be in his rooms by twelve o’clock each night, or issues the leave ticket if he wants to go down to London for a few days. It is a little state in itself, equipped with its own dining hall, kitchen, chapel, library, common rooms, and lodgings for dons and undergraduates. Built as a block in tight stone quadrangles, it is a unit against all the world, and closes its heavy oaken doors upon that world shortly after nine every night, as the great bell of Christ Church strikes 101 strokes.

The college organization is a reminder of the Middle Ages, just as its architecture in the Gothic or sub-Gothic or Italian mode, its bell-towers or odd Flemish gables are memorials of another time. If he has rooms in college, the undergraduate lives there; he is expected to go to chapel there; he dines every night in hall, with the dons sitting at the high table and the portraits of great men of the college looking down from the walls, his tutor is provided by the college, his social life and athletics are organized under the same authority. Once having selected a college, the Oxonian does not transfer his allegiance; to “migrate” from one college to another is regarded much as changing fraternities would be in America. With us the undergraduate has two important loyalties—the immediate one to his class, and the higher one to the University—which are independent of each other. The undergraduate at Oxford has one fundamental loyalty—that to his college—in which his duty to the University as a whole is merged.

The result of this collegiate system upon student life is very interesting. Life in America is relatively standardized; life in England is much more individual. So student affairs on an American campus are thoroughly centralized; at Oxford they are pretty well decentralized. Student publications, for instance, are wholly in private hands. There is no central board of control. Similarly

RALPH M CARSON

with athletics. There are Varsity teams, of course, but practically the only University game they play is that with Cambridge, which is usually played in London. The rest of the schedule is with small city or county or professional teams. There seem to be no professional coaches, except perhaps for rowing, which is the one Oxford sport that is taken seriously. There is no stadium, no organized cheering. I have not heard of any eligibility rules. The innumerable contests that take place every afternoon on the playing fields on the fringe of the city are between colleges. Every college has its own soccer team, its own rugby, hockey, cricket, and track teams, and its rowing eight with headquarters in the college barge. These teams are all informal, there is no driving or coaching, and no insatiate will to win; sport is entered into clearly for sport's sake, and every member of the college is supposed to take part in the form of sport that interests him. I have never yet heard or read an appeal to "Oriel spirit" or to "Oxford spirit." Such a thing does not seem to be considered necessary. Each man is assumed to know his own good if he wants to go out for "rugger," he has the chance, if he personally does not care for "rugger," Oxford does not recognize any higher interest in the college or University which ought to override the interest of the individual.

So again with debating. There are no inter-university debates. Instead, each college supports two or three debating societies, which sometimes discuss politics in serious vein, but more often produce wordy flights of imagination or of ironic humor upon some such topic as this: "Resolved, That dancing is preferable to other forms of sport." The great University debating society, which also maintains club rooms and a library, is the Oxford Union. Here political debates are waged in full parliamentary style. The house divides itself into government and opposition, each side has two set speeches, with extemporaneous speeches following; speakers address themselves ceremoniously to the chair, and at the end there is a division. Every term members of Parliament come down to speak on the motion, one term it will be Mr. Winston Churchill, and again Lord Robert Cecil. At the side of the debating hall are ranged busts of Gladstone, Lord Salisbury, and Mr. Asquith, former Presidents of the Union who have become Prime Ministers of Great Britain. They are now to be joined by Lord Birkenhead, also an ex-President, the rocket-like arc of whose career descended on the Woolsack.

The Union is perhaps as close to formality as Oxford gets, but even it, I think, does not approach the ruthless organization of the American inter-collegiate debate. The informality of Oxford life is a great charm. It permits, invites, persuades, in the end compels, individual expression. Thus, though there are a multitude of societies, Oxford does not suffer from the "over-organization" which constantly besets the American campus. Why? Because Oxonians do not, as a rule, take their organizations too seriously. If a society becomes too great a drain upon the time of its members they have no difficulty in dropping it.

Although it is said to be an Oxford tradition that there shall be no work between meals, the study-life has in fact a place of peculiar importance, because it seems to be the peculiar result of the Oxford system that a man shall work as he pleases. He has a tutor, who directs his reading, and whom he meets for one hour a week. For this period the tutor usually exacts an essay.

Beyond that, almost nothing is imposed upon him. At the beginning of the term the tutor selects a list of lectures, from the number lecturing in his subject, which he ought to attend. He is not forced to attend them. He does not go to any quizzes. The tutor does not attempt by any direct means to see whether he has done his reading. The one important requirement made of the student is that he shall pass the degree examination given by the University at the end of his study; that is usually three years ahead. Upon this and one intermediate examination his academic standing depends.

The University examinations are long and severe tests, by three-hour installments, of his knowledge of the particular subject, whether it be classics, or history, or law, he is expected to show, not solely accurate knowledge of detail but a grasp of the subject in its bearings, and a power of impromptu analysis. Oxford examinations place more emphasis upon the philosophy of a subject than upon its detail. Knowing by reputation their rigor, and knowing that a "first in schools" is a kind of intellectual blue ribbon over England, the undergraduate may be induced to regard his work seriously from the beginning. But still he will regard it as peculiarly his own work, because it is to be done largely in his own way. The tutor is apt to set written papers each term upon a select portion of the subject; these, however, are mere exercises which do not affect the pupil's standing. It is for the pupil to say whether he will work.

It is for him also to say when he will work. A great deal of the studying is done in vacation. The college year is made up of three terms—an eight weeks' term which begins in October and is followed by a six weeks' vacation; another eight weeks which begins in January and introduces a second vacation of six weeks, and the glorious "summer term," which, beginning in April and lasting also eight weeks, is followed by the "long vac" of sixteen weeks. No wonder that the average undergraduate declares himself unable to study during the short, distracting eight weeks of term, and adjourns his work to the holidays. Term is too short for one to get really down to work. "After all, the young gentlemen are up only eight weeks," as the don of Trinity is reported to have said in opposing a movement to install shower-baths in that college.

Confusing as this system of term and vacation seems to Americans, it at least encourages one to study more naturally by spreading his study over the year. It induces the reading habit. It is a part of the freedom and informality which distinguish life in Oxford. For, despite some restrictions which have lost their reason for modern times, that life is essentially free. One is required to wear his black gown when attending lectures or when staying out of college after eight P. M. He must be in college by midnight, is liable to a small fine if he comes in after the gates are closed, and cannot leave the city during term without permission. But these limitations are trifling compared with the privileges of working as he pleases, playing as he pleases, and forming his own personality upon the pattern of his choice in an intellectual atmosphere among the most stimulating in the world. That is a training which shows him the true use of his mind, if he has one.

But Oxford is not wholly "mind"; it is experience, in which the experience

of life in college is to be counted. Each man has two rooms to himself, a "bedder" and a "sitter," not too handsomely furnished, the latter possesses a small grate which is inadequately supplied with coal, and which at any time could scarcely warm a room in the chill, wet days that are the worst of an Oxford winter. Each stair of rooms is served by a college servant called the "scout," whose name may or may not have a connection with the fact that college bills are known as "battels." The scout takes care of your rooms, brings in your meals, and addresses you (not without humor, perhaps) as "Sir," since any one in residence at Oxford is technically a "gentleman." The young gentlemen in college have the best time in the world, the very memory of which made Lord Bryce toward the close of his long career refer with emotion to the happiness of his Oxford days.

One doesn't rise, of course, until eight o'clock or half-past (nine o'clock being the first lecture hour); lectures fill the morning, exercise the early afternoon, and tea at four-thirty is the climax of the day. Of course, the Englishman could not do without his tea. But who could that became truly used to it? It is not primarily a crude excuse for eating; it is a social, an intellectual episode. Held in college rooms, it introduces you to all kinds of men, with whom, under the influence of the warm, insidious liquor, you discover a common interest. Talk flies from topic to topic. You learn of an extraordinary keenness behind the British reserve. You observe that Englishmen do not characteristically wear monocles, that they do not usually drop their h's, and that they have a sense of humor possibly superior to the American. They have a remarkable openness to new points of view. They delight in epigram and good language. They revel in a slang of respectable edge and flavor. All this is edifying enough to justify much more than tea.

At seven o'clock there is dinner in hall, when most of the college come together. After dinner there is an immense choice of meetings to attend. Perhaps Colonel Lawrence, he of renown in the Near East, now a fellow of All Souls, is addressing a group in the Balliol common room; perhaps there is a good violinist at the town hall; or a leading politician has come up from London to explain at the Carlton Club the good points of the coalition; or the wit of the Oriel Plantagenet Society is to read a paper on Hell. Now the day is gone, and no studying has been done. There is yet time, from ten-thirty until midnight; unless, as is more likely, our student prefers to make some cocoa and to invite in the man across the stair. These solemn midnight sessions, over the cocoa cups and before the fire, are apt to be inspiring. An illumination of spirit descends upon you; you talk as one does not talk in daytime. Often, if your guest is an Englishman, you get light upon the secret strength of the British Empire and the reality of the Anglo-Saxon bond. The day goes out in an exaltation of knowledge. Only, the next day begins a little later.

Thus many days at Oxford, destructive of all study, yet most fruitful in education. As they pass one subsides more and more into the spirit of the place. When he first came to Oxford, it was with a sublime expectancy of seeing an ideal city. The city, as he first saw it, was not ideal. The narrow streets were lit with gas-lamps and increasingly crowded with motors, the college buildings looked antiquated and their stone was flaking, the districts north and

east were a dull expanse of red brick houses, and it rained continually. But as one lives in Oxford and comes to discern its essential phases, these things disappear, and the image of the ideal city, legendary mother of learning, forms again in his mind. This is the real Oxford. How reverend it is with age, how potent in wisdom, how fascinatingly old and wise! It is the Oxford where Parliaments have met, over which Cavaliers and Puritans have fought, whence great religious movements have gone forth to transform England. The fine oaken hall of Christ Church, stateliest of Tudor rooms, and the glorious fan-vaulted Divinity School have seen historic legislatures in session. The mound called Parnassus in New College garden is that from which King Charles's artillery battered the besieging Puritans. From Oxford in the fourteenth century Wycliffe, one-time Master of Balliol, launched the reforming program of the Lollards, and five hundred years later Newman and Keble, fellows of Oriel, preached the revival of faith. Here Simon de Montfort and his revolting barons drew up the Provisions of Oxford. Here were burned the martyrs whose memorial stands in St. Giles.

The memory of these great events clings to Oxford still. There lingers in the ancient quadrangles the recollection of her famous sons. Thomas Browne, the master of grave and fanciful meditation, Cecil Rhodes, Gibbon, and Ruskin; Matthew Arnold and the author of the *Anatomy of Melancholy*, Oscar Wilde and John Locke, Shelley, Gladstone, the Wesleys, the lordly Wolsey, and the once famed *Doctor Subtilis*, Duns Scotus himself, have walked the old streets of Oxford. In all these diverse lives the life of the ancient University has been a common factor, and in the present Oxford some portion of their personalities comes down to us. To stroll in the quadrangle of Sir Thomas More, to dine in hall under the gaze of Sir Walter Raleigh's picture, to pass daily under Newman's window, and to know that these men were members of the college of which you are now a member—this sort of thing is not quite meaningless to the dullest man. This is a very flattering spiritual fellowship. If to Cambridge in the past the great poets and scientific thinkers have chiefly gone, the humanists and statesmen have come to Oxford, and have made Oxford the center of a great tradition of *upper* class government—a sound school of politics which, whatever its faults of vision, has usually tried to serve the whole country, and has come down to our day in such great Oxonians as Sir Robert Peel, Lord Salisbury, Lord Rosebery, Gladstone, and Asquith.

Such is the atmosphere of Oxford to one who views it with an eye to Oxford's place in history. It is an atmosphere not only romantic in itself but invested with scenic loveliness. The glorious tracery of a Gothic window, the austere lines of New College tower and the unutterable grace of Magdalen, the rich light of old glass, the mystery of cloistered walks, the noble ranks and clusters of pinnacles and spires which line the curving High Street—these in modern Oxford are the soul of the Middle Ages manifesting itself in beauty. The grand mass of oak and flowering chestnut, the smooth, impeccable green of the lawns, the varied color of college gardens—these shapes and hues so blend with the gray stone as if to seal the exquisite sympathy of art and nature. Even such a synthesis the appreciative American sees from the river on a fine summer evening. The sky-line of the University rhythmical yet reticent in the

splendor of a roseate west, purple spire and dome and tower defined with magical clearness, the rich, low landscape shadowed by trees, as the moon climbs higher, and the light changes, and the sweet chime of bells drifts across Christ Church meadow to bind up the picture with music this is the music and this the picture of the true Oxford, the paradisiac city of learning as imaged by the founders, lovely in its age, immortal in its beauty.

THE STUDENT MIND¹

by A Lawrence Lowell

Abbott Lawrence Lowell (1856-1943), of the famous Lowell family of Boston, graduated from Harvard in 1877, was a professor of government there from 1900 to 1909, and was, finally, Harvard's president from 1909 to 1933. He was the author of many books, among which are *The Government of England* (1908), *Conflicts of Principle* (1932), and *What a University President Has Learned* (1938), the source of the following selection.

YOUNG men, and especially, perhaps, college undergraduates, are commonly supposed to be indolent, liking ease and comfort, but, in fact, they prefer to endure hardship and take serious risks for things they believe worth while. Before the World War a member of the Faculty, addressing a body of students, said that were the country at war and two regiments being recruited—one of them for Fortress Monroe, where the quarters would be comfortable, the food ample, the work light and the men out of danger, while the second would go to the front, where the hardships would be great, the food sometimes deficient, the labor exhausting, and where many of them would be killed and more wounded—not a man present would volunteer for the first regiment, but all for the second. When the war came this prophecy was fulfilled, and the disappointment of the young officers who were kept at work training recruits in the camps, instead of crossing the ocean, was bitter. The German military authorities thought that the United States could give little assistance in France—first, because they could not transport an army there if they had one; and, second, because they could not create an army rapidly for lack of natural officer material. The last difficulty was solved by the students and graduates of our universities and colleges who filled the officers' training camps, and, from their education and behavior, were readily followed by the enlisted men.

Not do the students object to strict discipline in itself, if we may judge from the rigidity with which they enforce it themselves. On the athletic field, or in the boat house, every member of the team or crew, and every candidate must be on hand for his appointments, and although many a coach wastes the time of students recklessly by keeping them on the ground waiting for their turn at practice, complaints are not made by them. If an instructor sets a date when written work must be presented, he is often good natured enough to accept

¹ From A. Lawrence Lowell, *What a University President Has Learned*. By permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

an excuse for some delay, but in the case of candidates for the Crimson,² nothing is received after the appointed hour, no excuse is considered, and there is no resentment at the harshness of the rule. This is by no means wholly due to regarding such matters as more important than academic duties, but rather to the fact that the students themselves are responsible for the results and must maintain the discipline necessary to secure them, for all people are critical of rules made, even for their benefit, by others, while they accept the like when coming from a body believed to represent their own general interests.

The member of the Faculty who prophesied the action of the students, if a war should come, added that if he could persuade them of the value of high scholarship they would tumble over one another in the effort to get it. In those days they did not regard the matter as he did, largely because they had no confidence that the tests applied—i.e., marks in courses—were a reliable measure of ability and character. Whether they were right or not the obvious thing to do was to find some method of determining rank that would seem to them a measure of those qualities. Now there may be many ways of reaching such a result, but the one adopted in some colleges has been to hold general examinations at graduation on subjects intensively pursued, with questions that give a chance for grasp and originality. For honor men a thesis based upon personal investigation is even more stimulating and respected, and so are tutors who long to have their capable pupils show what they can do. Those institutions that have tried some such plan have found that the interest in scholarship, the number of men who try for and obtain rank, have increased, and that disparaging epithets for men with high grades have almost disappeared. Scholarship has become respectable if not admirable. If it had not, the American college, as we have known it, might be on its fourfold way to an untimely and lingering death, for an institution is dangerously ill when its members have too little regard for the chief object of its existence.

The prophetic professor has led us into a by-way where we have anticipated events, for long before the changes just mentioned were made there had arisen in the colleges an interest which grew so great that to many outsiders it seemed to overshadow and submerge everything else. Not long after the middle of the nineteenth century came rowing races, baseball, and even the old American foot-ball games with outside rivals, and the two former grew to regular inter-collegiate sports; but a vast impulse came with the introduction of the English Rugby foot-ball modified for use in America. This soon attracted so many spectators, who brought so much revenue from the sale of seats, that in time great stadia were built to hold them,—one institution, it is said, mortgaging its campus for the purpose. To the newspapers the games have been a streak of luck. They are spectacular, easy to report and photograph, there is much individual play to record, and a well-nigh universal interest in the result. In fact when a player, later in life, achieves distinction the press is apt to recall some feat of his in foot-ball, and doubtless it preserves such notes in its "graveyards" for posthumous eulogy.

That intercollegiate games should have taken a deep hold on the imagination

² The Harvard undergraduate daily

of the college youth is perfectly natural. The very fact that they excite so strongly the alumni and the public is in itself enough to attract him, but, quite apart from this, they appeal to many of his best sentiments. They call for sacrifice, for no sport demanding all that a man can put forth is an unmixed pleasure; and in foot-ball there is also a risk of serious injury. They call for long and arduous training, and involve acute competition throughout that process as well as in the games with the teams of other colleges, and, above all, the players believe that they are fighting for the glory of their institution. Some years ago the writer was told that a member of a foot-ball eleven, who had failed to earn his degree, complained to the President that he had been working for the college while the high scholars, who obtained theirs, had been working for themselves. He was wrong, for, in fact, the production of a few scholars, educated to the top of their capacities who later become eminent, confers a greater benefit on the college, and on the country, than any number of games won over another team. Yet he was perfectly sincere, and that attitude has much to do with the popularity among the students of intercollegiate contests. Certainly the players are not preparing themselves for any future career that will be profitable to them, and would be shocked to think they were training to be professionals.

Horrified by the exuberance of these spectacles, the enormous expense involved, the distortion of values, and the discordance with the proper aims of an institution of learning, some people have thought intercollegiate sports so harmful that they ought to be abolished. That the extravagance is too great few sensible men would deny; although there is difficulty in reducing it when the coaches and the players, present and past, are convinced that it cannot be done on any large scale without reducing the chance of victory. But it should be done, and one hopes is being done gradually. As for the distortion of values and the discordance with scholarly aims, they are more apparent than real; for the students as a whole do not share the exaggerated views of some alumni and the newspapers, or over-estimate in the same degree the importance of victories. Nor is there any evidence that athletic contests interfere seriously with scholarship; for good scholars on a team are not uncommon, and occasionally the very highest are found among the players. To abolish intercollegiate games would probably reduce all interest in athletic exercise, and thereby promote other evils from which we now suffer little; nor is there any reason to suppose that it would promote scholarship. Children are not made studious by forbidding play, they are made sulky, and the same thing is true of young men also, although their play is more violent and so would be their reaction if it were prohibited. For athletic contests are play, of a strenuous kind no doubt, as suited to the age, but still a form of play, and the real trouble begins when we try to treat them otherwise.

Among the attractions that athletic contests have for the student, competition has been named as a very important one, and so it is; yet, as applied to scholarship, it has in the ears of some people a repulsive sound as suggesting sawdust, a race-track or a foot-ball game, something unworthy of the true scholar. They feel that for the highest objects appeal should be made only to the highest motives, and, let us add, that in everything we should be guided only by the

lofty teachings of ethics. Some years ago a man was asked to speak to the graduating class in a preparatory school, and being at a loss what to talk about he took up his parable and said something like this: "I suppose we should all agree that we ought to act on the highest moral principles; one of these is unselfishness, and therefore we should strive to give pleasure to another rather than seek it for ourselves. Now, it is a pleasure to win a race, and one should not take that pleasure himself but give it to the other boy by allowing him to win. Hence one should run not faster, but slower, than his competitor. But as that boy has the same moral rectitude he also will try to yield the prize, so that both will run not as fast but as slowly as they can, each trying to keep behind the other. I will give ten cents to any of you who can point out the flaw in this reasoning. I will not offer more since it is not worth it, for you all know that it is nonsense", and he went on to say that the same thing applied to striving for rank, which is and should be competitive.

We constantly hear that young people should not study for marks, but for knowledge, just as, let us add, one should not run to win a race but for bodily health, and should, therefore, not enter any competitive physical sport. Are study for marks and study for knowledge in some way inconsistent?—and if they are, is it because the examinations are of a bad type where, by cramming, high grades can be obtained by inferior persons? That passing marks can often be obtained by cramming is true, but in properly constructed competitive tests he who has the largest grasp of the subject should stand at the top, and although there is some luck in the matter, as in most other close competitions, that is no reason for disparaging them. Earnest study is, of course, needed to excel, but would anyone condemn sports because a man, however naturally endowed, is not likely to excel in them without sufficient training?

Competition is the life-blood of youth; the natural impulse that leads him, like the young of all animals, to fit himself for the demands of later life; and especially it is a spur to activity in normal young men when, as in college, the ultimate object is not yet visible. No one claims that competition is in itself wrong or degrading, but merely that it is unworthy as applied to scholarship. To say that no one should be tempted to enter an intellectual life unless he has the highest motives for doing so is to shut out many men who would delight in it when they had once acquired the taste. Pleasure in the better things of life comes from taking part in them, and if ambition or competition is the road thereto let youth, by all means, follow it. Every innocent and normal means to bring them into the path should be freely used, and they should not be shut off from it, or discouraged, by questions at the gate about the elevation of their motives. By better psychology, or good judgment, the Europeans have made scholarship desirable, as shown, for example, in the great increase in the candidates for honors at Oxford. In fact it is hardly an exaggeration to attribute to the competitive honor schools there, and the corresponding triposes at Cambridge, the rise of those two places out of the lethargy by which all European universities were blighted in the eighteenth century. The prejudice against competition in scholarship has, in fact, greatly declined within the writer's lifetime, but the desire to excel is not yet used as systematically and

effectively as it might be to enhance in our colleges the respect for scholarly achievement and the desire to attain it

Human psychology, and with it that of students, has permanent and variable elements, but among the former one may probably class the love of competition and rivalry in youth. We see it in their sports, where it has certainly not tended to decrease. We see it in the whole community by the popular interest in professional base-ball games, the America Cup Races, and in the number of international contests of all kinds. In fact the enlarged circulation of the newspaper and the radio have made such events more widely popular than ever before, and there is no prospect of their decrease.

On the other hand, there are variable elements in the student mind, and one of them that has impressed the writer may be worth recording. When he was in college in the seventies of the last century, young men were breaking away from parental traditions, not yet, however, so far that to many of them an appeal on the ground of family pride was without effect, but if urged to use their influence in restraining the conduct of others, not their personal friends, their natural reaction would have been to ask, "Am I my brother's keeper?" The individualistic attitude still prevailed, and the sense of social obligation for the community to which they belonged had not come. Now that has greatly changed. Family pride is undemocratic, while social solidarity and the duties it implies have risen to a new significance. In the earlier period there was no Student Council, and it probably would have been ineffective, certainly not what it is today, for its utility has grown with the gradual change of sentiment and the sense of responsibility. Nearly thirty years ago when the plan of housing the freshmen compulsorily together was being considered, that Council, still in its earlier stages, was consulted, and the members were evidently hostile at the outset, until it was suggested that the question was not what they would themselves like, for they would, of course, never go there, but whether as a body responsible for student welfare they thought it a good plan for the future freshmen. Then their attitude changed in its favor. Today the Student Council is a great help to the authorities, and the professors are no longer regarded by its members as taskmasters, driving unwilling students to drink from the fountain of knowledge. What would have been thought fifty years ago if any group of undergraduates had tried, as the Student Council has done this year, to dissuade the college papers from accepting advertisements by unauthorized tutoring schools, whose object is to help their comrades to pass the examinations in courses without laboring to obtain the required information? There has been, as in the community at large, a shift of emphasis from the individualistic to the social point of view, and there has also been a growth in the spirit of responsibility for the well ordering of the college on the part of the individual student, and still more of his representatives. The idea that all true intellectual advance is by the road of self-education under guidance has progressed.

When the undergraduate comes to his senior year, if not before, he thinks seriously about his future career, and some attempt is usually made to give him advice, nor is this a simple matter. In the Far East a boy normally follows the occupation of his father, and does so without any sense of compulsion. In fact that was also generally true of Europe in the Middle Ages; for human

nature, as a rule, adapts itself readily to what it regards as inevitable, but when given a conscious choice becomes greatly concerned what that choice shall be. Now—save for the few whose parental opportunities virtually determine their career—young men graduating from college can choose for themselves, and are sometimes much puzzled how to decide. Often they want guidance which it is even more perplexing to supply, and the wise officer rarely gives definite advice but lays before them facts and considerations that may help them to make their own selection.

One caution in giving advice about the choice of a career should be obvious. It is that little as the student may know of his own fitness for a particular occupation, the adviser probably knows less, for that fitness depends not so much on any one quality as on many aptitudes, intellectual, temperamental and moral, combined in a way that will accord with the work to be done; and about this the student himself is untutored, the adviser guessing in the dark. So stated, the choice of a career would seem hazardous for the youth, and wise advice about it impossible, did not other considerations enter into the question.

Young men with special aptitudes are usually aware of them, in fact, more undergraduates think they have talents they do not possess than are unconscious of gifts they have in a marked degree. Such men want not advice in regard to the career they shall take up, but information from specialists on the way to enter it. Whether they are right or wrong in their preference the adviser had better be chary of his advice, and certainly, unless very intimate, not try to persuade them to change their minds, but since such men are not very likely to seek his advice they are not to him a source of perplexity.

For those who have no unusual qualities and no bent—that is, for a large part of the ordinary type of student—the choice of a career is less important than is commonly supposed. In no occupation are they likely to make a brilliant mark, and in any, if earnest and sensible, they should earn a fair success, for much the same qualities are required in all professions and in all kinds of business—intelligence, good judgment, fair dealing, and above all diligence with a determination to make good by work well done. Without these a man rarely succeeds in any career; with them there are an abundance of niches in almost every serious occupation. In none does every member perform the same duties, and in the large professions and industrial concerns there is a diversity of functions covering nearly the whole gamut of mental aptitudes. A lawyer, for example, may present facts to a jury, argue law to a court, draw briefs, advise clients about their rights, prosecute criminals for their wrongs, draw documents, examine titles to real estate, or do many other things, and in fact he may use any quality, from the facility of the advocate, through the wisdom of the counsellor, to the meticulous accuracy of the conveyancer. Much the same range of qualities are needed in every large business, and in a moderate as well as in an unusual degree; for although a young man may be obliged to begin with what is assigned to him (it is well he should do so) he will in time find the work for which he is most fit, and which to him is most congenial.

If, therefore, the man of fair ability can find the work for which he is best adapted, and most likely to do well, in almost any broad career, his selection

among those open to him is not so vital as it seems. Yet for such men the wise adviser is perhaps more valuable than for any other class, for while it is not so important what career he selects, it is of the greatest moment he should be conscious of a voluntary choice carefully and deliberately made, in short that he should start upon it with a confidence that it is the right one for him, and that he will succeed. Of course a young man's qualities, mental and moral, may develop with the need for them, sometimes far more than one would have expected from his earlier life, for there is no better school for learning what should be done than doing it, and no teacher therein more exacting than in the sense of responsibility. Many a man has been awakened from somnolence by having duties thrust upon him, but too many young men think this will be true in their own case, whereas it is, in fact, exceptional. As a rule a stern determination, earnestness of purpose, and the habit of postponing pleasure to work, are required before he can get his feet on the ladder that leads to a responsible position.

In regard to particular professions. Medicine stands somewhat apart, for to most young men it is distinctly either attractive or repellent, and those who go into it usually choose it early. That they should have a strong preference for it is, indeed, fortunate, because medicine in this country rarely leads to anything outside its associated sciences and its own direct applications. At the opposite pole in this matter is the law, which by its close contact with men of affairs, and its universal pervasiveness, spreads its members in manifold directions. Between these two extremes the other professions lie, for engineers are frequently engaged in non-technical administrative work, business men climb from one industry to another, while for clergymen and teachers the field is distinctly limited. All this has little bearing on advice to students about possible careers, as one could hardly suggest a choice because it is easy to abandon, but it may be important to a young man who is not yet certain wherein his greatest usefulness will lie, and in fact it does draw many men into the law and out again.

There is, moreover, a difference of temperament among men, little mentioned in the giving of advice because it has less bearing on the choice of a career than on the type of work done within it. The distinction is between occupations that involve a series of disconnected operations, each of them separately completed, to be put aside when done, and those with one continuous objective, with many facets but a single aim that cannot be attained for many years, or only in part in a lifetime. For example, the attending of patients by a physician, where the case is over when the patient recovers from an acute disease, and still more definitely when he does not, belongs to the first class, while continuous research on the nature and causes of a disease belongs to the second. Giving advice or drawing legal instruments for a client, conducting his case in court, and for a judge deciding it, are in the main discrete acts complete in themselves, so that when finished attention is turned to something else, but the writing of Blackstone's Commentaries was a single long, continuous labor. So again the building of a bridge is a different thing from working out the stresses and strains of new materials on which such structures depend for their stability.

One may suggest that this is essentially the difference between the practitioner and the scholar, and no doubt it often is, but by no means always or wholly so. The physician may fall into so specialized a practice that he devotes his life to one peculiar disease of a single organ, and studies it with the same intensity as his colleague who is studying some other infection without treating patients. A lawyer who makes himself an authority on some particular branch of the law may do the same, and among men in active business, in no sense scholars, there is the same distinction between one who as a manager of a factory, a railroad or a bank spends his whole life in striving to build it up, and another who as a broker sells to a client stock or bonds, and after the sale is made thinks of it no more, feels no responsibility for it, although in the property sold his own firm had an interest.

There is the same difference among scholars, one preferring the long labor of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, another a series of short monographs, both, it may be, learned, industrious and profound. In fact the distinction in all pursuits is far from sharp and absolute. Joseph Story could hardly write an opinion without making it a text book, and on the other hand medical journals advance the science through the reports by practitioners of particular cases clarified by the autopsy. We should not think one of these attitudes of mind as essentially superior to the other, or forget that both are involved in all occupations in varying degrees. Yet the distinction is real, although not seldom unconscious, and some men are more disposed toward one of these forms of objective, others the opposite, some being particularly attracted by a series of different problems, each supplying a fresh incentive to the imagination, others preferring the long continuous labor for a distant object that for them dominates the intellectual horizon.

What about the students' estimate of values, for that is, perhaps, the most important thing in life? It is not very different from that of their parents and friends. Formerly they had an exaggerated opinion of athletic victories, but in the older colleges, at least, that is not true today, they have estimated scholarship too low, but so do their parents and the outside public; some of them are too prone to segregate themselves in social clubs and cliques, particularly in the vicinity of a large city, thereby failing to make friends with men who will be most worth knowing in later life, but that also is characteristic of America, where society, having no fixed basis, sometimes tends to protect itself by exclusiveness. Wealth has less attraction for the student than for older men, and he is somewhat more of an idealist; though there is nothing to correspond with the tradition in continental Europe that students as a class are radicals in the university, and turn conservative when they become engaged in active life. In short, the American college student does not, in his outlook on life, differ very much from the community out of which he comes and into which he goes.

All this is important because it is the sense of relative values that determines men's conduct in life. It is true of material things, for success in all occupations, and in all forms of business, depends upon a correct estimate of values, present and future. The men who foresaw the utility of the telephone and the automobile made great fortunes; as the old saying went, if any merchant only

knew what was cheap and what was dear he need be a merchant but a single year, and it is not less true of the things of the spirit

Man's whole history is a search for values that vary from one people to another and from time to time. In republican Rome the citizens fought for, and the upper strata governed, the nation, until the territories conquered outstripped the possibility of being ruled in that way. Then came the emperors who began to use experts to conduct the administration, and carried it so far that the imperial power, with its bureaucracy and its paternalism, left to its earnest men little opening for serious public work. Reduced to impotence, many of them turned their thoughts to the problems of the natural world and of the human soul, the more erudite to neoplatonism, the less learned to the oriental religions with their suggestions of immortality. The Egyptian cults, the Persian ideas of Mithras and other beliefs had their votaries throughout the Empire and in Rome itself, until Christianity, the best for the Western world, overcame the rest, helped probably by a ferocity of persecution to which the others were not subjected.

In a less essential respect all criterions of value change. After the Renaissance the Gothic cathedrals were thought barbarous—sometimes in England whitewashed on the inside, up to the nineteenth century when their merits were rediscovered. We laugh at the selection of Paul Potter's Bull as one of the great pictures of the world brought to adorn Paris under Napoleon, and seventy years ago one sometimes heard the question whether you were musical or liked Wagner. The Victorian Era was thought by men of the day the highest point of civilization man had yet reached, and now there is no more complete condemnation than to say that taste or philosophy is Victorian. In fact all art and poetry fade from popularity in the next generation, the test of enduring value being whether the reputation of a work revives, and if so it becomes a classic. Yet advance comes not by the rejection of what is past but by improving upon it. The great arts of sculpture in Greece, and painting in Italy, could not have come without the primitives, for if subservience to the past makes stagnation, developing it is true progress. Even science, which as it advances renders that which went before obsolete, really builds upon its past, constantly advancing to new knowledge from the standpoint of the already known.

In our own day we are seeing great changes in the estimate of values. A hundred years ago, for both the peasant and the workman, thrift was a cardinal virtue, now by heavy taxation and the provision of well-nigh universal pensions for old age, it is discouraged. The former were the days of *laissez faire* carried much too far, now the time of paternal government carried, perhaps, to the other extreme. In the middle of the last century peace and progress were, in theory at least, associated, but at the present day huge armies and expansion of territory are regarded as in themselves among the chief national values by the rulers of three great countries. The easy optimism of the Victorian Era with its belief that mankind naturally progressed by a steady improvement, material, intellectual and moral, with its conviction that, under a system of universal personal liberty, peace and prosperity would be assured, with the doctrines proclaimed in Herbert Spencer's philosophy just at the time they were beginning to lose their hold on the thinking public, that optimism re-

ceived a rude shock from the World War and its aftermath. When mankind loses its faith in the principles by which it has lived, it is certain to be uncomfortable until it acquires a new faith in principles accepted generally enough to govern human relations. This is true not only within each country, but also in international relations. It is, of course, easy to exaggerate the decay of earlier convictions, to treat as universal what is only partial, as absolute what is only a tendency; yet it is clear that there has been a weakening, for example, in the obligation of contracts, public, international and private—the cement that has made possible the structure of the modern world. This, to the writer, is more ominous than the danger of war, or of any change in industrial organization made in an orderly way. Future historians will trace the causes of the changes in attitude; it suffices here to note them.

The doctrine of *laissez faire* assumed as a premise that in the long run the interest of each coincided with the interests of all, and although that was never true, it was not too glaringly false for many good people to believe it so long as those interests were unorganized, whereas, when people are acting and thinking in distinct consolidated groups, it is much easier to regard the interests of those groups as diverse and mutually opposed. Truly the future has less to fear from individual than from cooperative selfishness, and this is far more difficult to deal with, because when the state had only individuals to control it stood so far above them that it could be impartial, but popular government finds it very hard to disregard the pressure of large organized groups. Since the matter is one of sentiment rather than of reason it boots little to prove that for either of two quarreling part-owners of a cow to shoot his half is bad policy, or that in a war between two great nations at the present day both suffer more than they can possibly gain. Moreover, either side may push the subject of a claim or dispute to such a point that the other cannot concede it without abandoning self-respect or even the right to live its own life.

As between nations also there seems a tendency to assume that their interests are more discordant than they really are, and a growing disinclination to refer important questions to arbitration. That mankind is headed for mutual destruction, or permanent social and international instability, one cannot believe, nor can one suppose, as some Germans seem to have thought, that order will come as in the Roman Empire by the control of the whole world by one power. Some of us thought it could be done by an organization of all the nations to prevent, by the threat of force, attacks by one upon another, but the cohesion, and the willingness to carry out the undertakings assumed, have proved too slight to make the threat effective, and there is no reason to suppose that they will be stronger in any future that can be foreseen.

Yet unexpected changes of opinion sometimes occur. The wars of religion in the seventeenth century were followed in a hundred years by a rapid growth of the principle of toleration, inconceivable during the conflict; and it may be that, with or without more war, the peoples of the world will come to believe that frankness and mutual confidence are better for all nations than war or threats; that universal distrust is destructive of civilization; and that great modern armies inevitably lower the general standard of living. The fallacy of extreme pacifists lies in thinking that such a result can be brought about, or

helped, by any one nation remaining defenseless. One might as well expect to abolish banditry by disarming the police of a town. The people of no country are bandits at heart, nor do they desire to jeopardize their own civilization by an uncertain conflict with a powerful antagonist, but in the general confusion of thought that has followed the World War they have lost their bearings and are ready to follow any leaders who tell them a way out of their distress.

Now one of the objects of a liberal college is to give the students knowledge and respect for things of which the value is enduring, and has endured, for throughout all the varieties in form and method much remains the same in basic principles, and to explore the foundations reveals many things not seen above the surface. It is the deeper truths, the underlying ideas, that illuminate current changes, and explain the long struggle of man to raise himself by over-accentuating one aspect of every subject at a time. As things pass away much that remains beneath them stays unchanged, and to know that remnant and the forms to which it has given birth is the basis of true enlightenment.

LANGUAGE, LITERATURE, CULTURE

LEARNED WORDS AND POPULAR WORDS¹

by J B Greenough and G L Kittredge

James Bradstreet Greenough (1833-1901), eminent American philologist, was a member of the Harvard faculty for three decades. George Lyman Kittredge (1860-1941), one of the most notable of contemporary scholars and teachers, was a teacher and professor of English at Harvard from 1888 to 1936.

IN EVERY cultivated language there are two great classes of words which, taken together, comprise the whole vocabulary. First, there are those words with which we become acquainted in ordinary conversation, which we learn, that is to say, from the members of our own family and from our familiar associates, and which we should know and use even if we could not read or write. They concern the common things of life, and are the stock in trade of all who speak the language. Such words may be called "popular," since they belong to the people at large and are not the exclusive possession of a limited class.

On the other hand, our language includes a multitude of words which are comparatively seldom used in ordinary conversation. Their meanings are known to every educated person, but there is little occasion to employ them at home or in the market-place. Our first acquaintance with them comes not from our mothers' lips or from the talk of our schoolmates, but from books that we read, lectures that we hear, or the more formal conversation of highly educated speakers who are discussing some particular topic in a style appropriately elevated above the habitual level of everyday life. Such words are called "learned," and the distinction between them and "popular" words is of great importance to a right understanding of linguistic process.

The difference between popular and learned words may be easily seen in a few examples. We may describe a girl as "lively" or as "vivacious." In the first case, we are using a native English formation from the familiar noun *life*. In the latter, we are using a Latin derivative which has precisely the same meaning. Yet the atmosphere of the two words is quite different. No one ever got the adjective *lively* out of a book. It is a part of everybody's vocabulary. We cannot remember a time when we did not know it, and we feel sure that we learned it long before we were able to read. On the other hand, we must have passed several years of our lives before learning the word *vivacious*. We may even remember the first time that we saw it in print or heard it from

¹ From *Words and Their Ways in English Speech*, by permission of the publishers, The Macmillan Company.

some grown up friend who was talking over our childish heads Both *lively* and *vivacious* are good English words, but *lively* is popular and *vivacious* is learned

From the same point of view we may contrast the following pairs of synonyms ² *the same, identical, speech, oration, fire, conflagration, choose, select, brave, valorous, swallowing, deglutition, striking, percussion, building, edifice, shady, umbrageous, puckery, astringent, leaned, erudite, secret, cryptic, destroy, annihilate, stiff, rigid, flabby, flaccid, queer, eccentric, behead, decapitate, round, circular, thin, emaciated, fat, corpulent, truthful, voracious, try, endeavor, bit, modicum, piece, fragment, sharp, acute, crazy, maniacal, king, sovereign, book, volume, lying, mendacious, beggar, mendicant, teacher, instructor, play, drama, air, atmosphere, paint, pigment*

The terms "popular" and "learned," as applied to words, are not absolute definitions No two persons have the same stock of words, and the same word may be "popular" in one man's vocabulary and "learned" in another's³ There are also different grades of "popularity", indeed there is in reality a continuous gradation from infantile words like *mamma* and *papa* to such erudite derivatives as *concatenation* and *cataclysm* Still, the division into "learned" and "popular" is convenient and sound Disputes may arise as to the classification of any particular word, but there can be no difference of opinion about the general principle We must be careful, however, to avoid misconception When we call a word "popular," we do not mean that it is a favorite word, but simply that it belongs to the people as a whole—that is, it is everybody's word, not the possession of a limited number When we call a word "learned" we do not mean that it is used by scholars alone, but simply that its presence in the English vocabulary is due to books and the cultivation of literature rather than to the actual needs of ordinary conversation

Here is one of the main differences between a cultivated and an uncultivated language Both possess a large stock of "popular" words, but the cultivated language is also rich in "learned" words, with which the ruder tongue has not provided itself simply because it has never felt the need of them

In English it will usually be found that the so-called learned words are of foreign origin Most of them are derived from French or Latin, and a considerable number from Greek The reason is obvious The development of English literature has not been isolated, but has taken place in close connection with the earnest study of foreign literatures Thus, in the fourteenth century, when our language was assuming substantially the shape which it now bears, the literary exponent of English life and thought, Geoffrey Chaucer, the first of our great poets, was profoundly influenced by Latin literature as well as by that of France and Italy In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Greek and Latin classics were vigorously studied by almost every English writer of any consequence, and the great authors of antiquity were regarded as

² Not all the words are exact synonyms, but that is of no importance in the present discussion

³ It is instructive to study one's own vocabulary from this point of view, making a list of (1) those words which we feel sure we learned in childhood, (2) those which we have learned in later life, but not from books, (3) those which have entered our vocabulary from books We shall also find it useful to consider the difference between our reading vocabulary and our speaking vocabulary

models, not merely of general literary form, but of expression in all its details. These foreign influences have varied much in character and intensity. But it is safe to say that there has been no time since 1350 when English writers of the highest class have not looked to Latin, French, and Italian authors for guidance and inspiration. From 1600 to the present day the direct influence of Greek literature and philosophy has also been enormous, affecting as it has the finest spirits in a peculiarly pervasive way, and its indirect influence is quite beyond calculation. Greek civilization, we should remember, has acted upon us, not merely through Greek literature and art, but also through the medium of Latin, since the Romans borrowed their higher culture from Greece.

Now certain facts in the history of our language have made it peculiarly inclined to borrow from French and Latin. The Norman Conquest in the eleventh century made French the language of polite society in England; and, long after the contact between Norman-French and English had ceased to be of direct significance in our linguistic development, the reading and speaking of French and the study of French literature formed an important part of the education of English-speaking men and women. When literary English was in process of formation in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the authors whose works determined the cultivated vocabulary were almost as familiar with French as with their mother tongue, and it was therefore natural that they should borrow a good many French words. But these same authors were also familiar with Latin, which, though called a dead language, has always been the professional dialect of ecclesiastics and a *lingua franca* for educated men. Thus the borrowing from French and from Latin went on side by side, and it is often impossible to say from which of the two languages a particular English word is taken. The practice of naturalizing French and Latin words was, then, firmly established in the fourteenth century, and when in the sixteenth century there was a great revival of Greek studies in England, the close literary relations between Greece and Rome facilitated the adoption of a considerable number of words from the Greek. Linguistic processes are cumulative; one does not stop when another begins. Hence we find all of these influences active in increasing the modern vocabulary. In particular, the language of science has looked to Greece for its terms, as the language of abstract thought has drawn its nomenclature from Latin.

It would, however, be a great mistake to suppose that all our "popular" terms are of native origin and that all foreign derivatives are learned. The younger and less cultivated members of a community are naturally inclined to imitate the speech of the older and more cultivated. Hence, as time has passed, a great number of French and Latin words, and even some that are derived from the Greek, have made themselves quite at home in ordinary conversation. Such words, whatever their origin, are as truly popular as if they had been a part of our language from the earliest period.

Examples of such popular words of foreign derivation are the following:

From French: army, arrest, bay, card, catch, city, chase, chimney, conveyance, deceive, entry, engine, forge, hour, letter, mantle, mason, merchant, manner, mountain, map, move, navy, prince, pen, pencil, parlor, river, rage, soldier, second, table, veil, village

From Latin accommodate, act, add, adopt, animal, anxious, applause, arbitrate, auction, agent, calculate, cancer, circus, collapse, collis or, column, congress, connect, consequence, contract, contradict, correct, creation, cucumber, curve, centennial, decorate, delicate, dentist, describe, diary, diffident, different, digest, direct, discuss, divide, educate, elect, emigrant, equal, erect, expect, extra, fict, genius, genuine, graduate, gritis, horrid, imitate, item, joke, junction, junior, major, magnificent, medicine, medium, miser, obstinate, omit, pagan, pastor, pauper, pedral, pendulum, permit, picture, pligue, postpone, premium, prevent, prospect, protect, quiet, recess, recipe, reduce, regular, salute, secure, series, single, species, specimen, splendid, strict, student, subscribe, subtract, suburb, suffocate, suggest, tedious, timid, urge, vaccinate, various, ventilation, veto, victor, vim, vote

From Greek anthracite, apathy, arsenic, aster, athlete, atlas, attic, barometer, biography, calomel, catarrh, catholic, catastrophe, catechism, caustic, chemist, crisis, dialogue, diphtheria, elastic, encyclopedia, hector, homeopathy, iodine, lexicon, microscope, monotonous, myth, neuralgia, panic, panorama, photography, skeleton, strychnine, tactics, telegraph, tonic, zoology

No language can borrow extensively from foreign sources without losing a good many words of its own. Hence, if we compare the oldest form of English (Anglo-Saxon) with our modern speech, we shall discover that many words that were common in Anglo-Saxon have gone quite out of use, being replaced by their foreign equivalents. The "learned" word has driven out the "popular" word, and has thereupon, in many cases, become "popular" itself. Thus instead of A S *here* we use the French word *army*, instead of *thegn* or *thēow*, the French word *servant*, instead of *sciphere* (a compound of the Anglo-Saxon word for *ship* and that for *army*), we use *navy*, instead of *micel*, we say *large*, instead of *sige*, *victory*, instead of *swithe*, *very*, instead of *laf*, we say *remainder* or *remnant*, and so on.

Curiously enough, it sometimes happens that when both the native and the foreign word still have a place in our language, the latter has become the more popular, the former being relegated to the higher or poetical style. Thus it is more natural for us to say *divide* (from L *divido*) than *cleave* (from A S *cleofan*), *travel* than *fare*,⁴ *river* than *stream*, *castle* than *burg*, *residence* than *dwelling*, *remain* than *abide*, *expect* than *ween*, *pupil* or *scholar* than *learner*, *destruction* than *bale*, *protect* or *defend* than *shield*, *immediately* than *straightway*, *encourage* than *hearten*, *present* than *bestow*, *firm* than *steadfast*, *direct* than *forthright*, *impetuous* than *heady*, *modest* than *shamefaced*, *prince* than *atheling*, *noise* or *tumult* or *disturbance* than *din*, *people* than *folk*,⁵ *prophet* than *soothsayer*, *fate* than *weird*, *lancer* than *spearmen*, *I intend* than *I am minded*, *excavate* than *delve*, *resist* than *withstand*, *beautiful* than *goodly*, *gracious* than *kindly*. The very fact that the native words belong to the older stock has made them poetical, for the language of poetry is always more archaic than that of prose.

Frequently we have kept both the native and the foreign word, but in different senses, thus increasing our vocabulary to good purpose. The foreign

⁴ *Fare* is still common as a noun and in figurative senses.

⁵ But the irregular plural *folks* is a common colloquialism.

word may be more emphatic than the native as in *brilliant, bright; scintillate, sparkle, astonishment, wonder, a conflagration, a fire, devour, eat up, labor, work*. Or the native word may be more emphatic than the foreign as in *stench, odor, straightforward, direct; dead, deceased; murder, homicide*. Often, however, there is a wide distinction in meaning. Thus *driver* differs from *propeller*; *child* from *infant*, *history* from *tale*, *book* from *volume*, *forehead* from *front*; *length* from *longitude*, *moony* from *lunar*, *sunny* from *solar*; *nightly* from *nocturnal*, *churl* from *villain*, *wretch* from *miser*, *poor man* from *pauper*; *run across* from *occur*, *run into* from *incur*, *fight* from *debate*.

From time to time attempts have been made to oust foreign words from our vocabulary and to replace them by native words that have become either obsolete or less usual (that is to say, less popular). Whimsical theorists have even set up the principle that no word of foreign origin should be employed when a native word of the same meaning exists. In English, however, all such efforts are predestined to failure. They result, not in a simpler and more natural style, but in something unfamiliar, fantastic, and affected. Foreign words that have long been in common use are just as much English as if they had been a part of our language from the beginning. There is no rational theory on which they should be shunned. It would be just as reasonable for an Englishman whose ancestors had lived in the island ever since the time of King Alfred to disown as his countrymen the descendants of a Frenchman or a German who settled there three hundred years ago. The test of the learned or the popular character of a word is not its etymology, but the facts relating to its habitual employment by plain speakers. Nor is there any principle on which, of two expressions, that which is popular should be preferred to that which is learned or less familiar. The sole criterion of choice consists in the appropriateness of one's language to the subject or the occasion. It would be ridiculous to address a crowd of soldiers in the same language that one would employ in a council of war. It would be no less ridiculous to harangue an assembly of generals as if they were a regiment on the eve of battle. The reaction against the excessive Latinization of English is a wholesome tendency, but it becomes a mere "fad" when it is carried out in a doctrinaire manner. As Chaucer declares:

Ek Plato seith, whoso that can him rede,
"The wordes mot be cosin to the dede"

Every educated person has at least two ways of speaking his mother tongue. The first is that which he employs in his family, among his familiar friends, and on ordinary occasions. The second is that which he uses in discoursing on more complicated subjects and in addressing persons with whom he is less intimately acquainted. It is, in short, the language which he employs when he is "on his dignity," as he puts on evening dress when he is going to dine. The difference between these two forms of language consists, in great measure, in a difference of vocabulary. The basis of familiar words must be the same in both, but the vocabulary appropriate to the more formal occasion will include many terms which would be stilted or affected in ordinary talk. There is also considerable difference between familiar and dignified language in the manner of utterance. Contrast the rapid utterance of our everyday dialect, full of contrac-

tions and clipped forms, with the more distinct enunciation of the pulpit or the platform. Thus, in conversation, we habitually employ such contractions as *I'll*, *don't*, *won't*, *it's*, *we'd*, *he'd*, and the like, which we should never use in public speaking, unless of set purpose, to give a markedly colloquial tinge to what we have to say.

ON JARGON¹

by Sir Arthur Quiller Couch

Sir Arthur Quiller Couch (1863-1944) was King Edward VII Professor of English Literature at Cambridge University, and was one of the most widely known teachers of English. He was a poet, essayist, novelist, anthologist, scholar, and as the following selection shows, a genial critic.

WE PARTED, Gentlemen, upon a promise to discuss the capital difficulty of Prose, as we have discussed the capital difficulty of Verse. But, although we shall come to it, on second thoughts I ask leave to break the order of my argument and to interpose some words upon a kind of writing which, from a superficial likeness, commonly passes for prose in these days, and by lazy folk is commonly written for prose, yet actually is not prose at all, my excuse being the simple practical one that, by first clearing this sham prose out of the way, we shall the better deal with honest prose when we come to it. The proper difficulties of prose will remain, but we shall be agreed in understanding what it is, or at any rate what it is not, that we talk about. I remember to have heard somewhere of a religious body in the United States of America which had reason to suspect one of its churches of accepting spiritual consolation from a colored preacher—an offense against the laws of the Synod—and despatched a Disciplinary Committee with power to act, and of the Committee's returning to report itself unable to take any action under its terms of reference, for that while a person undoubtedly colored had undoubtedly occupied the pulpit and had audibly spoken from it in the Committee's presence, the performance could be brought within no definition of preaching known or discoverable. So it is with that infirmity of speech—that flux, that determination of words to the mouth, or to the pen—which, though it be familiar to you in parliamentary debates, in newspapers, and as the staple language of Blue Books, Committees, Official Reports, I take leave to introduce to you as prose which is not prose and under its real name of Jargon.

You must not confuse this Jargon with what is called Journalese. The two overlap, indeed, and have a knack of assimilating each other's vices. But Jargon finds, maybe, the most of its votaries among good dounce people who have never written to or for a newspaper in their life, who would never talk of "adverse climatic conditions" when they mean "bad weather", who have never trifled with verbs such as "obsess," "recrudesce," "envisage," "adumbrate," or with

¹ Reprinted from *On the Art of Writing* with the permission of the publishers, G. P. Putnam's Sons.

phrases such as "the psychological moment," "the true inwardness," "it gives furiously to think" It dallies with Latinity—"sub silentio," "de die in diem," "cui bono?" (always in the sense, unsuspected by Cicero, of "What is the profit?")—but not for the sake of style Your journalist at the worst is an artist in his way, he daubs paint of this kind upon the lily with a professional zeal, the more flagrant (or, to use his own word, arresting) the pigment, the happier is his soul Like the Babu he is trying all the while to embellish our poor language, to make it more floriferous, more poetical—like the Babu for example who, reporting his mother's death, wrote, "Regret to inform you, the hand that rocked the cradle has kicked the bucket"

There is metaphor, *there* is ornament, *there* is a sense of poetry, though as yet groping in a world unrealised. No such gusto marks—no such zeal, artistic or professional, animates—the practitioners of Jargon, who are, most of them (I repeat), douce respectable persons Caution is its father; the instinct to save everything and especially trouble, its mother, Indolence. It looks precise, but is not It is, in these times, *safe*, a thousand men have said it before and not one to your knowledge had been prosecuted for it And so, like respectability in Chicago, Jargon stalks unchecked in our midst It is becoming the language of Parliament, it has become the medium through which Boards of Government, County Councils, Syndicates, Committees, Commercial Firms, express the processes as well as the conclusions of their thought and so voice the reason of their being.

Has a Minister to say "No" in the House of Commons? Some men are constitutionally incapable of saying no; but the Minister conveys it thus: "The answer to the question is in the negative" That means "no." Can you discover it to mean anything less, or anything more except that the speaker is a pompous person?—which was no part of the information demanded.

That is Jargon, and it happens to be accurate But as a rule Jargon is by no means accurate, its method being to walk circumspectly around its target; and its faith, that having done so it has either hit the bull's-eye or at least achieved something equivalent, and safer

Thus the clerk of a Board of Guardians will minute that¹

In the case of John Jenkins deceased the coffin provided was of the usual character

Now this is not accurate "In the case of John Jenkins deceased," for whom a coffin was supplied, it is wholly superfluous to tell us that he is deceased. But actually John Jenkins never had more than one case, and that was the coffin The clerk says he had two—a coffin in a case, but I suspect the clerk to be mistaken, and I am sure he errs in telling us that the coffin was of the usual character, for coffins have no character, usual or unusual.

For another example (I shall not tell you whence derived).

In the case of every candidate who is placed in the first class (So you see the lucky fellow gets a case as well as a first-class He might be a stuffed animal perhaps he is)—In the case of every candidate who is placed in the first class the class list will show by some convenient mark (1) the Section or Sections for proficiency in which he is placed in the first class and (2) the Section or Sections (if any) in which he has passed with special distinction.

"The Section or Sections (if any)"—But how, if they are not any, could they be indicated by a mark however convenient?

The Examiners will have regard to the style and method of the candidate's answers and will give credit for excellence in *these respects*

Have you begun to detect the two main vices of Jargon? The first is that it uses circumlocution—rather than short straight speech. It says "In the case of John Jenkins deceased, the coffin" when it means "John Jenkins's coffin", and its yea is not yea, neither is its nay nay, but its answer is in the affirmative or in the negative, as the foolish and superfluous "case" may be. The second vice is that it habitually chooses vague, woolly abstract nouns rather than concrete ones. I shall have something to say by and-by about the concrete noun, and how you should ever be struggling for it whether in prose or in verse. For the moment I content myself with advising you, if you would write masculine English, never to forget the old tag of your Latin Grammar

Masculine will only be
Things that you can touch and see

But since these lectures are meant to be a course in First Aid to writing, I will content myself with one or two extremely rough rules, yet I shall be disappointed if you do not find them serviceable.

The first is: Whenever in your reading you come across one of these words, *case, instance, character, nature, condition, persuasion, degree*—whenever in writing your pen betrays you to one or another of them—pull yourself up and take thought. If it be "case" (I choose it as Jargon's dearest child—"in Heaven yeapt Metonymy") turn to the dictionary, if you will, and seek out what meaning can be derived from *casus*, its Latin ancestor, then try how, with a little trouble, you can extricate yourself from that case. The odds are, you will feel like a butterfly who has discarded his chrysalis.

Here are some specimens to try your hand on.

(1) All those tears which inundated Lord Hugh Cecil's head were dry in the case of Mr. Harold Cox.

Poor Mr. Cox! left gasping in his aquarium!

(2) (From a cigar-merchant) In any case, let us send you a case on approval.

(3) It is contended that Consols have fallen in consequence, but such is by no means the case.

"Such," by the way, is another spoilt child of Jargon, especially in Committee's Rules—"Co-opted members may be eligible as such, such members to continue to serve for such time as"—and so on.

(4) Even in the purely Celtic areas only in two or three cases do the Bishops bear Celtic names.

For "cases" read "dioceses."

Instance In most instances the players were below their form.

But what were they playing at? Instances?

Character—Nature There can be no doubt that the accident was caused through the dangerous nature of the spot, the hidden character of the by-road, and the utter absence of any warning or danger signal

Mark the foggy wording of it all! And yet the man hit something and broke his neck! Contrast that explanation with the verdict of the coroner's jury in the west of England on a drowned postman "We find that deceased met his death by an act of God, caused by sudden overflowing of the river Walkham and helped out by the scandalous neglect of the way-wardens"

The Aintree course is notoriously of a trying nature
On account of its light character, purity, and age, Usher's whiskey is a whiskey that will agree with you.

Order The mésalliance was of a pronounced order

Condition He was conveyed to his place of residence in an intoxicated condition
"He was carried home drunk."

Quality and Section Mr —, exhibiting no less than five works, all of a superior quality, figures prominently in the oil section

This was written of an exhibition of pictures

Degree. A singular degree of rarity prevails in the earlier editions of this romance.

This is Jargon In prose it runs simply "The earlier editions of this romance are rare"—or "are very rare"—or even (if you believe what I take leave to doubt), "are singularly rare"; which should mean that they are rarer than the editions of any other work in the world.

Now what I ask you to consider about these quotations is that in each the writer was using Jargon to shirk prose, palming off periphrases upon us when with a little trouble he could have gone straight to the point "A singular degree of rarity prevails," "the accident was caused through the dangerous nature of the spot," "but such is by no means the case" We may not be capable of much; but we can all write better than that, if we take a little trouble In place of, "the Aintree course is of a trying nature" we can surely say "Aintree is a trying course" or "the Aintree course is a trying one"—just that and nothing more.

Next, having trained yourself to keep a look-out for these worst offenders (and you will be surprised to find out how quickly you get into the way of it), proceed to push your suspicions out among the whole cloudy host of abstract terms. "How excellent a thing is sleep," sighed Sancho Panza; "it wraps a man round like a cloak"—an excellent example, by the way, of how to say a thing concretely, a Jargoner would have said that "among the beneficent qualities of sleep its capacity for withdrawing the human consciousness from the contemplation of immediate circumstances may perhaps be accounted not the least remarkable." How vile a thing—shall we say?—is the abstract noun! It wraps a man's thoughts round like cotton wool.

Here is a pretty little nest of specimens, found in *The Times* newspaper by Messrs. H. W. and F. G. Fowler, authors of that capital little book *The King's English*:

One of the most important reforms mentioned in the rescript is the unification of the organization of judicial institutions and the guarantee for all the tribunals of the independence necessary for securing to all classes of the community equality before the law

I do not dwell on the cacophony, but, to convey a straightforward piece of news, might not the editor of *The Times* as well employ a man to write

One of the most important reforms is that of the Courts, which need a uniform system and to be made independent. In this way only can men be assured that all are equal before the law

I think he might

A day or two ago the musical critic of the *Standard* wrote this

MR LAMOND IN BEETHOVEN

Mr Frederick Lamond, the Scottish pianist, as an interpreter of Beethoven has few rivals. At this second recital of the composer's works at Bechstein Hall on Saturday afternoon he again displayed a complete sympathy and understanding of his material that extracted the very essence of aesthetic and musical value from each selection he undertook. The delightful intimacy of his playing and his unusual force of individual expression are invaluable assets, which, allied to his technical brilliancy, enable him to achieve an artistic triumph. The two lengthy Variations in E flat major (Op. 35) and in D major, the latter on the Turkish March from *The Ruins of Athens*, when included in the same programme, require a master hand to provide continuity of interest. *To say that Mr Lamond successfully avoided moments that might at times, in these works, have inclined to comparative disinterestedness, would be but a moderate way of expressing the remarkable fascination with which his versatile playing endowed them, but at the same time* two of the sonatas given included a similar form of composition, and no matter how intellectually brilliant may be the interpretation, the extravagant use of a certain mode is bound to become somewhat ineffective. In the Three Sonatas, the E major (Op. 109), the A major (Op. 2), No. 2, and the C minor (Op. 111), Mr Lamond signalized his perfect insight into the composer's varying moods.

Will you not agree with me that here is no writing, here is no prose, here is not even English, but merely a flux of words to the pen?

Here again is a string, a concatenation—say, rather, a tiara of gems of purest ray serene from the dark unfathomed caves of a Scottish newspaper.

The Chinese viewpoint, as indicated in this letter, may not be without interest to your readers, because it evidently is suggestive of more than an academic attempt to explain an unpleasant aspect of things which if allowed to materialize, might suddenly culminate in disaster resembling the Chang Sha riots. It also ventures to illustrate incidents having their inception in recent premature endeavors to accelerate the development of Protestant missions in China, but we would hope for the sake of the interests involved that what my correspondent describes as "the irresponsible ruffian element" may be known by their various religious designations only within very restricted areas.

Well, the Chinese have given it up, poor fellows! and are asking the Christians—as today's newspapers inform us—to pray for them. Do you wonder?

But that is, or was, the Chinese "viewpoint"—and what a willow-pattern viewpoint! Observe its delicacy. It does not venture to interest or be interesting; merely "to be not without interest." But it does "venture to illustrate incidents"—which, for a viewpoint, is brave enough, and this illustration "is suggestive of something more than an academic attempt to explain an unpleasant aspect of things which, if allowed to materialize, might suddenly culminate." *What* materializes? The unpleasant aspect? or the things? Grammar says the "things," "things which if allowed to materialize." But things are materialized already, and as a condition of their being things. It must be the aspect, then, that materializes. But, if so, it is also the aspect that culminates, and an aspect, however unpleasant, can hardly do that, or at worst cannot culminate in anything resembling the Chang-Sha riots. . . . I give it up.

Let us turn to another trick of jargon; the trick of Elegant Variation, so rampant in the sporting press that there, without needing to attend these lectures, the undergraduate detects it for laughter.

Hayward and C. B. Fry now faced the bowling, which apparently had no terrors for the Surrey crack. The old Oxonian, however, took some time in settling to work . . .

Yes, you all recognize it and laugh at it. But why do you practice it in your essays? An undergraduate brings me an essay on Byron. In an essay on Byron, Byron is (or ought to be) mentioned many times. I expect, nay exact, that Byron shall be mentioned again and again. But my undergraduate has a blushing sense that to call Byron Byron twice on one page is indelicate. So Byron, after starting bravely as Byron, in the second sentence turns into "that great but unequal poet" and thenceforward I have as much trouble with Byron as ever Telemachus with Proteus to hold and pin him back to his proper self. Halfway down the page he becomes "the gloomy master of Newstead", overleaf he is reincarnated into "the meteoric darling of society", and so proceeds through successive avatars—"this arch-rebel," "the author of *Childe Harold*," "the apostle of scorn," "the ex-Harrobian, proud, but abnormally sensitive of his club-foot," "the martyr of Missolonghi," "the pageant-monger of a bleeding heart." Now this again is Jargon. It does not, as most Jargon does, come of laziness; but it comes of timidity, which is worse. In literature as in life he makes himself felt who not only calls a spade a spade but has the pluck to double spades and redouble.

For another rule—just as rough and ready, but just as useful. Train your suspicions to bristle up whenever you come upon "as regards," "with regard to," "in respect of," "in connection with," "according as to whether," and the like. They are all dodges of Jargon, circumlocutions for evading this or that simple statement; and I say that it is not enough to avoid them nine times out of ten, or nine-and-ninety times out of a hundred. You should never use them. That is positive enough, I hope? Though I cannot admire his style, I admire the man who wrote to me, "Re Tennyson—your remarks anent his *In Memoriam* make me sick", for though *re* is not a preposition of the first water, and "anent" has enjoyed its day, the finish crowned the work. But here are a few specimens far, very far, worse:

The special difficulty in Professor Minocelsi's case (our old friend "case" again) arose in *connexion with* the view he holds *relative to* the historical value of the opening pages of Genesis

That is Jargon In prose, even taking the miserable sentence as it stands constructed, we should write "the difficulty arose over the views he holds about the historical value," etc From a popular novelist

I was entirely indifferent *as to* the results of the game, caring nothing at all *as to* whether *I had losses or gains*

Cut out the first "as" in "as to," and the second "as to" altogether, and the sentence begins to be prose—"I was indifferent to the results of the game, caring nothing whether I had losses or gains"

But why, like Dogberry, have "had losses"? Why not simply "lose" Let us try again "I was entirely indifferent to the results of the game, caring nothing at all whether I won or lost"

Still the sentence remains absurd, for the second clause but repeats the first without adding one jot For if you care not at all whether you win or lose, you must be entirely indifferent to the results of the game So why not say, "I was careless if I won or lost," and have done with it?

A man of simple and charming character, he was fitly *associated with* the distinction of the Order of Merit

I take this gem with some others from a collection made three years ago by the *Oxford Magazine*, and I hope you admire it as one beyond price "He was associated with the distinction of the Order of Merit" means "he was given the Order of Merit" If the members of that Order make a society then he was associated with them, but you cannot associate a man with a distinction The inventor of such fine writing would doubtless have answered Canning's Needy Knife grinder with

I associate thee with sixpence! I will see thee in another association first!

But let us close our *florilegium* and attempt to illustrate Jargon by the converse method of taking a famous piece of English (say Hamlet's soliloquy) and remolding a few lines of it in this fashion

To be, or the contrary? Whether the former or the latter be preferable would seem to admit of some difference of opinion, the answer in the present case being of an affirmative or of a negative character according as to whether one elects on the one hand to mentally suffer the disfavor of fortune, albeit in an extreme degree, or on the other to boldly envisage adverse conditions in the prospect of eventually bringing them to a conclusion The condition of sleep is similar to, if not indistinguishable from that of death, and with the addition of finality the former might be considered identical with the latter, so that in this connection it might be argued with regard to sleep that, could the addition be effected, a termination would be put to the endurance of a multiplicity of inconveniences, not to mention a number of down right evils incidental to our fallen humanity, and thus a consummation achieved of a most gratifying nature

This is Jargon and to write Jargon is to be perpetually shuffling around in the fog and cotton-wool of abstract terms, to be forever hearkening, like Ibsen's Peer Gynt, to the voice of the Boyg exhorting you to circumvent the difficulty, to beat the air because it is easier than to flesh your sword in the thing. The first virtue, the touchstone of masculine style, is its use of the active verb and the concrete noun. When you write in the active voice, "They gave him a silver teapot," you write as a man. When you write "He was made the recipient of a silver teapot," you write Jargon. But at the beginning set even higher store on the concrete noun. Somebody—I think it was FitzGerald—once posited the question, "What would have become of Christianity if Jeremy Bentham had had the writing of the Parables?" Without pursuing that dreadful enquiry I ask you to note how carefully the Parables—those exquisite short stories—speak only of "things which you can touch and see"—"A sower went forth to sow," "The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took,"—and not the Parables only, but the Sermon on the Mount, and almost every verse of the Gospel. The Gospel does not, like my young essayist, fear to repeat a word, if the word be good. The Gospel says "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's"—not "Render unto Caesar the things that appertain to that potentate." The Gospel does not say "Consider the growth of the lilies," or even "Consider how the lilies grow." It says, "Consider the lilies, how they grow."

Or take Shakespeare. I wager you that no writer of English so constantly chooses the concrete word, in phrase after phrase forcing you to touch and see. No writer so insistently teaches the general through the particular. He does it even in *Venus and Adonis* (as Professor Wendell, of Harvard, pointed out in a brilliant little monograph on Shakespeare, published some ten years ago). Read any page of *Venus and Adonis* side by side with any page of Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* and you cannot but mark the contrast. In Shakespeare the definite, particular, visualized image, in Marlowe, the beautiful generalization, the abstract term, the thing seen at a literary remove. Take the two openings, both of which start out with the sunrise. Marlowe begins:

Now had the Morn espied her lover's steeds,
Whereat she starts, puts on her purple weeds,
And, red for anger that he stay'd so long,
All headlong throws herself the clouds among

Shakespeare wastes no words on Aurora and her feelings, but gets to his hero and to business without ado:

Even as the sun with purple-colour'd face
(You have the sun visualized at once),

Even as the sun with purple-colour'd face
Had ta'en his last leave of the weeping morn,
Rose-cheek'd Adonis hied him to the chase;
Hunting he loved, but love he laugh'd to scorn.

When Shakespeare has to describe a horse, mark how definite he is:

Round hoof'd, short jointed, fetlocks shag and long,
 Broad breast, full eye, small head and nostril wide,
 High crest, short ears, straight legs and passing strong,
 Thin mane, thick tail, broad buttock, tender hide

Or again, in a casual simile, how definite

Upon this promise did he raise his chin,
 Like a dive dipper peering through a wave,
 Which, being look'd on, ducks as quickly in

Or take, if you will, Marlowe's description of Hero's first meeting Leander

It lies not in our power to love or hate,
 For will in us is over-ruled by fate

and set against it Shakespeare's description of Venus' last meeting with Adonis,
 as she came on him lying in his blood

Or as a snail whose tender horns being hit
 Shrinks backward in his shelly cave with pain,
 And there, all smother'd up, in shade doth sit,
 Long after fearing to creep forth again,
 So, at his bloody view

I do not deny Marlowe's lines (if you will study the whole passage) to be lovely. You may even judge Shakespeare's to be crude by comparison. But you cannot help noting that whereas Marlowe steadily deals in abstract, nebulous terms, Shakespeare constantly uses concrete ones, which later on he learned to pack into verse, such as

Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care

Is it unfair to instance Marlowe, who died young? Then let us take Webster for the comparison, Webster, a man of genius or of something very like it, and commonly praised by the critics for his mastery over definite, detailed, and what I may call *solidified sensation*. Let us take this admired passage from his *Duchess of Malfi*:

Ferdinand How doth our sister Duchess bear herself
 In her imprisonment?

Basola Nobly. I'll describe her
 She's sad as one long wed to 't, and she seems
 Rather to welcome the end of misery
 That shun it a behaviour so noble
 As gives a majesty to adversity¹
 You may discern the shape of loveliness
 More perfect in her tears than in her smiles,
 She will muse for hours together,² and her silence
 Methinks expreseth more than if she spake

¹ Note the abstract terms

² Here we first come on the concrete, and beautiful it is

Now set against this the well-known passage from *Twelfth Night* where the Duke asks and Viola answers a question about some one unknown to him and invented by her—a mere phantasm, in short yet note how much more definite is the language.

Viola My father had a daughter lov'd a man,
As it might be, perhaps, were I a woman,
I should your lordship
Duke And what's her history?
Viola A blank, my lord She never told her love,
But let concealment, like a worm i' the bud,
Feed on her damask cheek, she pined in thought,
And with a green and yellow melancholy
She sat like Patience on a monument
Smiling at grief. Was not this love indeed?

Observe (apart from the dramatic skill of it) how, when Shakespeare *has* to use the abstract noun "concealment," on an instant it turns into a visible worm "feeding" on the visible rose; how, having to use a second abstract word "patience," at once he solidifies it in tangible stone.

Turning to prose, you may easily assure yourselves that men who have written learnedly on the art agree in treating our maxim—to prefer the concrete term to the abstract, the particular to the general, the definite to the vague—as a canon of rhetoric. Whately has much to say on it. The late Mr E J Payne, in one of his admirable prefaces to Burke (prefaces too little known and valued, as too often happens to scholarship hidden away in a schoolbook), illustrated the maxim by setting a passage from Burke's speech *On Conciliation with America* alongside a passage of like purport from Lord Brougham's *Inquiry into the Policy of the European Powers*. Here is the deadly parallel:

BURKE

In large bodies the circulation of power must be less vigorous at the extremities. Nature has said it. The Turk cannot govern Egypt and Arabia and Curdistan as he governs Thrace; nor has he the same dominion in Crimea and Algiers which he has in Brusa and Smyrna. Despotism itself is obliged to truck and huckster. The Sultan gets such obedience as he can. He governs with a loose rein, that he may govern at all; and the whole of the force and vigour of his authority in his centre is derived from a prudent relaxation in all his borders.

BROUGHAM

In all the despotisms of the East, it has been observed that the further any part of the empire is removed from the capital, the more do its inhabitants enjoy some sort of rights and privileges, the more inefficacious is the power of the monarch, and the more feeble and easily decayed is the organisation of the government.

You perceive that Brougham has transferred Burke's thought to his own page; but will you not also perceive how pitifully, by dissolving Burke's vivid particulars into smooth generalities, he has enervated its hold on the mind?

"This particularising style," comments Mr Payne, "is the essence of poetry, and in prose it is impossible not to be struck with the energy it produces Brougham's passage is excellent in its way but it pales before the flashing lights of Burke's sentences" The best instances of this energy of style, he adds, are to be found in the classical writers of the seventeenth century "When South says, 'An Aristotle was but the rubbish of an Adam, and Athens but the rudiments of Paradise,' he communicates more effectually the notion of the difference between the intellect of fallen and of unfallen humanity than in all the philosophy of his sermons put together"

You may agree with me, or you may not, that South in this passage is expounding trash, but you will agree with Mr Payne and me that he uttered it vividly

Let me quote to you, as a final example of this vivid style of writing, a passage from Dr John Donne far beyond and above anything that ever lay within South's compass

The ashes of an Oak in the Chimney are no epitaph of that Oak, to tell me how high or how large that was, it tells me not what flocks it sheltered while it stood, nor what men it hurt when it fell The dust of great persons' graves is speechless, too, it says nothing, it distinguishes nothing As soon the dust of a wretch whom thou wouldest not, as of a prince whom thou couldest not look upon will trouble thine eyes if it blow thither, and when a whirlwind hath blown the dust of the Churchyard into the Church, and the man sweep out the dust of the Church into the Churchyard, who will undertake to sift those dusts again and to pronounce, This is the Patrician, this is the noble flowre (flour), this the yeomanly, this the Plebeian bran? So is the death of *Iesabel* (*Iesabel* was a Queen) expressed They shall not say *This is Iesabel*, not only not wonder that it is, nor pity that it should be, but they shall not say, they shall not know, *This is Iesabel*

Carlyle noted of Goethe, "his emblematic intellect, his never-failing tendency to transform into *shape*, into *life*, the feeling that may dwell in him Everything has form, has visual excellence the poet's imagination bodies forth the forms of things unseen, and his pen turns them into shape"

Perpend this, Gentlemen, and maybe you will not hereafter set it down to my reproach that I wasted an hour of a May morning in a denunciation of Jargon, and in exhorting you upon a technical matter at first sight so trivial as the choice between abstract and definite words

A lesson about writing your language may go deeper than language, for language (as in a former lecture I tried to preach to you) is your reason, your λόγος So long as you prefer abstract words, which express other men's summarized concepts of things, to concrete ones which lie as near as can be reached to things themselves and are the first-hand material for your thoughts, you will remain, at the best, writers at second-hand If your language be Jargon, your intellect, if not your whole character, will almost certainly correspond Where your mind should go straight, it will dodge the difficulties it should approach with a fair front and grip with a firm hand it will be seeking to evade or circumvent For the style is the man, and where a man's treasure is there his heart, and his brain, and his writing, will be also.

POLITICS AND THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE¹

by George Orwell

George Orwell is an English critic, essayist, and novelist who writes regularly for *The London Observer* and *The New Statesman and Nation*. Born in 1903 in India, where his father was a Civil Servant, he went to Eton—one of England's leading boys' schools—where, he says, he learned "as nearly as possible nothing." After Eton, he served five years in Burma as a member of the Indian Imperial Police. He fought for two years on the Loyalist side in the Spanish Civil War and was severely wounded. During World War II he served in the Indian Section of the British Broadcasting Corporation and in the Home Guard. His best-known novels are *The Clergyman's Daughter* and *Burmese Days*. A book of critical essays, *Dickens, Dali and Others*, and a bitingly ironical fable, *Animal Farm*, are recent Orwell works published in the United States.

Most people who bother with the matter at all would admit that the English language is in a bad way, but it is generally assumed that we cannot by conscious action do anything about it. Our civilization is decadent, and our language—so the argument runs—must inevitably share in the general collapse. It follows that any struggle against the abuse of language is a sentimental archaism, like preferring candles to electric light or hansom cabs to aeroplanes. Underneath this lies the half-conscious belief that language is a natural growth and not an instrument which we shape for our own purposes.

Now, it is clear that the decline of a language must ultimately have political and economic causes: it is not due simply to the bad influence of this or that individual writer. But an effect can become a cause, reinforcing the original cause and producing the same effect in an intensified form, and so on indefinitely. A man may take to drink because he feels himself to be a failure, and then fail all the more completely because he drinks. It is rather the same thing that is happening to the English language. It becomes ugly and inaccurate because our thoughts are foolish, but the slovenliness of our language makes it easier for us to have foolish thoughts. The point is that the process is reversible. Modern English, especially written English, is full of bad habits which spread by imitation and which can be avoided if one is willing to take the necessary trouble. If one gets rid of these habits one can think more clearly, and to think clearly is a necessary first step towards political regeneration, so that the fight against bad English is not frivolous and is not the exclusive concern of professional writers. I will come back to this presently, and I hope that by that time the meaning of what I have said here will have become clearer. Meanwhile, here are five specimens of the English language as it is now habitually written.

These five passages have not been picked out because they are especially bad—I could have quoted far worse if I had chosen—but because they illustrate

¹ From *Horizon*, April, 1946. Reprinted by permission of *Horizon* and of *The New Republic*.

various of the mental vices from which we now suffer. They are a little below the average, but are fairly representative samples. I number them so that I can refer back to them when necessary.

"(1) I am not, indeed, sure whether it is not true to say that the Milton who once seemed not unlike a seventeenth century Shelley had not become, out of an experience ever more bitter in each year, more alien (*sic*) to the founder of that Jesuit sect which nothing could induce him to tolerate."

Professor Harold Laski (Essay in *Freedom of Expression*)

"(2) Above all, we cannot play ducks and drakes with a native battery of idioms which prescribes such egregious collocations of vocables as the Basic *put up with* for *tolerate* or *put at a loss* for *bewilder*."

Professor Lancelot Hogben (*Interglossa*)

"(3) On the one side we have the free personality by definition it is not neurotic, for it has neither conflict nor dream. Its desires, such as they are, are transparent, for they are just what institutional approval keeps in the forefront of consciousness, another institutional pattern would alter their number and intensity, there is little in them that is natural, irreducible, or culturally dangerous. But *on the other side*, the social bond itself is nothing but the mutual reflection of these self secure integrities. Recall the definition of love. Is not this the very picture of a small academic? Where is there a place in this hall of mirrors for either personality or fraternity?"

Essay on psychology in *Politics* (New York)

"(4) All the 'best people' from the gentlemen's clubs, and all the frantic fascist captains, united in common hatred of Socialism and bestial horror of the rising tide of the mass revolutionary movement, have turned to acts of provocation, to foul incendiarism, to medieval legends of poisoned wells, to legalize their own destruction of proletarian organizations, and rouse the agitated petty-bourgeoisie to chauvinistic fervour on behalf of the fight against the revolutionary way out of the crisis."

Communist pamphlet

"(5) If a new spirit is to be infused into this old country, there is one thorny and contentious reform which must be tackled, and that is the humanization and galvanization of the B B C. Timidity here will bespeak canker and atrophy of the soul. The heart of Britain may be sound and of strong beat, for instance, but the British lion's roar at present is like that of Bottom in Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*—as gentle as any sucking dove. A virile new Britain cannot continue indefinitely to be traduced in the eyes, or rather ears, of the world by the effete languors of Langham Place, brazenly masquerading as "standard English." When the Voice of Britain is heard at nine o'clock, better far and infinitely less ludicrous to hear atches honestly dropped than the present priggish, inflated, inhibited, school ma'amish arch braying of blameless bashful mewing maidens!"

Letter in *Tribune*

Each of these passages has faults of its own, but, quite apart from avoidable ugliness, two qualities are common to all of them. The first is staleness of imagery, the other is lack of precision. The writer either has a meaning and cannot express it, or he inadvertently says something else, or he is almost indifferent as to whether his words mean anything or not. This mixture of

vagueness and sheer incompetence is the most marked characteristic of modern English prose, and especially of any kind of political writing. As soon as certain topics are raised, the concrete melts into the abstract and no one seems able to think of turns of speech that are not hackneyed. Prose consists less and less of *words* chosen for the sake of their meaning, and more and more of *phrases* tacked together like the sections of a prefabricated hen-house. I list below, with notes and examples, various of the tricks by means of which the work of prose-construction is habitually dodged.

Dying metaphors. A newly invented metaphor assists thought by evoking a visual image, while on the other hand a metaphor which is technically "dead" (e.g. *iron resolution*) has in effect reverted to being an ordinary word and can generally be used without loss of vividness. But in between these two classes there is a huge dump of worn-out metaphors which have lost all evocative power and are merely used because they save people the trouble of inventing phrases for themselves. Examples are: *Ring the changes on, take up the cudgels for, toe the line, ride roughshod over, stand shoulder to shoulder with, play into the hands of, no axe to grind, grist to the mill, fishing in troubled waters, on the order of the day, Achilles' heel, swan song, hotbed*. Many of these are used without knowledge of their meaning (what is a "rift," for instance?), and incompatible metaphors are frequently mixed, a sure sign that the writer is not interested in what he is saying. Some metaphors now current have been twisted out of their original meaning without those who use them even being aware of the fact. For example, *toe the line* is sometimes written *tow the line*. Another example is *the hammer and the anvil*, now always used with the implication that the anvil gets the worst of it. In real life it is always the anvil that breaks the hammer, never the other way about: a writer who stopped to think what he was saying would be aware of this, and would avoid perverting the original phrase.

Operators, or verbal false limbs. These save the trouble of picking out appropriate verbs and nouns, and at the same time pad each sentence with extra syllables which give it an appearance of symmetry. Characteristic phrases are *render inoperative, militate against, prove unacceptable, make contact with, be subjected to, give rise to, give grounds for, have the effect of, play a leading part (role) in, make itself felt, take effect, exhibit a tendency to, serve the purpose of, etc., etc.* The keynote is the elimination of simple verbs. Instead of being a single word, such as *break, stop, spoil, mend, kill*, a verb becomes a *phrase*, made up of a noun or adjective tacked on to some general-purpose verb such as *prove, serve, form, play, render*. In addition, the passive voice is wherever possible used in preference to the active, and noun constructions are used instead of gerunds (*by examination of* instead of *by examining*). The range of verbs is further cut down by means of the *-ize* and *de-* formations, and banal statements are given an appearance of profundity by means of the *not un-* formation. Simple conjunctions and prepositions are replaced by such phrases as *with respect to, having regard to, the fact that, by dint of, in view of,*

in the interests of, on the hypothesis that, and the ends of sentences are saved from anti-climax by such resounding commonplaces as *greatly to be desired, cannot be left out of account, a development to be expected in the near future, deserving of serious consideration, brought to a satisfactory conclusion*, and so on and so forth

Pretentious diction Words like *phenomenon, element, individual* (as noun), *objective, categorical, effective, virtual, basic, primary, promote, constitute, exhibit, exploit, utilize, eliminate, liquidate*, are used to dress up simple statement and give an air of scientific impartiality to biased judgements. Adjectives like *epoch making, epic, historic, unforgettable, triumphant, age old, inevitable, inexorable, veritable* are used to dignify the sordid processes of international politics, while writing that aims at glorifying war usually takes on an archaic colour, its characteristic words being *realm, throne, chariot, mailed fist, trident, sword, shield, buckler, banner, jackboot, clarion*. Foreign words and expressions such as *cul de sac, ancien régime, deus ex machina, mutatis mutandis, status quo, gleichschaltung, weltanschauung*, are used to give an air of culture and elegance. Except for the useful abbreviations *i.e., e.g.*, and *etc.*, there is no real need for any of the hundreds of foreign phrases now current in English. Bad writers, and especially scientific, political and sociological writers, are nearly always haunted by the notion that Latin or Greek words are grander than Saxon ones, and unnecessary words like *expedite, ameliorate, predict, extraneous, deracinated, clandestine, subaqueous* and hundreds of others constantly gain ground from their Anglo-Saxon opposites.² The jargon peculiar to Marxist writing (*hyena, hangman, cannibal, petty bourgeois, these gentry, lacquey, flunkey, mad dog, White Guard*, etc.) consists largely of words and phrases translated from Russian, German or French, but the normal way of coining a new word is to use a Latin or Greek root with the appropriate affix and, where necessary, the *-ize* formation. It is often easier to make up words of this kind (*deregionalize, impermissible, extramarital, non-fragmentatory* and so forth) than to think up the English words that will cover one's meaning. The result, in general, is an increase in slovenliness and vagueness.

Meaningless words In certain kinds of writing, particularly in art criticism and literary criticism, it is normal to come across long passages which are almost completely lacking in meaning.³ Words like *romantic, plastic, values, human, dead, sentimental, natural, vitality*, as used in art criticism, are strictly meaningless, in the sense that they not only do not point to any discoverable

² An interesting illustration of this is the way in which the English flower names which were in use till very recently are being ousted by Greek ones, *snappedragon* becoming *anturrhinum forget me not* becoming *myosotis*, etc. It is hard to see any practical reason for this change of fashion: it is probably due to an instinctive turning away from the more homely word and a vague feeling that the Greek word is scientific.

³ Example: 'Comfort's catholicity of perception and image, strangely Whitmanesque in range, almost the exact opposite in aesthetic compulsion, continues to evoke that trembling atmospheric accumulative hinting at a cruel, an inexorably serene timelessness. Wrey Gardiner scores by aiming at simple bullseyes with precision. Only they are not so simple, and through this contented sadness runs more than the surface bitter-sweet of resignation' (*Poetry Quarterly*).

object, but are hardly even expected to do so by the reader. When one critic writes, "The outstanding feature of Mr X's work is its living quality," while another writes, "The immediately striking thing about Mr X's work is its peculiar deadness," the reader accepts this as a simple difference of opinion. If words like *black* and *white* were involved, instead of the jargon words *dead* and *living*, he would see at once that language was being used in an improper way. Many political words are similarly abused. The word *Fascism* has now no meaning except in so far as it signifies "something not desirable." The words *democracy*, *socialism*, *freedom*, *patriotic*, *realistic*, *justice*, have each of them several different meanings which cannot be reconciled with one another. In the case of a word like *democracy*, not only is there no agreed definition, but the attempt to make one is resisted from all sides. It is almost universally felt that when we call a country democratic we are praising it; consequently the defenders of every kind of régime claim that it is a democracy, and fear that they might have to stop using the word if it were tied down to any one meaning. Words of this kind are often used in a consciously dishonest way. That is, the person who uses them has his own private definition, but allows his hearer to think he means something quite different. Statements like *Marshal Pétain was a true patriot*, *The Soviet Press is the freest in the world*, *The Catholic Church is opposed to persecution*, are almost always made with intent to deceive. Other words used in variable meanings, in most cases more or less dishonestly, are *class*, *totalitarian*, *science*, *progressive*, *reactionary*, *bourgeois*, *equality*.

Now that I have made this catalogue of swindles and perversions, let me give another example of the kind of writing that they lead to. This time it must of its nature be an imaginary one. I am going to translate a passage of good English into modern English of the worst sort. Here is a well-known verse from *Ecclesiastes*:

"I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill, but time and chance happeneth to them all."

Here it is in modern English:

"Objective consideration of contemporary phenomena compels the conclusion that success or failure in competitive activities exhibits no tendency to be commensurate with innate capacity, but that a considerable element of the unpredictable must invariably be taken into account."

This is a parody, but not a very gross one. Exhibit (3), above, for instance, contains several patches of the same kind of English. It will be seen that I have not made a full translation. The beginning and ending of the sentence follow the original meaning fairly closely, but in the middle the concrete illustrations—race, battle, bread—dissolve into the vague phrase "success or failure in competitive activities." This had to be so, because no modern writer

of the kind I am discussing—no one capable of using phrases like “objective consideration of contemporary phenomena”—would ever tabulate his thoughts in that precise and detailed way. The whole tendency of modern prose is away from concreteness. Now analyse these two sentences a little more closely. The first contains 49 words but only 60 syllables, and all its words are those of everyday life. The second contains 38 words of 90 syllables: 18 of its words are from Latin roots, and one from Greek. The first sentence contains six vivid images, and only one phrase (“time and chance”) that could be called vague. The second contains not a single fresh, arresting phrase, and in spite of its 90 syllables it gives only a shortened version of the meaning contained in the first. Yet without a doubt it is the second kind of sentence that is gaining ground in modern English. I do not want to exaggerate. This kind of writing is not yet universal, and outcrops of simplicity will occur here and there in the worst-written page. Still, if you or I were told to write a few lines on the uncertainty of human fortunes, we should probably come much nearer to my imaginary sentence than to the one from *Ecclesiastes*.

As I have tried to show, modern writing at its worst does not consist in picking out words for the sake of their meaning and inventing images in order to make the meaning clearer. It consists in gumming together long strips of words which have already been set in order by someone else, and making the results presentable by sheer humbug. The attraction of this way of writing is that it is easy. It is easier—even quicker, once you have the habit—to say *In my opinion it is a not unjustifiable assumption that* than to say *I think*. If you use ready-made phrases, you not only don't have to hunt about for words, you also don't have to bother with the rhythms of your sentences, since these phrases are generally so arranged as to be more or less euphonious. When you are composing in a hurry—when you are dictating to a stenographer, for instance, or making a public speech—it is natural to fall into a pretentious, Latinized style. Tags like *a consideration which we should do well to bear in mind* or *a conclusion to which all of us would readily assent* will save many a sentence from coming down with a bump. By using stale metaphors, similes and idioms, you save much mental effort, at the cost of leaving your meaning vague, not only for your reader but for yourself. This is the significance of mixed metaphors. The sole aim of a metaphor is to call up a visual image. When these images clash—as in *The Fascist octopus has sung its swan song, the jackboot is thrown into the melting pot*—it can be taken as certain that the writer is not seeing a mental image of the objects he is naming, in other words he is not really thinking. Look again at the examples I gave at the beginning of this essay. Professor Laski (1) uses five negatives in 53 words. One of these is superfluous, making nonsense of the whole passage, and in addition there is the slip *alien* for *akin*, making further nonsense, and several avoidable pieces of clumsiness which increase the general vagueness. Professor Hogben (2) plays ducks and drakes with a battery which is able to write prescriptions, and, while disapproving of the everyday phrase *put up with*, is unwilling to look *egregious* up in the dictionary and see what it means. (3), if one takes an uncharitable attitude towards it, is simply meaningless. probably

one could work out its intended meaning by reading the whole of the article in which it occurs. In (4), the writer knows more or less what he wants to say, but an accumulation of stale phrases chokes him like tea leaves blocking a sink. In (5), words and meaning have almost parted company. People who write in this manner usually have a general emotional meaning—they dislike one thing and want to express solidarity with another—but they are not interested in the detail of what they are saying. A scrupulous writer, in every sentence that he writes, will ask himself at least four questions, thus: What am I trying to say? What words will express it? What image or idiom will make it clearer? Is this image fresh enough to have an effect? And he will probably ask himself two more: Could I put it more shortly? Have I said anything that is avoidably ugly? But you are not obliged to go to all this trouble. You can shirk it by simply throwing your mind open and letting the ready-made phrases come crowding in. They will construct your sentences for you—even think your thoughts for you, to a certain extent—and at need they will perform the important service of partially concealing your meaning even from yourself. It is at this point that the special connection between politics and the debasement of language becomes clear.

In our time it is broadly true that political writing is bad writing. Where it is not true, it will generally be found that the writer is some kind of rebel, expressing his private opinions and not a "party line." Orthodoxy, of whatever colour, seems to demand a lifeless, imitative style. The political dialects to be found in pamphlets, leading articles, manifestoes, White Papers and the speeches of under-secretaries do, of course, vary from party to party, but they are all alike in that one almost never finds in them a fresh, vivid, home-made turn of speech. When one watches some tired hack on the platform mechanically repeating the familiar phrases—*bestial atrocities, non heel, bloodstained tyranny, free peoples of the world, stand shoulder to shoulder*—one often has a curious feeling that one is not watching a live human being but some kind of dummy: a feeling which suddenly becomes stronger at moments when the light catches the speaker's spectacles and turns them into blank discs which seem to have no eyes behind them. And this is not altogether fanciful. A speaker who uses that kind of phraseology has gone some distance towards turning himself into a machine. The appropriate noises are coming out of his larynx, but his brain is not involved as it would be if he were choosing his words for himself. If the speech he is making is one that he is accustomed to make over and over again, he may be almost unconscious of what he is saying, as one is when one utters the responses in church. And this reduced state of consciousness, if not indispensable, is at any rate favourable to political conformity.

In our time, political speech and writing are largely the defence of the indefensible. Things like the continuance of British rule in India, the Russian purges and deportations, the dropping of the atom bombs on Japan, can indeed be defended, but only by arguments which are too brutal for most people to face, and which do not square with the professed aims of political parties. Thus political language has to consist largely of euphemism, question-begging and sheer cloudy vagueness. Defenceless villages are bombarded from the air, the

inhabitants driven out into the countryside, the cattle machine gunned, the huts set on fire with incendiary bullets—this is called *pacification*. Millions of peasants are robbed of their farms and sent trudging along the roads with no more than they can carry—this is called *transfer of population* or *rectification of frontiers*. People are imprisoned for years without trial, or shot in the back of the neck or sent to die of scurvy in Arctic lumber camps—this is called *elimination of unreliable elements*. Such phraseology is needed if one wants to name things without calling up mental pictures of them. Consider for instance some comfortable English professor defending Russian totalitarianism. He cannot say outright, "I believe in killing off your opponents when you can get good results by doing so." Probably, therefore, he will say something like this:

"While freely conceding that the Soviet régime exhibits certain features which the humanitarian may be inclined to deplore, we must, I think, agree that a certain curtailment of the right to political opposition is an unavoidable concomitant of transitional periods, and that the rigours which the Russian people have been called upon to undergo have been amply justified in the sphere of concrete achievement."

The inflated style is itself a kind of euphemism. A mass of Latin words falls upon the facts like soft snow, blurring the outlines and covering up all the details. The great enemy of clear language is insincerity. When there is a gap between one's real and one's declared aims, one turns as it were instinctively to long words and exhausted idioms, like a cuttlefish squirting out ink. In our age there is no such thing as "keeping out of politics." All issues are political issues, and politics itself is a mass of lies, evasions, folly, hatred and schizophrenia. When the general atmosphere is bad, language must suffer. I should expect to find—this is a guess which I have not sufficient knowledge to verify—that the German, Russian and Italian languages have all deteriorated in the last ten or fifteen years, as a result of dictatorship.

But if thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought. A bad usage can spread by tradition and imitation, even among people who should and do know better. The debased language that I have been discussing is in some ways very convenient. Phrases like *a not unjustifiable assumption*, *leaves much to be desired*, *would serve no good purpose*, *a consideration which we should do well to bear in mind*, are a continuous temptation, a packet of aspirins always at one's elbow. Look back through this essay, and for certain you will find that I have again and again committed the very faults I am protesting against. By this morning's post I have received a pamphlet dealing with conditions in Germany. The author tells me that he "felt impelled" to write it. I open it at random, and here is almost the first sentence that I see: "(The Allies) have an opportunity not only of achieving a radical transformation of Germany's social and political structure in such a way as to avoid a nationalistic reaction in Germany itself, but at the same time of laying the foundations of a co-operative and unified Europe." You see, he "feels impelled" to write—feels, presumably, that he has something new to say—and yet his words, like cavalry horses answering the bugle, group themselves automatically into the familiar dreary pattern. This invasion of one's mind by ready-made

phrases (*lay the foundations, achieve a radical transformation*) can only be prevented if one is constantly on guard against them, and every such phrase anaesthetizes a portion of one's brain

I said earlier that the decadence of our language is probably curable. Those who deny this would argue, if they produced an argument at all, that language merely reflects existing social conditions, and that we cannot influence its development by any direct tinkering with words and constructions. So far as the general tone or spirit of a language goes, this may be true, but it is not true in detail. Silly words and expressions have often disappeared, not through any evolutionary process but owing to the conscious action of a minority. Two recent examples were *explore every avenue* and *leave no stone unturned*, which were killed by the jeers of a few journalists. There is a long list of flyblown metaphors which could similarly be got rid of if enough people would interest themselves in the job, and it should also be possible to laugh the *not un-*formation out of existence,⁴ to reduce the amount of Latin and Greek in the average sentence, to drive out foreign phrases and strayed scientific words, and, in general, to make pretentiousness unfashionable. But all these are minor points. The defence of the English language implies more than this, and perhaps it is best to start by saying what it does *not* imply.

To begin with, it has nothing to do with archaism, with the salvaging of obsolete words and turns of speech, or with the setting-up of a "standard English" which must never be departed from. On the contrary, it is especially concerned with the scrapping of every word or idiom which has outworn its usefulness. It has nothing to do with correct grammar and syntax, which are of no importance so long as one makes one's meaning clear, or with the avoidance of Americanisms, or with having what is called a "good prose style." On the other hand it is not concerned with fake simplicity and the attempt to make written English colloquial. Nor does it even imply in every case preferring the Saxon word to the Latin one, though it does imply using the fewest and shortest words that will cover one's meaning. What is above all needed is to let the meaning choose the word, and not the other way about. In prose, the worst thing one can do with words is to surrender to them. When you think of a concrete object, you think wordlessly, and then, if you want to describe the thing you have been visualizing, you probably hunt about till you find the exact words that seem to fit it. When you think of something abstract you are more inclined to use words from the start, and unless you make a conscious effort to prevent it, the existing dialect will come rushing in and do the job for you, at the expense of blurring or even changing your meaning. Probably it is better to put off using words as long as possible and get one's meaning as clear as one can through pictures or sensations. Afterwards one can choose—not simply *accept*—the phrases that will best cover the meaning, and then switch round and decide what impression one's words are likely to make on another person. This last effort of the mind cuts out all stale or mixed images, all prefabricated phrases, needless repetitions, and humbug and

⁴ One can cure oneself of the *not un-*formation by memorizing this sentence: *A not unblack dog was chasing a not unsmall rabbit across a not ungreen field.*

vagueness generally. But one can often be in doubt about the effect of a word or a phrase, and one needs rules that one can rely on when instinct fails. I think the following rules will cover most cases.

(1) Never use a metaphor, simile or other figure of speech which you are used to seeing in print.

(ii) Never use a long word where a short one will do.

(iii) If it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out.

(iv) Never use the passive where you can use the active.

(v) Never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word or a jargon word if you can think of an everyday English equivalent.

(vi) Break any of these rules sooner than say anything outright barbarous.

These rules sound elementary, and so they are, but they demand a deep change of attitude in anyone who has grown used to writing in the style now fashionable. One could keep all of them and still write bad English, but one could not write the kind of stuff that I quoted in those five specimens at the beginning of this article.

I have not here been considering the literary use of language, but merely language as an instrument for expressing and not for concealing or preventing thought. Stuart Chase and others have come near to claiming that all abstract words are meaningless, and have used this as a pretext for advocating a kind of political quietism. Since you don't know what Fascism is, how can you struggle against Fascism? One need not swallow such absurdities as this, but one ought to recognize that the present political chaos is connected with the decay of language, and that one can probably bring about some improvement by starting at the verbal end. If you simplify your English, you are freed from the worst follies of orthodoxy. You cannot speak any of the necessary dialects, and when you make a stupid remark its stupidity will be obvious, even to yourself. Political language—and with variations this is true of all political parties, from Conservatives to Anarchists—is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind. One cannot change this all in a moment, but one can at least change one's own habits, and from time to time one can even, if one jeers loudly enough, send some worn-out and useless phrase—some *jackboot*, *Achilles' heel*, *hotbed*, *melting pot*, *acid test*, *veritable inferno* or other lump of verbal refuse—into the dustbin where it belongs.

THE LANGUAGE OF HOLLYWOOD¹

by James T Farrell

James T Farrell, who was born and raised in Chicago, is best known for his powerful novels of Chicago boyhood, especially the *Studs Lonigan* trilogy Farrell is also the author of many short stories, and of a number of critical essays, in which, as the essay below amply proves, he does not hesitate to speak out against matters which conflict with his conception of artistic integrity.

IN AMERICA, a tremendous commercial culture has developed as a kind of substitute for a genuinely popular, a genuinely democratic culture, which would re-create and thus communicate how the mass of the people live, how they feel about working, loving, enjoying, suffering, and dying This culture has become a big business It is capitalized at hundreds of millions of dollars, it returns many millions in annual profits, rent, and interest; and it employs thousands of men and women to whom it pays additional millions as wages and salaries At times, the apologists and propagandists for these cultural industries proudly boast of the "cultural" achievements of these industries on other occasions, however, they assert that these industries produce entertainment, not culture Let us not quibble over words The products of these industries (motion pictures, songs, radio plays and soap operas, cartoons, and so on) re-create images of life they communicate feelings, no matter how banal these may be; they externalize reveries, they fix ideals, they embody and illustrate moral attitudes; they stimulate tastes which in turn create attitudes—in brief, directly and by example, suggestion, innuendo, fable, story, they tell huge masses of people how and what to believe If the performance of such functions be described as something other than cultural, then the plain meaning of words is being inexcusably debased

Usually, the debates concerning these industries—and especially the motion picture industry—are concerned with the problem of commercial versus artistic values Critics of the motion picture industry generally claim that pictures are not artistic enough, their adversaries then reply that pictures are as artistic as they can be made, considering the fact that they must be produced for a profit The claim that the function of pictures is to produce entertainment serves as a justification of the simple and admitted fact that the fundamental purpose of the motion picture studios is to make money Not only in motion picture studios, but also in the offices of publishers and theatrical producers, a very common reason for the rejection of many books and scripts is that these do not promise to return a profit. The role of cash value in contemporary American culture is continuously acknowledged on many sides

All this is common knowledge. It is clear that business considerations play a decisive role in all these fields. And art that we call good, art that we call bad,

¹ From *The League of Frightened Philistines* Copyright, 1945, by Vanguard Press, Inc By permission of Vanguard Press, Inc

art that we call counterfeit—all are sold on the commodity market. But today, owing to basic economic causes, something of the most profound significance has happened in American culture: it has been invaded by finance capital. American commercial culture is owned and operated by finance capital.

The motion picture industry clearly illustrates what has happened. Back in 1931 the late Mr. Benjamin Boles Hampton's book, *A History of The Movies*, was published; it revealed, as of that date, the change in the economic character of the motion picture industry. As is well known, and as Mr. Hampton clearly described, motion pictures were fathered in peep shows and nickelodeons by a motley crowd of carnival workers, hustling immigrants, and others. This novelty quickly interested the public—and it attracted a lot of nickels. In particular, men with a gambling temperament rushed into this new field in order to exploit it before the novelty wore off. However, it quickly became clear that motion pictures were more than a mere and transient carnivalistic attraction. A golden flood of money began pouring in. And it was this, and not the cultural possibilities of the medium, that made it so attractive. The stage of novelty did not last long. A period of intense competition followed, punctuated by litigation over patents. The stage of competition led to the formation of a trust, which would standardize trade, control production, eliminate independent producers, and (as Mr. Hampton indicated) mulct the exhibitors.

A bitter struggle ensued between the trust and independents like Zukor and Laemmle. As is usual in the development of a new form of business under capitalism, this struggle was not carried on merely according to laws of competition and in accordance with the due processes of law provided by the courts. There were instances of violence: sluggers were hired, and they smashed cameras, studio, and other tangible assets of more than one independent. In general, the history of the rise of the motion picture industry parallels that of the rise of many other American industries.

The trust was eventually defeated. It was more or less left to die its own death, a process that was related to its conservatism. One of the independents, Mr. Zukor, then rose until he became, perhaps, the most powerful figure in the new industry. This industry expanded rapidly. Movies became increasingly popular. Expenses, salaries, income, all sky-rocketed. This process continued toward the period of the talkies. The money spent, when one reads of it, seems like an orgy. It was paralleled with the boom time and the expenditures of the parvenu stars of that period. Stories and anecdotes of this are common gossip and parlor talk. One director is supposed to have had two stunning and sensational automobiles of a very expensive make and to have gone about Hollywood riding in one and being serenaded from the other by a hired jazz band.

But this period reveals something very important. The so-called normal and natural processes of capitalist competition become one of the fetters on production and expansion if we look at these from the point of view of society. Much waste, duplication and unnecessary costs of production, which are merely a result of the needs of competition, become inevitable. The uneven and continuing process of growth—that is, expansion—leads to more intense and persistent efforts to eliminate the smaller and more economically weak groups or

individual entrepreneurs In this period Mr Zukor became so powerful in the industry that the federal government even investigated his power At the same time, each new person, each new group that expanded, that attained power and an important place in the industry, quickly became conservative Mr Hampton pointed out that, generally, new capital, and, with it, new figures were needed for each innovation, such as three-reel films, five-reelers and so on This is a very important fact in the history of the motion picture industry It suggests how uneven its expansion has been—uneven in the tempo of the development of pictures as an industry, on one hand, and as an art form, a mass cultural medium, on the other From the very beginning, its attraction was that of the money it promised for those investing in it. At first this money was what many Hollywood persons would now refer to as peanuts, as coffee and doughnuts money Then it was marked by gambling, speculation, the taking of risks At this time there was manipulation, competition, maneuvering, struggles for control This led, further, to the rise of new personalities, the entry of new capital, and to an intensification and extension of the struggle for control, which, in turn, was a struggle for a larger share of profits. This struggle, and the kind of economic expansion it predicated, continuously hampered the technical and artistic development of the motion picture The feverish irregularity that characterized capitalism as a whole was revealed in the expansion of the motion picture industry And there is nothing peculiar in the fact that at each innovation those who were powerful would resist change, arguing that innovations would not be good box office. In other words, the public was getting what it wanted, liked what it was getting, and introducing innovations was too risky But changes were inevitable. The powerfulness of the medium, its potentialities which today are still far from being realized, made innovations inevitable on the technical side, the need for capital to expand made them inevitable on the economic side By and large, the majority of those who rose in the evolution of the motion picture industry, some of them rising only to fall, were not personages who were seriously interested in culture, experienced in it, anxious to develop a new and great artistic medium They were speculators, businessmen, gamblers, risk-takers And the risk-taker of one year soon became the conservative of the next year. In this way, feverishly, irregularly, unevenly, competitively, the motion picture industry expanded until it became a miracle of this century It grew so big that it could no longer be financed from within One by one the movie kings went to the bankers The industry, rising to the billion-dollar stage and becoming one of the most heavily capitalized of American industries, was soon based on huge *blocs* and coagulations of capital it reached the stage where it was to become dominated by finance capital, where it was to be a virtual monopoly. Economic control passed from the hands of individuals; it resided in the hands of a very few individuals in association with the banks Entrepreneurs of yesterday were forced out, or else they became managers instead of owners, that is, in the sense in which once they had been owners This occurred not as a result of dastardly conspiracies but rather as a kind of logical result of the possibilities of this industry and the nature of capitalistic enterprise The volume of business increased enormously, as we know. The investment in capital kept pace with

this increase. The task of financing the industry became such that it was no longer possible for individuals to undertake it. There was nothing to do but call in the banks.

A number of years ago, the French writer, Léon Moussinac, began his book, *Panoramique de Cinema*, by juxtaposing quotations—one from the merchant stating that the film is not merchandise, another from the writer declaring that the film is not art. To the film-maker, it is better to believe, or pretend to believe, that the film be seen as art, to hope that it is art, to gain all the good will he can from prestige that thereby is cast upon films—the glow, the dignity, the respect that is granted to art and culture. To the writer, the character of the work he does, the way he is employed, the continuous manner in which he is blocked from creating as an artist make it indubitably clear to him that the film is merchandise. But the fact is that the film is both merchandise and art. It is merchandise—a commodity—and it is also an artistic production. It may be good, or bad, or it may be a fake and a counterfeit, but it is, nevertheless, an artistic, a cultural production. The contradictions between the film as merchandise and the film as art are central in the American motion picture. These contradictions are not general, formal, abstract. They appear as contradictions concretely, individually, in the making of films, in the give-and-take, in the conflicts among producers, directors, and writers that often occur when a film is being made.² In general, the results constitute some form of compromise generally weighted on the side of merchandise. Often this contradiction is concealed by various apologetic arguments. For instance, Leo C. Rosten, in his book, *Hollywood: The Movie Colony and the Movie Makers*, argues that motion pictures are a young industry, an artistic infant, and that, in consequence, one needs to judge them artistically with a certain, and at least relative, leniency. Further, he defends motion pictures by a formal comparison of the film with the printed word and points out how much rubbish, how much bad art, how much utter verbal junk is written, printed, and sold. He argues that if you make such a comparison, the motion picture industry is not alone to be criticized for its “bad” films, and especially not when it is further understood that it is an infant art, a child of this century. Such arguments, such apologetics teach us nothing, accept them and not only do we understand nothing, but, worse, we misunderstand everything. The reason so much junk is produced on a mass scale is because this is *so profitable*. The contradiction between the film as art and the film as merchandise has existed, and has been revealed at every stage of the development of the motion picture industry. Today, because of the size of the industry, and because of the fact that it is now socially organized under a monopolistic aegis, this contradiction can be more clearly,

² At the present time I am reading a recent book, *Hollywood Hallucination* by Parker Tyler (published by The Creative Age Press, New York, 1944). It is too late for me to discuss Mr. Tyler's volume in this book, but he has some illuminating observations to offer on competitiveness as it is revealed in the context of films. He points out that, because of a lack of unity of artistic conceptions, films reveal an inner competitiveness between those involved in the making of the movies—actors, camera men, costumers, and so on. His observation is just. And he provides many other stimulating insights on the role of the camera, the character of love in films, and other aspects of the motion picture in America. I should urge everyone interested in the problems of the motion picture in this country to read Mr. Tyler's book, for I am confident that it will—despite difficulties in its style—reward him with fresh and suggestive perceptions.

more sharply revealed. With this, the predominating, the almighty, role of the market is nakedly exposed. It is generally admitted that pictures have to make money. They have to make a lot of money. They have to keep making millions of dollars.

At the same time, the motion picture industry has become involved in the whole life of America in innumerable and complicated ways. It touches indirectly on the business life of the nation in a manner that needs to be understood, because this is one of the important specific factors that further focuses and widens this same contradiction. The element of competition in American economy has been heightened, generalized. It is now competition between huge combinations of capital that manufacture and sell different types of commodities. Each of these combinations must jealously guard its product, its good will, prestige, reputation. Indirectly, the motion picture plays an enormous role in causing the sale of various kinds of commodities. It influences styles in dress, in furniture, in the trade and art of the beautician; styles relating to many aspects of the leisure life of, and consumption of goods by, millions of Americans. Trade-marks, business reputations—all these are involved. If a film directly or indirectly endangers a trade-mark, a business reputation, etc., a studio can easily become involved in difficulties—even in expensive litigation—with the producers of the commodity so affected. Not only is the industry owned by the same class that owns all the major means of production of America, but, in addition, it occupies a special place whereby it indirectly affects the increase or decrease of sales of any number of commodities. More broadly, its films touch on the whole religious, political, and social life of America. And as a result of this fact, it is always in danger of becoming involved in difficulties and conflicts. The results of this situation, insofar as they relate to the contradiction between the film as merchandise and the film as art, are incalculable.

The motion picture industry is dominated by a few huge studios, the same is the case in radio. The success of *Reader's Digest* and of the Luce publications reveals the same tendency triumphing in journalism. Some of the consequences of this fact must be noted. It is seemingly paradoxical, but true, that the bigger a corporation producing for the consumer market, the more must it depend on good will. The profits of huge concerns are vitally affected by this fact. Good will, considered as an asset, is highly important. The motion picture industry, which has already revealed in practice how it must expand, demands the widest possible audience. It has something of a mass-production character and a mass audience. And thanks to the stakes involved in the industry, the need for profits and expansion (Hollywood is now on the eve of gaining tremendous control over the world film market), this leads to greater caution. On the whole, there is less willingness to take risks. Capitalism involves risks. But in the stage of finance capital, there is a reduction, a relative standardization, of risk. The greater disinclination to take risks is reflected in the economy of the industry. Its cost of circulation is increased, and because of this the calculations concerning cost of production and concerning profits are affected. Preparations for any "new" venture in films are made long in advance, with an expensive barrage of publicity and fanfare. This fact, in itself, offers eloquent testimony concerning the growing disinclination to take risks.

The star system is also a related and a rather peculiar feature of the social organization of Hollywood. The stars are now virtually walking possibilities of profit. Each major star represents a great asset. As such, he or she must be protected. The protection of stars further demands the reduction of risk. It is financially dangerous to put a star in a role in which he or she may seem unpopular to a considerable section of the audience. This fact has no necessary relationship to the abilities of the stars to play such roles: it is a matter of cold calculation. The element of prestige comes in. In every film in which a star appears, the film must be made according to that star's importance. A star must have expensive directors, expensive writers, and a story that usually is expensive. A star must appear in a film that costs a lot of money. The other actors must not take a film away from the star. This is of vital interest to the star in person, often it is important to the studio. Nowadays, stars, to a certain extent, are "made" by studios. They are trained, coached, treated by beauticians and cosmeticians, nursed and babied along, all at great cost and with the idea in mind that here is an investment that will realize much more than what it costs.

Factors such as these all play their respective roles in (a) the making of profits, (b) in the accumulation of capital and expansion of the market, and, as a consequence of this, (c) in creating the need for so much good will, spread over such a wide human area. Here we see a major reason why the Hollywood studio cannot permit as much freedom in the treatment of a subject as the Broadway producer can, who, in turn, can allow less freedom than the book publisher can. The bigger our cultural industries become, the greater are the restrictions they must impose on the choice and the handling of subject matter. These factors should explain why economic necessities dominate all other considerations. The aims and tastes of the men controlling the industries must be compatible with the economics. One producer may be more sincere, more artistic than another. But all must adjust themselves, all must work within this system.

There can be no doubt that individual taste plays its role in the making of films. What is notable concerning taste is that it is secondary, not decisive. The economic factors more or less map out the boundaries within which individual taste must function, and therefore the role of taste is often reduced to mere detail. Daring, experimentation have a correspondingly similar role. One act of daring experiment and bold honesty may cost a million dollars. Similar risks taken by book publishers can be sustained more easily because the risks are not so great.³ In addition, those who control the big studios are large-scale capitalists themselves, or they are managers for huge capitalist enterprises. And we have already mentioned, in a direct or indirect way, films touch on all the major economic, political, social, and religious aspects of American life and that the industry needs good will. By representing life on the screen the movies affect every vital material and spiritual interest in American life. There are both objective and subjective interests for doing this. The men in control of the industry have the same class interests as do American

³ It must be noted that the book industry is becoming big business and that a stage of combinations has now been reached.

capitalists as a whole. They tend to think and act according to their class interests. This is not a matter of dire conspiratorial ideas, it is an inevitable social phenomenon. It is folly to expect them wilfully to produce, and even to lose money on, art that will endanger their basic class interests. Honest art often threatens these interests. This means there is a double restriction imposed on the character of what is produced in motion pictures. Besides promising a profit, a picture must not seriously threaten the class interests of the owners.

Genuine works of art have something new and individual to convey. They reveal new aspects of life, of human feeling. They make us conscious of what hitherto has been hidden, concealed, not clearly grasped in our own consciousness. To assimilate true works of art is often painful, disturbing, difficult; we must make an effort; we must expand our boundaries of feeling and thinking. Growth and assimilation are almost always painful, disturbing, demanding. For we are then forced to change—to alter the force of habit. It is a truism that in a shoddy culture shoddy art generally gains quicker acceptance than does genuine art. The time required for the assimilation of new, more honest, more revealing pictures would be too long, and large losses would have to be sustained during that period. Again we see the role of the element of risk.

Now and then it may happen that a good picture is produced. This is exceptional, often accidental. Usually, bad pictures are produced, and the explanation is as follows. The aim of the studios is to gain a return on investment, to gain profits, rent, and interest. If returns on investment permit the studios to produce great art, then, and *then only*, will they do so; otherwise the artistic values—the truth values embodied in pictures—are, and will remain, merely secondary. In order to be a businessman in this system you must do what business requires; in order to be an artist you must meet the demands and responsibilities required by art. An artist must be sincere, honest, clear, and he must draw on his own inner life and inner tensions for his work. A businessman must stay in business. Q E D !

My analysis can be extended to encompass the economic relationships that play an important role in other fields of culture as well as in the motion picture industry. I use the latter merely as an illustration. Hollywood is not a cause, it is an effect. But the relative purity with which it reveals tendencies now at work in American culture makes it a most illuminating illustration of what I want to convey. The rise of Hollywood to the realm of culture is a phenomenon somewhat analogous to that of the triumph of machine production during the industrial revolution. In the studios many separate crafts and arts are all linked together, mainly under one roof in one serial process. And this requires a large capital investment. This means that we have social methods of artistic creation and of film production carried on for private profits. But those who contribute artistically to this production—with rare exceptions—do not control it. They lose their independence as artists and craftsmen and become employees. Their economic relationship is thereby changed. Most writers, for instance, become wage-working writers. It is true that their wages are generally fantastically higher than those of factory workers, but that is not the decisive factor here. In the economic sense, most writers have a relationship to their employers similar to that of the factory worker to his boss. Just as the worker sells his

labor power, so does the writer sell his skill and talent. What he then receives is a wage. All control over the means of his production resides in the employer. Thus, the writer suffers from the same kind of alienation as does the factory worker. He is alienated from control over his means of production, and over what he produces.

And there is a singular character to the alienation of the writer. His real means of production consists of his skill, his feelings, the needs that feed his work, his way of seeing life, in other words, his real means of production is his soul. This is what he sells. As a result of his economic relationships the writer may write what he feels and wants to write only if his employer allows him to do so. But the artist does not determine whether he will or will not do this.

Culture, art, is the most powerful means invented by mankind for preserving the consciousness of civilized man. It externalizes and communicates that which is most important in human life—man's inner life. But in Hollywood the writer who plays the role of the artist, who is ostensibly the creator, sells as a commodity his very ability to create. There is a clear-cut difference between freely creating out of inner need and then selling the creation, and selling the very faculty of creating instead of the results of that creation. The writer may thus write out of his inner self only when his own needs, feelings, and attitudes coincide with the demands of his employer. The nature of these demands has already been uncovered in this analysis. Under such conditions free creation is not a conscious act of will, it is merely accidental, coincidental. Such being the case, it is not accidental, however, that so many Hollywood writers, once they become inured to their work, reveal a retrogression in consciousness. When they write they cannot draw fully on their needs and emotions. Much of their writing is reduced to the level of literary carpentering. They are fettered. And the fettered consciousness must retrogress. This is the real situation. Here we see the mechanism that takes those who should be artists and turns them into mere purveyors of entertainment. Let each make what he can of this situation in accordance with his values, his moral outlook, and with what he wants in life for himself and for his fellow man.

It has already been noted, in passing, that there is a huge capital investment in the distribution end of motion pictures. America—the world, in fact—is almost glutted with motion picture theaters, each of which also must return its profit, its rent, its interest. In many instances these are also organized into chains. Taken together, they constitute a huge and voracious mouth forever crying for commodities to be consumed. And they must be fed. They must stay open, they must have customers continually streaming to the box office. The studios must supply them. Halt this flow of commodities, and bankruptcies will follow. This need, more than any other, conditions the production schedules of the studios. Gigantic blocs of capital are involved in the total structure of the industry. Consequently it must find the widest possible market. This means that the largest possible audience is a necessity. Such an audience can be only a most heterogeneous one, encompassing all age, emotional, and mental levels, and it is only such an audience that will permit this industry to continue. There is no time for costly experiments for educating the tastes of

this audience. Staple commodities, based on the lowest common denominator of the mentality and the emotional life of the audience, must be produced. Staple commodities in art, produced in this way, and in order to meet such requirements must mean, in the main, counterfeit art. This is a decisive prerequisite why the masses of the American people really "need" so much Hollywood "entertainment."

Actually, the motion picture industry needs the money of the American masses as much as they need the industry's entertainment. Thus we get an endless barrage of Hollywood publicity and of Hollywood advertising that almost batters the intelligence of the nation into insensibility. Hollywood must do this in order to give the public what Hollywood wants it to want. The audience cannot choose directly. It is not given proper alternatives. Usually it may choose one of various absurd pictures, or none of them at all. When choice is so restricted, it is meaningless to argue that the public really gets what it wants. Also, the contradictions we have observed in the motion picture industry are apparent in American society as a whole. The conditions of American life create alienated and truncated personalities, a fact that has already engaged the attention of more than one generation of sociologists, political scientists, psychologists, judges, social workers, and others. The conditions of earning one's bread in this society create the lonely modern man.

Such conditions help explain the need, sometimes feverish, for an entertainment that so repetitively presents the same reveries, the same daydreams, the same childish fables of success and happiness. So much of the inner life of men is dried up that they tend to become filled with yearnings and to need the consolation of these reveries about people who are happy, healthy, and always successful. Tastes are thus conditioned. Increasingly deprived of proper alternatives from which to choose, the American masses have also become habituated to this taste for the movies. The movies have thereby become a social habit. The kind of culture for profit which we now have would in any case have produced conditions which would aid in the creation of the necessary audience. The two have developed more or less harmoniously. Hence, parallel to the retrogression of consciousness in, say, the Hollywood writer, there is a more widespread and also more pernicious retrogression of consciousness in the motion-picture audience. Social and economic conditions have established the basis for this, the motion picture further enforces it. But such a process cannot continue indefinitely. Eventually a limit must and will be reached. Eventually, there will be a profound revulsion of popular taste. But this will depend not only on the audience being saturated with what it is given; but, more than this, it will depend on fundamental changes that are economic, political, and social in character.

Most motion pictures enervate rather than energize. They distract the masses of the people from becoming more clearly aware of their real needs, their moral, esthetic, and spiritual needs; in other words, the motion pictures of today distract people from the real and most important problems of life. As such, they offer what William James aptly characterized as "a moral holiday." Moral holidays can be refreshing, but when a nation spends so much time on moral holidays, it presents a social problem that must be defined. The gap

between the realities of life in our time and the way these are represented on the screen is a wide one. However, the masses of the people do not lose their real needs merely because these are not fulfilled in motion pictures.

It should now be clear that this commercial culture is a safety valve. Here, I offer—in opposition to the conceptions, the apologetics, the theorizations, of such a culture—a different idea of what a culture should do. It should help to create those states of consciousness, of awareness of oneself, of others, and of the world, which aid in making people better, and in preparing them to make the world better. Hollywood films usually have precisely the opposite effect, most of them make people less aware, or else falsely aware. This, to me, is the sense in which Hollywood films fail to fulfill the real cultural needs of the masses of the people. For really to try to satisfy that need, they must not merely envision the masses of the people as they were in the past and as they are now, one must also envision them as they might be, one must establish as a premise their great potentiality. In other words, one must think in terms of the future as well as of the past and of the present. Such a premise is essential if one's ideal is a culture that is truly human, a culture that is truly free. Here, in essence, is the great ideal of a free, a human, a socialist, culture which was expressed by Friedrich Engels when he spoke of the possibility of mankind's escaping from the kingdom of necessity and entering the kingdom of freedom.

The content of motion pictures is so familiar to us that it need not be analyzed here in great detail. The values generally emphasized are those of rugged individualism. The lessons inculcated are those implying that the world in which we live, and have lived, is the best of all possible worlds. The dominant characteristics embodied in most motion picture heroes are those of the pioneer, plus those characteristics of the present either consistent with the practices, standards, and the mores of bourgeois America, or else in no vital contradiction to them. The past is re-created in accents of weak nostalgia, the present glorified. The future is promised as no different. All history is, in fact, gradually being revised on the screen until it begins to seem like some glamorous fable. Furthermore, pictures often embody within their very context a kind of visual and illustrative argument indicating that the function of the motion picture is entertainment, thus, the reliance placed on entertainment within the picture, which is itself an entertainment. And although heroes and heroines, on occasion, are given roles, for example, of social workers, which tend to suggest an improvement in the content of motion pictures, the change is merely superficial, and the heroes and heroines remain as absurd as before. Besides, the introduction of social workers as heroes is one indication of how Hollywood really meets social problems. It creates the impression that these problems are soluble by the exercise of individual good will, by babying and nursing the poor, and by eliminating struggle and effort on the part of the poor themselves. Social change is thus treated as purely individualistic. Often, and especially in films dealing with juvenile delinquency, the entire social problem treated is depicted as one caused by pure accident. The absurdity of the heroes and heroines in such films is therefore not the major point on which they should be criticized: the major criticism is that they give totally false impressions of the nature of social problems.

What characterizes almost all Hollywood pictures is their inner emptiness. This is compensated for by an outer impressiveness. Such impressiveness usually takes the form of a truly grandiose Belasco realism. Nothing is spared to make the setting, the costumes, and all of the surface details correct. These efforts help to mask the essential emptiness of the characterizations and the absurdities and trivialities of the plots. The houses look like houses, the streets look like streets, the people look and talk as people do, but they are empty of humanity, credibility, and motivation. Needless to say, the disgraceful censorship code is an important factor in predetermining the content of these pictures. But the code does not disturb the profits, nor does it disturb the entertainment value of the films; it merely helps to prevent them from being credible. The code isn't too heavy a burden for the industry to bear. In addition to the impressiveness of the settings, there is a use of the camera which at times seems magical. But of what human import is all this skill, all this effort, all this energy in the production of effects, when the story, the representation of life, is hollow, stupid, banal, childish? Because masses of people see these films, they are called democratic. In addition, there is often a formal democratic character embodied in the pictures. Common speech is often introduced; an ambassador acts like a regular guy named Joe, poor working girls are heroines, and, now and then, they continue to marry rich men; speeches are introduced propagandistically, in which the common man is praised, democracy is cheered, and the masses are flattered with verbiage. The introduction of such democratic emphases is an additional way of masking the real content of the picture, these emphases are pressed into the service merely to glorify the status quo.

Let us grant that, now and then, an unusual picture is produced—one different from those which I have characterized. Let us not forget that *The Informer* was produced.⁴ But can one, or could even ten such films, justify a preponderance of the vastly inferior pictures? One might ask a theologian if a man steals money, and uses some of it to have masses said for the suffering souls in Purgatory, will he thereby redeem his guilt for theft? To argue that because once in a while we get a picture like *The Informer*, Hollywood is justified, is just about the same as to argue that you should be forgiven for theft because you have used some stolen money for the remission of punishment, due to sin, of souls in Purgatory. I leave those who argue in this manner to the theologians, who can explain what is wrong with this kind of argument. And, similarly, the argument that bad pictures are necessary to make money which will permit the use of profits for good pictures is a fallacious one. The reason this happens, when it does, is because of the social organization of the industry, and I have already indicated the structure of that.

Hollywood has not created all this counterfeit culture. It borrowed most of what it has given us from tendencies that antedate the appearance of the motion picture on the cultural scene. In fact, other than in the technical realm,

⁴ I cite *The Informer* rather than a later film for a reason that should be obvious: my overwhelming admiration for this film. It also is an instance, in my opinion, of something more than rare, here, for once, the film was far superior to the novel on which it was based.

Hollywood has invented very little. It has used the powerful inventions of the cinema to repeat most of the cheap stories, the cheap plots, the counterfeits, which have long been printed as stories in commercial magazines. Many of its jokes were familiar even to our fathers, and perhaps our grandparents. Therefore Hollywood is significant mainly because it is a clear cut example of the development of commercial culture in the period of finance capital. Owing to its size, its wealth, its ability to reach such a mass audience, Hollywood has a penetrating influence in the whole field of culture, one which far exceeds that exerted in the commercial culture it inherited.

Its penetrating influence has long been observed in the drama and in the novel. Hollywood simplifications are introduced more and more into the characterizations of current novels, and this is but one example of the penetrating influences of the motion picture. At present, novels are sold for pictures even before they are written. One can guess what most such books will be like, or, if one wishes to know without trusting to a guess, one can read Louis Bromfield. Another penetrating influence of Hollywood on the novel is the stimulation it has given to a kind of hard-boiled realism that imitates all the manners of serious realistic writing but contains none of the inner meaning, the inner protest against evils, the revelation of the social mechanisms and social structures found in serious realism. This tendency is illustrated by such books as *The Postman Always Rings Twice*.⁵ The influence of the film industry is to be observed, also, in an incalculable way. For instance, there is the diversion of talent, the fettering of talent, in brief, the retrogression in consciousness about which I have already commented. A large proportion of the literary talent of America is now diverted to Hollywood and to radio writing. In many instances there is a certain inevitability in this. For, with the rise of these industries, the writers' situation is such that, on the whole, the book market (except in periods of war prosperity) can support relatively fewer of them. By and large, talent flows toward the highest bidder. A writer represents more than an individual talent, he represents so much social labor that had to be performed in order that he may have developed his talent. This social labor has been expended for the development of literary talent in America. Such talent, instead of returning honest work for the social labor that made its development possible, is used up, burned out, in scenario writing. This is a positive and incalculable social loss. And there can be little doubt of the fact that a correlation exists between the success of this commercial culture and the loss of esthetic and moral vigor in so much contemporary writing. This must be the result when talent is fettered and sold as a commodity, when audiences are doped, and when tastes are confused, and even depraved.

The culture of a society ought not to be viewed as a mere ornament, a pastime, a form of entertainment. It is the life, the consciousness, the conscience of that society. When it fails to serve as such, then it moves farther and farther

⁵ An instance that can be cited here is the filming of James M. Cain's book, *Double Indemnity*, where the realism is utterly pointless and unilluminating. To have a suggestion of extra marital sexual relationships, to have a husband murdered, to have the hero die at the end, and to present this story with touches of vernacular dialogue does not produce *meaningful realism*.

away from the real roots of life. Such is precisely and unmistakably the situation in America, where we have this tremendous commercial culture spreading itself like an octopus. And consider how many lives, how much labor power, how much talent, how much of social goods is poured not only into Hollywood but into American commercial culture as a whole. The social cost is fabulous. We are familiar with the news telling us of the financial costs of pictures. A million dollars. More than that. And then we go once again and see what has been produced at such cost. Once again we see a picture so silly that it insults our intelligence. Once again the same old stupid and inept story of boy meets girls, framed, mounted, and glorified until it becomes a monumental absurdity. And so inured are most people to this that they do not even see anything wrong in it.

This entire structure can be metaphorically described as a grandiose Luna Park of capitalism. And if the serious artist enters it, he well may quote these words from Dante: "All hope abandon, ye who enter here."

This is a culture that does not serve men, on the contrary, it makes men its servants. Its highest measure of worth is revealed in little numerals, written in black and red ink on sheets of paper that record profits and losses. Let those who favor this masquerade try to justify it. Far better is it to see it for what it is, and to renounce all the ideals and aims embodied by it. But the writer who does this places himself in that category described by one motion picture executive as "the irresponsible literati." Correct! Irresponsible to this system, responsible to an ideal of trying to show men what life is like now, of seeking to do what one can in the necessary effort of creating in men a consciousness of their problems, their needs, and their future that will help to produce a better society.

EDUCATION¹

by Aldous Huxley

Aldous Leonard Huxley (b. 1894), grandson of the great Victorian scientist Thomas Henry Huxley and brother of the contemporary scientist Julian Huxley, was educated at Eton and Oxford and published his first novel at the age of 27. By the time he had written *Point Counter Point* (1928), Huxley had won the right to stand as one of the "greats" among contemporary novelists. He is equally eminent as an essayist and short story writer, where, as in his novels, the dominant note is one of biting criticism of contemporary civilization. The essay which follows is, admittedly, difficult. But the rewards of careful study are commensurate.

PROFESSIONAL educationists and, along with them, certain psychologists, have been inclined to exaggerate the efficacy of childhood training and the accidents of early life. The Jesuits used to boast that, if they were given the child at a sufficiently early age, they could answer for the man. Similarly the Freudians attribute all men's spiritual ills to their experience during early

¹ From *Ends and Means* by Aldous Huxley. Copyright, 1937, by Aldous Huxley. Reprinted by permission of Harper & Brothers.

childhood. But the Jesuits trained up free thinkers and revolutionaries as well as docile believers. And many psychologists are turning away from the view that all neuroses are due to some crucial experience in infancy. "Treatment in accordance with the trauma theory is often," writes Jung, "extremely harmful to the patient, for he is forced to search in his memory—perhaps over a course of years—for a hypothetical event in his childhood, while things of immediate importance are grossly neglected." The truth is that a man is affected, not only by his past, but also by his present and what he foresees of the future. The conditioning process which takes place during childhood does not completely predetermine the behaviour of the man. To some extent, at any rate, he can be re-conditioned by the circumstances of his adolescent and adult life, to some extent his will is free, and, if he so chooses and knows the right way to set about it, he can re-condition himself. This re-conditioning may be in a desirable direction, it may equally well be in an undesirable one. For example, the conditioning which children now receive in nursery schools is generally excellent. That which they receive in more advanced schools is generally bad. In spite of the Jesuits and Freud, the bad conditioning during adolescence effectively neutralizes the results of good conditioning during childhood. In his "Anatomy of Frustration," Mr. H. G. Wells makes his hero comment upon the distressing difference between "the charm, the alert intelligence, the fearless freedom of the modern child of six or seven and the slouching mental futility of the ordinary youth in his later teens." The first is the product of the nursery school, the second of the elementary and secondary, the preparatory and public school. We educate young children for freedom, intelligence, responsibility and voluntary co-operation, we educate older children for passive acceptance of tradition and for either dominance or subordination. This fact is symptomatic of the uncertainty of purpose which prevails in the Western democracies. The old patriarchal tradition coexists in our minds with a newer and quite incompatible hankering for freedom and democracy. In our enthusiasm for the second, we train up our young children to be free, self governing individuals, having done which, we take fright and, remembering that our society is still hierarchical, still in great measure authoritarian, we devote all our energies to teaching them to be rulers on the one hand and, on the other, acquiescent subordinates.

Here, in passing, it may be remarked that "modern" schools may be too "modern" by half. There is a danger that children may be given more freedom than they can profitably deal with, more responsibility than they desire or know how to take. To give children too much freedom and responsibility is to impose a strain which many of them find distressing and even exhausting. Exceptional cases apart, children like to have security, like to feel the support of a firm framework of moral laws and even of rules of polite conduct. Within such a firmly established framework there is plenty of room for a training in independence, responsibility and co-operation. The important thing is to avoid extremes—the extreme of too much liberty and responsibility on the one hand and, on the other, of too much restriction, above all too much restriction of the wrong sort. For the fixed framework may just as well be a bad code as a good one. Children may derive just as comforting a sense of security from the moral

code, say, of militarism as from that of non-attachment² But the results of an upbringing within a framework of militaristic morality will be quite different from the results of an upbringing in the ethic of non-attachment

Coming back to the world as we know it, we have to ask ourselves an important question Even if we were to prolong the nursery-school type of training—training, that is to say, for self-government and responsible co-operation—if we were to continue it far into adolescence, would we, in the existing world, succeed in making any conspicuous change for the better in society or the individuals composing it? Practical life is the most efficient of all teachers Take adolescents trained for self-government and co-operation and turn them loose into a hierarchical, competitive, success-worshipping society what will happen? Will the effects of the conditioning received in school survive? Probably not Most likely, there will be a period of bewilderment and distress, then, in the majority of cases, re-adjustment to the circumstances of life Which shows, yet once more, that life is a whole and that desirable changes in one department will not produce the results anticipated from them, unless they are accompanied by desirable changes in all other departments

In the preceding paragraph I have suggested that a good education is not that infallible cure of all our ills which some enthusiasts have supposed to be Or rather that it can become such a cure only when it is associated with good conditions in other departments of life As usual it is not a question of simple cause and effect, but of complex interrelationship, of action and reaction Good education will be fully effective only when there are good social conditions and, among individuals, good beliefs and feelings, but social conditions, and the beliefs and feelings of individuals will not be altogether satisfactory until there is good education The problem of reform is the problem of breaking out of a vicious circle and of building up a virtuous one in its place

The time has now come when we must ask ourselves in what precisely a good education consists In the first years and months of infancy education is mainly physiological, the child, to use the language of the kennel, is house-trained In the past this seemed a trivial and unsavoury matter which it was at once unnecessary and indelicate to discuss In the words of Uncle Toby Shandy, one

² Huxley has defined "non-attachment" thus

"It is difficult to find a single word that will adequately describe the ideal man of the free philosophers and the founders of religions 'Non-attached' is perhaps the best The ideal man is the non-attached man Non-attached to his bodily sensations and lusts Non-attached to his craving for power and possessions Non-attached to the objects of these various desires Non-attached to his anger and hatred, non-attached to his exclusive loves Non-attached to wealth, fame, social position Non-attached even to science, art, speculation, philanthropy Yes, non-attached even to these For, like patriotism, in Nurse Cavell's phrase, 'they are not enough' Non-attachment is negative only in name The practice of non attachment entails the practice of all the virtues It entails the practice of charity, for there are no more fatal impediments than anger (even 'righteous indignation') and cold-blooded malice to the identification of the self with the immanent and transcendent more-than-self It entails the practice of courage, for fear is a painful and obsessive identification of the self with its body (Fear is negative sensuality, just as sloth is negative malice) It entails the cultivation of intelligence, for insensitive stupidity is a main root of all the other vices It entails the practice of generosity and disinterestedness, for avarice and the love of possessions constrain their victims to equate themselves with mere things And so on It is unnecessary any further to labour the point, sufficiently obvious to anyone who chooses to think about the matter, that non-attachment imposes upon those who would practice it the adoption of an intensely positive attitude towards the world"

wiped it up and said no more about it. Modern psychologists have discovered that the subject is by no means a trivial one and that, for the infant at least, excretion and the process of house-training are matters of the deepest concern. In this context I need mention only the work of the late Dr Suttie, whose book, "The Origins of Love and Hatred," contains an interesting chapter on the effects of early house training upon the emotional life of human beings. These effects, it would seem, are generally bad, and he gives reasons for supposing that our emotional life would be much more serene if our training in cleanliness had not started so early. Messy children are a nuisance, but if, by allowing them to make their messes, we can guarantee that they shall grow up into gentle, unquarrelsome adults, free from what Suttie calls our "taboo on tenderness," the nuisance will be very bearable.

So much for the physiological education of infancy. We now come to the moral and intellectual education of later childhood. The two are, of course, inseparable, but it will be convenient to consider them one at a time. Let us begin by asking in what a desirable moral education consists. Our aim, let us recall, is to train up human beings for freedom, for justice, for peace. How shall it be done? In his recent book, "Which Way to Peace?" Bertrand Russell has written a significant paragraph on this subject. "Schools," he says, "have very greatly improved during the present century, at any rate in the countries which have remained democratic. In the countries which have military dictatorships, including Russia, there has been a great retrogression during the last ten years, involving a revival of strict discipline, implicit obedience, a ridiculously subservient behaviour towards teachers and passive rather than active methods of acquiring knowledge. All this is rightly held by the governments concerned to be a method of producing a militaristic mentality, at once obedient and domineering, cowardly and brutal. From the practice of the despots, we can see that they agree with the advocates of 'modern' education as regards the connection between discipline in schools and the love of war in later life."

Dr Maria Montessori has developed the same theme in a recent pamphlet. "The child who has never learned to act alone, to direct his own actions, to govern his own will, grows into an adult who is easily led and must always lean upon others. The school child, being continually discouraged and scolded, ends by acquiring that mixture of distrust of his own powers and of fear, which is called shyness and which later, in the grown man, takes the form of discouragement and submissiveness, of incapacity to put up the slightest moral resistance. The obedience which is expected of a child both in the home and in the school—an obedience admitting neither of reason nor of justice—prepares the man to be docile to blind forces. The punishment, so common in schools, which consists in subjecting the culprit to public reprimand and is almost tantamount to the torture of the pillory, fills the soul with a crazy, unreasoning fear of public opinion, even an opinion manifestly unjust and false. In the midst of these adaptations and many others which set up a permanent inferiority complex, is born the spirit of devotion—not to say of idolatry—to the *condottieri*, the leaders." Dr Montessori might have added that the inferiority complex often finds expression in compensatory brutality and cruelty. The traditional

education is a training for life in a hierachical, militaristic society, in which people are abjectly obedient to their superiors and inhuman to their inferiors. Each slave "takes it out of" the slave below.

In the light of these two citations, we are able to understand more clearly why history should have taken the course it actually has taken in recent years. The intensification of militarism and nationalism, the rise of dictatorships, the spread of authoritarian rule at the expense of democratic government—these are phenomena which, like all other events in human history, have a variety of interacting causes. Most conspicuous among these, of course, are the economic and political causes. But these do not stand alone. There are also educational and psychological causes. Among these must be reckoned the fact that, for the last sixty years, all children have been subjected to the strict, authoritarian discipline of state schools. In recent European history, such a thing has never happened before. At certain periods, it is true, and in certain classes of society, the discipline imposed within the family was exceedingly strict. For example, the seventeenth-century Puritan family was governed almost as arbitrarily and as harshly as the family of the Roman farmer or the Japanese Samurai. Samurai and Roman had the same end in view—to train up children in the military virtues, so that they should become good soldiers. The Puritan had a religious end in view, he was imitating Jehovah, he was breaking his children's will because St. Augustine and Calvin had taught him that that will was essentially evil. And yet, though the ends were different, the results of the Puritan's educational system were the same as those attained by the essentially similar system devised by the Roman and the Samurai for quite another end. His children became first-rate soldiers; and when they were not called upon to go to war, they exhibited their militaristic qualities in the field of commerce and industry, becoming (as Tawney and Weber have shown) the first and almost the most ruthless of the capitalists. The Puritans, I repeat, were strict disciplinarians within the family. But not all the population was composed of Puritans. When most children were brought up within the family, a great many experienced only kindness and consideration. In other cases spasmodic brutality alternated with spasmodic affection. In yet others, no doubt, parents would have liked to impose a strict Roman or Hebrew discipline, but were too lazy to do so systematically, so that the child came through almost unscathed. It is a highly significant fact that the members of the upper classes, who, as children had been under tutors or sent to school, were always the actively militaristic element in mediaeval and early modern society. The common people were seldom spontaneously bellicose. War and imperialistic brigandage were the preoccupation of their masters—men who had enjoyed the privilege, during boyhood, of being bullied by some sharp-tongued, hard-hitting pedagogue.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, secondary education for the middle classes was enormously extended; in the second half, primary education was made universally compulsory. For the first time, *all* children were subjected to strict, systematic, unremitting discipline—the kind of discipline that "produces a militaristic mentality, at once obedient and domineering." The members of the middle and upper classes still undergo, in most countries, a longer period

of education than do the poor. This is why the members of the middle and upper classes are still, on the whole, more bellicose than the members of the working class (Such organizations as the Peace Pledge Union have more adherents among the poor than among the rich.) Even the poor, however, are now given several years of authoritarian discipline. The decline of democracy has coincided exactly with the rise to manhood and political power of the second generation of the compulsorily educated proletariat. This is no fortuitous coincidence. By 1920 all the Europeans who had escaped compulsory primary education were either dead or impotently old. The masses had gone through, first, six or seven years of drilling in school, then, in most countries, anything from one to three years of conscription, and finally the four years of the war. Enough military discipline to make them "at once obedient and domineering." The most actively domineering ones climbed to the top, the rest obeyed and were given, as a reward, the privilege of bullying those beneath them in the new political hierarchies.

The early educational reformers believed that universal primary and, if possible, secondary education would free the world from its chains and make it "safe for democracy." If it has not done so—if on the contrary, it has merely prepared the world for dictatorship and universal war—the reason is extremely simple. You cannot reach a given historical objective by walking in the opposite direction. If your goal is liberty and democracy, then you must teach people the arts of being free and of governing themselves. If you teach them instead the arts of bullying and passive obedience, then you will not achieve the liberty and democracy at which you are aiming. Good ends cannot be achieved by inappropriate means. The truth is infinitely obvious. Nevertheless we refuse to act upon it. That is why we find ourselves in our present predicament.

The two types of education—education for freedom and responsibility, education for bullying and subordination—coexist in the democracies of the West, where nursery schools belong to the first and most other schools to the second type. In Fascist countries, not even nursery schools may belong to the first type. Significantly enough, the Montessori Society of Germany was dissolved by the political police in 1935, and in July 1936 Mussolini's Minister of Education decreed the cessation of all official Montessori activities in Italy. In the days of Lenin, Russian education was based, at every stage, upon principles essentially similar to those enunciated by Dr. Montessori. In the manifestos and decrees published shortly after Lenin's seizure of power one may read such phrases as these: "Utilization of a system of marks for estimating the knowledge and conduct of the pupil is abolished. Distribution of medals and insignia is abolished. The old form of discipline which corrupts the entire life of the school and the untrammelled development of the personality of the child, cannot be maintained in the schools of labour. The progress of labour itself develops this internal discipline without which collective and rational work is unimaginable. All punishment in school is forbidden. All examinations are abolished. The wearing of school uniform is abolished."

On September 4, 1935, a Decree on Academic Reform was issued by the Stalin Government. This decree contained, among others, the following orders: "In-

struct a commission to elaborate a draft of a ruling for every type of school. The ruling must have a categorical and absolutely obligatory character for pupils as well as for teachers. This ruling must be the fundamental document which strictly establishes the regime of studies and the basis for order in the school. Underlying the ruling on the conduct of pupils is to be placed a strict and conscientious application of discipline. In the personal record there will be entered for the entire duration of his studies the marks of the pupil for every quarter, his prizes and his punishments. A special apparatus of Communist Youth organizers is to be installed for the surveillance of the pupil inside and outside of school. They are to watch over the morality and the state of mind of the pupils. Establish a single form of dress for the pupils of the primary, semi-secondary and secondary schools, this uniform to be introduced, to begin with, in 1936 in the schools of Moscow."

This decree was followed by another, issued in February 1937, ordering that the existing organizations for giving military training to young children (from eight years old upwards) should be strengthened and extended. Such systems of infantile conscription already exist in the Fascist countries and, if the threat of war persists, will doubtless soon be imposed upon the democracies of the West.

Any change for the worse in educational methods means a change for the worse in the mentality of millions of human beings during their whole lifetime. Early conditioning, as I have pointed out, does not irrevocably and completely determine adult behaviour, but it does unquestionably make it difficult for individuals to think, feel and act otherwise than as they have been taught to do in childhood. Where social conditions are in harmony with the prevailing system of education, the task of getting outside the circle of early conditioning may be almost insuperably difficult. Stalin has made it practically certain that, for the next thirty or forty years, the prevailing Russian philosophy of life shall be essentially militaristic.

Discipline is not the only instrument of character training. One of the major psychological discoveries of modern times was the discovery that the play, not only of small children, but (even more significantly) of adolescents and adults could be turned to educational purposes. Partly by accident, partly by subtle and profound design, English educators of the second half of the nineteenth century evolved the idea of organizing sport for the purpose of training the character of their pupils. At Rugby, during Tom Brown's schooldays, there were no organized games. Dr. Arnold was too whole-heartedly a low-church social reformer, too serious-minded a student of Old Testament history, to pay much attention to a matter seemingly so trivial as his boys' amusements. A generation later, cricket and football was compulsory in every English Public School, and organized sport was being used more and more consciously as a means of shaping the character of the English gentleman.

Like every other instrument that man has invented, sport can be used either for good or for evil purposes. Used well, it can teach endurance and courage, a sense of fair play and a respect for rules, co-ordinated effort and the subordination of personal interests to those of the group. Used badly, it can en-

courage personal vanity and group vanity, greedy desire for victory and hatred for rivals, an intolerant *esprit de corps* and contempt for people who are beyond a certain arbitrarily selected pale. In either case sport inculcates responsible co-operation, but when it is used badly the co-operation is for undesirable ends and the result upon the individual character is an increase of attachment, when it is used well, the character is modified in the direction of non-attachment. Sport can be either a preparation for war or, in some measure, a substitute for war, a trainer either of potential war-mongers or of potential peace-lovers, an educative influence forming either militarists or men who will be ready and able to apply the principles of pacifism in every activity of life. It is for us to choose which part the organized amusements of children and adults shall play. In the dictatorial countries the choice has been made, consciously and without compromise. Sport there is definitely a preparation for war—doubly a preparation. It is used, first of all, to prepare children for the term of military slavery which they will have to serve when they come of age—to train them in habits of endurance, courage and co-ordinated effort, and to cultivate that *esprit de corps*, that group-vanity and group-pride which are the very foundations of the character of a good soldier. In the second place, it is used as an instrument of nationalistic propaganda. Football matches with teams belonging to foreign countries are treated as matters of national prestige, victory is hailed as a triumph over an enemy, a sign of racial or national superiority, a defeat is put down to foul play and treated almost as a *casus belli*. Optimistic theorists count sport as a bond between nations. In the present state of nationalistic feeling it is only another cause of international misunderstanding. The battles waged on the football field and the race-track are merely preliminaries to, and even contributory causes of, more serious contests. In a world that has no common religion or philosophy of life, but where every national group practises its own private idolatry, international football matches and athletic contests can do almost nothing but harm.

The choice of the dictators has been, as I have said, definite and uncompromising. They have decided that sport shall be used above all as a preparation for war. In the democratic countries we are, as usual, of two minds. The idea of using sport solely as a preparation for war seems to us shocking, at the same time we cannot bring ourselves to use it, consciously or consistently, as an instrument for training active peace-lovers. To some extent we still use sport as a training for militarists. "The battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton", and it was on these and a score or two other school playgrounds that the Indian Empire was conquered and held down. The Amritsar massacre is a genuine, hall-marked product of the prefectorial system and compulsory cricket. "His captain's hand on his shoulder smote 'Play up, and play the game'." The game was played in that high-walled Jalianwallabagh to the tune of I forget how many hundreds of dead and wounded. But if India was conquered and is now held down on the playing fields of the English Public Schools, it is also administered there, and administered with a considerable degree of justice and incorruptibility. It is even in process (very gradually and reluctantly, it is true) of being liberated on those same fields. In the half-

democracy of modern England, sport is not used solely as a preparation for war and the fostering of group-vanity and group-pride, it is also used for teaching boys to behave with genuine decency—in other words, as a training in non-attachment. In the world as it is at present we cannot afford to be of two minds. Either we must make use of sport (and in general the whole educational system) as a device for training up non-attached, non-militaristic men and women; or else, under the urgent threat of war, we must make up our minds to out-Prussianize the Nazis and, on the playing fields of Eton and the other schools, prepare for the winning of future Waterloos. The first alternative involves great risk, but may lead, not only the English, but the whole world beside, out of the valley of destruction in which the human race is now precariously living. The second alternative can lead only to the worsening of international relations and ultimately to general catastrophe. Unhappily, it is towards the second alternative that the rulers of England now seem to be inclining.

I have spoken hitherto as though there were only one type of sound education. But human beings are of several different types. This being so, is it not a mistake to prescribe one system of character-training? Should there not be several systems? The answer to these questions is at once yes and no. It is not a mistake to prescribe only one system of character-training, because it is always in men's power to move away from the territories in which psychological divisions exist, because it is always possible for them, if they so desire, to find in the common world of action the site for a broad, substantial bridge connecting even the most completely incommensurable of psychological universes. Character-training through self-government, through responsible co-operation, through the voluntarily accepted discipline of games, is something which goes on in that common world of action, in which alone it is possible for individuals of different psychological types to come together. To prescribe one fundamental technique of character-training is therefore no mistake. On the other hand it would obviously be foolish not to adapt the one fundamental technique to the different types of individual. To discuss the nature of these variations would take a long time and, since the matter is not one of fundamental importance, I will proceed at once to a consideration of my next topic, which is education as instruction.

In most of the civilized countries of the West primary education has been universal and compulsory for sixty years and more. Secondary and higher education have also been made available—less freely in England than in America, in France and Italy than in Germany, but everywhere to very considerable numbers of young people and adults. When we compare the high hopes entertained by the early advocates of universal education with the results actually achieved after two generations of intensive and extensive teaching, we cannot fail to be somewhat discouraged. Millions of children have passed thousands of millions of hours under schoolroom discipline, reading the Bible, listening to pi-jaws—and the peoples of the world are preparing for mutual slaughter more busily and more scientifically than ever before, humanitarianism is visibly declining; the idolatrous worship of strong men is on the increase; international politics are conducted with a degree of brutal cynicism unknown

since the days of Pope Alexander VI and Cesare Borgia. From moral we pass to intellectual education. The best that has been thought and said has been bawled by millions of pedagogues, millions of times, into millions of little ears—and the yellow press, the tabloids, the *grands journaux d'information* circulate by scores of millions every morning and evening of the year, each month the pulp magazines offer to millions of readers their quota of true confessions, film fun, spicy detective stories, hot mysteries, all day long in the movie palaces millions of feet of imbecile and morally squalid films are unrolled before a succession of audiences, from a thousand transmitting stations streams of music (mostly bad) and political propaganda (mostly false and malevolent) are poured out, for eighteen hours out of the twenty four, into the contaminated ether. Instruments of marvellous ingenuity and power on the one hand, and, on the other, ways of using those instruments which are either idiotic, or criminal, or both together. Such are the moral and intellectual fruits of our system of education. It is time that something was done to change the nature of the tree that bears these fruits.

In earlier paragraphs I have indicated what must be done if we wish to breed up a race of non-attached, actively peace-loving men and women. We now have to consider the best methods for fostering intelligence and imparting knowledge.

At the present time education as-instruction assumes one of two forms—academic (or liberal) education and technical education. Academic education is supposed to do two things for those who are subjected to it, it is supposed, first of all, to be a gymnastic, by means of which they will be able to develop all the faculties of their minds, from the power of logical analysis to that of esthetic appreciation, and, in the second place, it is supposed to provide young people with a framework of historical, logical and physico-chemico-biological relationships, within which any particular piece of information acquired in later life may find its proper and significant place. Technical education, on the other hand, aims merely at practical results and is supposed to give young people proficiency in some particular trade or profession.

Recent investigations (for example, that which was carried out a few years ago by the Scottish education authorities) have given statistical form and content to the conclusions which personal experience had long since forced upon the practising teacher—namely, that academic education (although grudgingly dispensed, at any rate in its secondary and higher forms) is given to large numbers of boys and girls who are unable to derive much profit from it. To some extent, no doubt, this failure to profit by academic education is due to the defects of our teaching system or to the shortcomings of individual teachers (Teaching is an art, not a science, bad artists have always greatly outnumbered the good.) However, when all allowances have been made, it seems perfectly clear that very many young people—probably an absolute majority of them—are congenitally incapable of receiving what academic education has to offer. At the same time it is no less clear that many of those who are able to stay the course of an academic education emerge from the ordeal either as parrots, gabbling remembered formulas which they do not really understand, or, if they *do* understand, as specialists, knowing everything about one subject and taking

no interest in anything else; or, finally, as intellectuals, theoretically knowledgeable about everything, but hopelessly inept in the affairs of ordinary life. Something analogous happens to the pupils of technical schools. They come out into the world, highly expert in their particular job, but knowing very little about anything else and having no integrating principle in terms of which they can arrange and give significance to such knowledge as they may subsequently acquire.

Can these defects in our educational system be remedied? I think they can. We must begin by the frankest, the most objectively scientific acceptance of the fact that human beings belong to different types. Congenitally, the cerebrotonic is not such a "good mixer" as the viscerotonic, who may be so deeply absorbed in his rich emotional life as to be unwilling to concern himself with the intellectual pursuits at which the cerebrotonic excels. Again, the somatonic is predestined by his psycho-physical make-up to be more interested in, and more proficient at, muscular than intellectual or emotional activity. Or take particular talents, these, it would seem, are often given and can be developed only at the expense of other talents. (For example, good mathematicians are often musical, but very rarely have any appreciation of the visual arts.) Then there is the problem—still to some extent the subject of controversy—of the degrees of intelligence. Intelligence tests have been improved in recent years, but they will become fully significant only when the results of the tests are given in their proper context. The affirmation that A's intelligence quotient is higher than B's tells us, as it stands, very little, if it is to be really significant, we must know a number of other facts—whether, for example, A and B belong to the same psycho-physical type or to different types, whether they approximate to the pure type or are greatly mixed. And so on. The intelligence test, then, is an imperfect instrument, but, imperfect as it is, it has done something to give statistical form and content to the universally held conviction that some people are stupider than others. Having accepted the fact that human beings belong to different types, are gifted with different talents and have different degrees of intelligence, we must attempt to give each the education best calculated to develop his or her capacities to their utmost. In a rather crude and inefficient way, this is what we are attempting to do even now. Clever boys pass examinations and are given scholarships that take them from primary to secondary schools and from secondary schools to universities. Handy boys are apprenticed or sent to technical schools to learn some skilled trade. And so on. A rough and ready system—a good deal rougher than readier. Its defects are twofold. First, the methods employed for choosing the candidates for the different kinds of education are far from satisfactory. And, second, the kinds of education to which successful candidates are subjected are even less satisfactory than the methods of choice.

About the examination system it is unnecessary for me to speak at length. Most educators agree in theory that a single crucial examination does not provide the best test of a person's ability. Many of them have even passed from theory to practice and are giving up the single, crucial examination in favour of a series of periodical tests of knowledge and intelligence and the reports, over a span of years, of teachers and inspectors. Supplemented by an expert

grading in terms of psycho-physical type, the second method of choosing candidates for the various kinds of education should prove quite satisfactory

We must now consider the various kinds of education to which (according to their type) young people should be subjected

We have seen that both the existing kinds of education, technical as well as academic or liberal, are unsatisfactory. The problem before us is this: to amend them in such a way that technical education shall become more liberal, and academic education, a more adequate preparation for everyday life in a society which is to be changed for the better.

A liberal education is supposed to provide, first, a gymnastic, second, a frame of reference. In other words, it is supposed to be simultaneously a device for fostering intelligence and the source of a principle of integration.

In academic education as we know it today, the principle of integration is mainly scientific and historical. We can put the matter in another way and say that the frame of reference is logical and factual, and that the facts with which the logical intellect is trained to deal are mainly facts about the material universe and about humanity as a part of the material universe. (History, as taught in schools and colleges, is of two kinds: non-scientific history, which is merely a branch of nationalistic propaganda, and scientific history, which is almost a branch of physics. Scientific historians treat facts about human beings as though they were facts about the material universe, they write about men as though men were gas molecules that could be dealt with most effectively in terms of the law of averages.)

The man who goes through a course of our academic education may come out a parrot. In this case we say that the education has failed of its purpose. Or he may come out as an efficient specialist. In this case we say that the education has been only partially successful. Or else (and when this happens we think that education has worked very successfully) he may emerge as an intellectual—that is to say, a person who has learned to establish relations between the different elements of his sum of knowledge, one who possesses a coherent system of relationships into which he can fit all such new items of information as he may pick up in the course of his life. We can define this system of relationships in terms of what is known and say (what has been said above) that it is predominantly scientific and historical, logical and factual. We can also define it in terms of the knower and say that it is predominantly cognitive, not affective or conative.

The parrot repeats, but does not understand, the narrow specialist understands, but understands only his specialty, the accomplished intellectual understands the relations subsiding between many sectors of apprehended reality, but does so only theoretically. He knows, but is fired by no positive desire to act upon his knowledge and has received no training in such action. We see, then, that even the man whom we are accustomed to regard as the successful product of our academic education is an unsatisfactory person.

To the pupils of our technical schools, no principle of integration is given. Their teachers provide them with no frame of reference, no coherent system of relationships. They are taught a job and no more—equipped with a technique and just so much of the theory lying behind that particular technique as will

make them efficient workers. They emerge into the world wholly unprepared to deal in an intelligent way with the facts of experience. The web of understanding which, in the mind of the accomplished intellectual, connects the atom with the spiral nebula and both with this morning's breakfast, the music of Bach, the pottery of neolithic China, what you will—this network of cognitive relationships is all but completely lacking. Bits of information exist for the technically educated man, not as parts of one vast continuum, but in isolation, like so many stars dotted about in a gulf of black incomprehension. Or if there is a continuum, the chances are that it will be composed of ideas borrowed from a bronze-age theology, from anecdotal history, from philosophy as taught in the newspaper and the films. The successful product of technical education is as unsatisfactory as the successful product of academic education.

What is the remedy for this state of things? Some people have suggested that technical education should be liberalized, like academic education, in terms of general knowledge—above all, knowledge of scientific facts and theories. They have suggested that technicians should be given a principle of integration fundamentally similar to that employed by the intellectual—a principle of integration which the knower feels to be mainly cognitive and which, defined in terms of the known, is mainly scientific.

There are two good reasons for thinking that this suggestion is unsound. First of all, the great majority of those who undergo technical education are incapable of using this principle of integration and, being incapable of using it, are therefore uninterested in it. Even among those who go through a course of our academic education, only a few emerge as accomplished intellectuals. Most of them emerge as parrots or specialists. (A good proportion of these return to the schools as teachers and proceed to train up other parrots and specialists.) Minds that delight in what may be called large-scale knowledge—knowledge, that is to say, of the relations subsisting between things and events widely separated in space or time and seemingly irrelevant one to another—are rare. Academic education is supposed to impart such knowledge and to infect men and women with the desire to possess it; but in actual fact few are so infected and few go out into the world possessing it. To provide people with a principle of integration which it is almost certain that they will not wish or be able to use is mere foolishness.

Nor is this all. We have seen that even the accomplished intellectual is a far from satisfactory person. His involvement with the world is only cognitive, not affective nor conative. Moreover, the framework into which he fits his experience is the framework of the natural sciences and of history treated as though it too were one of the natural sciences. He is concerned mainly with the material universe and with humanity as a part of the material universe. He is not concerned with humanity as human, as potentially more than human. One of the results of this preoccupation with the material universe is that, on the rare occasions when the intellectual does become affectively and conatively involved with the world of human reality, he tends to exhibit a curious impatience which easily degenerates into ruthlessness. Thinking of human beings "scientifically," as parts of the material universe, he doesn't see why they shouldn't be handled

as other parts of the material universe are handled—dumped here, like coal or sand, made to flow there, like water, “liquidated” (the Russians preserve the vocabulary of the intellectuals who prepared and made their revolution), like so much ice over a fire

Technical education is without a principle of integration, academic education makes use of a principle that integrates only on the cognitive plane, only in terms of a natural science preoccupied with the laws of the material universe. What is needed is another principle of integration—a principle which the technicians and the unsuccessful academics will be congenitally capable of using, a principle that will co-ordinate the scattered fragments, the island universes of specialized or merely professional knowledge, a principle that will supplement the scientific-historical frame of reference at present used by intellectuals, that will help, perhaps, to transform them from mere spectators of the human scene into intelligent participants

What should be the nature of this new principle of integration? The answer seems clear enough, at any rate in its main outlines: it should be psychological and ethical. Within the new frame of reference, co-ordination of knowledge and experience would be made in human terms, the network of significant relations would be, not material, but psychological, not indifferent to values, but moral, not merely cognitive, but also affective and conative

A concrete example will make my meaning clear. Here is a young man in process of being trained in engineering and practical mechanics. Under the existing dispensation, the chances are that he will come out into the world profoundly ignorant of everything but his specialty. His education will have failed to equip him with any principle by means of which he can integrate his future experiences and accessions of knowledge. Educationists trained up in the existing academic schools believe that it will be possible to liberalize his education by somehow leading him from the practical and the particular to general scientific theory. Give him, they say, a mastery of general scientific theory, and he will have a principle by means of which he will be able to integrate all his knowledge and experience. In the abstract this scheme seems good enough, but in practice it just doesn't work. For the probability is that the young man will not be interested in general scientific theory, that he will have neither the wish nor the ability to integrate his experience and his knowledge in terms of the laws of the material universe. As a matter of brute historical fact, the great advances in scientific theory have very seldom been made by skilled artisans. The practical man who knows his job is interested in the job and perhaps in just as much of the theory underlying his practice as will enable him to do the job better. Very rarely does he develop into the scientist, and few indeed are the fruitful generalizations which we owe to such men. In general, the advances in scientific theory have been made by men of another type—men who did not concern themselves professionally with technical problems, but who merely looked at them as outsiders and then proceeded to generalize and rationalize what was merely particular and empirical. Between the practical man and the man who is interested in scientific theories of the universe at large a gulf is fixed. They belong to different types. The attempt to liberalize technical edu-

cation by means of the principle which intellectuals use to integrate their experience is foredoomed to failure

Man is the only subject in which, whatever their type or the degree of their ability, all men are interested. The future engineer may be unable and unwilling to go far in the study of the laws of the material universe. There will be no difficulty, however, in getting him to take an interest in human affairs. It is, therefore, in terms of human affairs that his technical education can best be liberalized. There would be no difficulty in integrating any technical subject into a comprehensive scheme of relations within our human, ethico-psychological framework. The technical course would be accompanied by a course explaining the effects, as measured in terms of good and evil, well-being and suffering, of the technique in question. Our hypothetical young man would learn, not only to be a mechanician, but also to understand the ways in which machinery affects, has affected and is likely to affect, the lives of men and women. He could begin with the effects of machinery upon the individual—such effects as are discussed, for example, in Stuart Chase's essay in contemporary history, "Men and Machines," or in the Hammonds' account of the industrial revolution. Next, the broader social effects could be studied—the transformation of technically backward countries, the destruction of old-established trades, the creation of new industries. In these and similar ways a complete network of relationships could be created in the student's mind, a network binding together things seemingly as irrelevant to one another as down-draught carburettors and the education of children in New Mexico, aluminum alloys and the slaughter of Abyssinians and Spaniards, viscose fibres and the ruin of peasants in Japan and the Rhone Valley. A similar frame of psychological, sociological and ethical reference could be used, not indeed to replace, but to supplement the frame of scientific reference used in academic education. The technician would integrate his experience and special knowledge in human terms only, the intellectual would integrate in terms of the non-human, material universe as well as of the human world. Both educations would thus be made genuinely liberal—liberal in the academic sense, because even the technical student would be given a wide range of knowledge and a principle of integration; liberal also in the political sense, because it would be hard indeed to receive such an education and not emerge with a wider range of sympathy, a keener desire to act.

It would be impossible, in the space at my disposal, to give an account of all the hopeful experiments in education undertaken in recent years. The most I can do is to mention a few of the more outstanding essays in the liberalization of our existing system. Of Dr. Montessori's work for young children and of the reasons why we have hesitated to apply her methods to the teaching of adolescents, I have already spoken. It is true, as Mr. Russell points out in the passage I have quoted above, that, in the democratic countries, our hesitation has not amounted to a complete refusal to apply the Montessori principles. But the applications have been partial and have almost always been made in an intrinsically un-Montessorian context. Consider, by way of example, the English Public Schools. Within a fixed framework, their pupils are in a measure self-governing. Unhappily the rules, customs and loyalties which constitute the

supporting framework are the rules, customs and loyalties of a hierarchical, competitive, imperialistic society. Such training in self-government and self-teaching as the young people receive serves merely to make them more efficient and enterprising members of this intrinsically undesirable society. Something similar takes place in an army preparing for war in modern conditions. The old-fashioned drill, by means of which soldiers were conditioned to overcome fear, cultivate rage and blindly obey their superiors, is an inadequate training for men who are to fight with modern weapons. The mechanization of war has made necessary a new kind of training. The soldier has to be educated to co-operate with small groups of his fellows, to make quick decisions, to use his judgment. Tennyson's advice to soldiers was good enough in the eighteen-fifties. But for the crew of a tank or a motorized machine-gun unit, doing and dying is not sufficient, they are also required to reason why. Within the framework of the rules, customs, and loyalties of militarism, soldiers are taught to use their intelligence and act upon their own initiative. To this extent Montessori principles have been adopted even in the army. But under the present dispensation, the partially self-governing and self-teaching soldier is not being trained for freedom and justice any more than is his younger brother, the partially self-governing and self-teaching schoolboy.

A particularly hopeful attempt to enlarge the scope and humanize the character of academic education was made, in the years immediately following the War [World War I], by Dr A. E. Morgan (subsequently director of the Tennessee Valley Authority) at Antioch College. Under the educational dispensation developed by Dr Morgan, periods of study, as has been noted earlier, are alternated with periods of labour in the factory, the office, the farm—even the prison and the asylum. Three months of theory are supplemented and illustrated by three months of practice. The intellectual is taught to make use of a frame of human reference as well as a frame of natural scientific and historical reference—and taught, what is more, in the most effective of all possible ways, in terms of physical contact with actual samples of human reality. His principle of integration is not merely cognitive, thanks to an educational system which compels him to take part in many different kinds of practical work, it is also conative and effective.⁸

A system of education somewhat similar to that developed at Antioch is used in the schools attached to factories in Soviet Russia. All such systems are but the modern extensions and systematization of the traditional Hebrew system of education. "He who does not teach his son a trade," so it is written in the Talmud, "virtually teaches him to steal." St Paul was not only a scholar, he was also a tent maker. The ideal of the scholar and the gentleman originated among the slave-owning philosophers of Athens and Ionia. It is one of the ironies of history that the modern world should have taken over from the Hebrews all that was worst in their cultural heritage—their ferocious bronze-age literature, their paeans in praise of war, their tales of divinely inspired slaughter and sanctified treachery, their primitive belief in a personal, despotic and pas-

⁸ Note in this context the use of 'occupational therapy' in mental disease. There are certain forms of mental disease for which hand work is the best cure.

sionately unscrupulous God, their low, Samuel-Smilesian notion that virtue deserves a reward in cash and social position. It is, I repeat, one of the ironies of history that we should have taken over all this and have rejected the admirably sensible rabbinical tradition of an all-round education, at once academic and technical, in favour of the narrow and immoral ideal of the Hellenic slavers.

To perfect the Antioch system, it would probably be necessary to extend its provisions from the student to the teaching body. The fossil professor is a familiar object to those who have rambled through university towns. The onset of petrification might be delayed, if teachers were given periodically, not merely sabbatical, but also non-sabbatical years—years during which they would have to work at some job entirely unconnected with the academic world.

A good deal of attention has been paid in recent years to the education of the emotions through the arts. In many schools and colleges, music, "dramatics," poetry and the visual arts are used more or less systematically as a device for widening consciousness and imparting to the flow of emotion a desirable direction.

Music, for example, may be used to teach a number of valuable lessons. When they listen to a piece of good music, people of limited ability are given the opportunity of actually experiencing the thought-and-feeling processes of a man of outstanding intellectual power and exceptional insight. (This applies, of course, to all the arts, but there is reason to believe that more people are able to participate, and participate more intensely, in the experience of the music-maker than in that of the painter, say, or the architect, or perhaps even the imaginative writer.) The finest works of art are precious, among other reasons, because they make it possible for us to know, if only imperfectly and for a little while, what it actually feels like to think subtly and feel nobly.

Music also serves to teach a very valuable kind of emotional co-operation. Singing and playing instruments together, people learn, not only to perform complicated actions requiring great muscular skill and the mind's entire attention, but also to feel in harmony, to be united in a shared emotion.

Coming next to literature, we see that the acting of plays can also be used for the purposes of emotional training. By playing the part of a character who is either very like or very unlike himself, a person can be made aware of his own nature and of his relations with others. To some extent, it may be, the watching of plays can serve the same purpose. We must, however, be on our guard against attributing to drama educative virtues which, at any rate in its present form, it certainly does not possess. In relation to the modern play or film it is sheer nonsense to talk about the Aristotelian catharsis. A Greek tragedy was much more than a play; it was also a cathedra service, it was also one of the ceremonies of the national religion. The performance was an illustration of the scriptures, an exposition of theology. Modern dramas, even the best of them, are none of these things. They are, essentially, secular. People go to them, not in order to be reminded of their philosophy of life, not to establish some kind of communion with their gods, but merely to "get a kick," merely to titillate their feelings . . .

The chief educative virtue of literature consists in its power to provide its readers with examples which they can follow. To some extent, all human beings are, in Jules de Gaultier's phrase "bovaristic"—that is to say they have a capacity for seeing themselves as they are not, for playing a part other than that which heredity and circumstances seem to have assigned to them. The heroine of Flaubert's novel came to a tragic end, but there is no reason why all bovaristic behaviour should turn out so disastrously as it did in the case of the original Mme Bovary. There is good bovarism as well as bad bovarism. Educationists have always known this fact and, from time immemorial, have tried to mould the character of their pupils by providing them with literary models to be imitated in real life. Such models may be mythical, historical or fictional. Hercules and Thor are instances of the first kind of heroic model, Plutarch's statesmen and soldiers and the saints of the Christian calendar are instances of the historical model, Hamlet and Werther, Julien Sorel and Alyosha Karamazov, Juliet and Lady Chatterley are instances of fictional heroes and heroines upon whom, at one time or another, great numbers of human beings have patterned themselves. In all cases, whether mythical, historical or fictional, some measure of literary art is necessary, if the story is told inadequately, the pupil will remain unimpressed, will feel no desire to imitate the model set before him. Hence the importance, even in ethical instruction, of good art. Moreover, every generation must produce its stock of imitable models, described in terms of 'an art which is not merely good, but also up-to-date. Old good art can never have the same appeal as new good art, for most people, indeed, it cannot rival with new bad art. More people bovarize themselves upon the models provided by the pulp magazines than upon those provided by Shakespeare. There are two reasons for this. The first is that, though crude and incompetent, the pulp magazines deal with contemporary characters, while Shakespeare, though in comparable in his power to "put things across," is more than three hundred years out of date, the second must be sought in the fact that the moral effort required to imitate Shakespeare's heroes, and even his villains, is far greater than that which is needed to imitate the personages of pulp-magazine fiction. Pulp-magazine stories are transcriptions of the commonest and easiest day-dreams—dreams of sexual titillation, of financial success, of luxury, of social recognition. Shakespeare's personages are on a larger scale. They embody the hardly realizable, extravagant day dreams of paranoiacs—of men who dream of being kings and heroes, lovers uniquely faithful, proud saviours of their country uniquely disinterested and uniquely adored, villains uniquely vengeful and malignant. In this context it is worth remarking that except for the Duke in *Measure for Measure*—and he is scarcely a human being, only a symbol—Shakespeare gives no picture of a non attached human being. Indeed good pictures of non-attached men and women are singularly rare in the world's literature. The good people in plays and novels are rarely complete, fully adult personages. They are either a bit deficient, like Dostoevsky's epileptic Prince Mishkin, like Gorki's virtuous but imbecile hermit, or Dickens's charitable but utterly infantile Cheerybles, or else, like Pickwick, they are made lovable by being represented as eccentric to the point of absurdity, we can tolerate their

superiority in virtue because we feel superior in common sense. Finally and most frequently they are shown as being good without being intelligent, like Colonel Newcome, or the peasant who talks to Tolstoy's Pierre in prison. These individuals are personally good within an abominably bad system which they do not even question. Men who are profoundly good without being intelligent have often attained to sainthood. The Curé d'Ars and St. Peter Claver are cases in point. One must admire such men for the, by ordinary standards, super-human qualities of character which they display. At the same time, it is, I think, necessary to admit that they are not complete, not fully adult. Perfect non-attachment demands of those who aspire to it, not only compassion and charity, but also the intelligence that perceives the general implications of particular acts, that sees the individual being within the system of social and cosmic relations of which he is but a part. In this respect, it seems to me, Buddhism shows itself decidedly superior to Christianity. In the Buddhist ethic stupidity, or unawareness, ranks as one of the principal sins. At the same time people are warned that they must take their share of responsibility for the social order in which they find themselves. One of the branches of the Eightfold Path is said to be "right means of livelihood." The Buddhist is expected to refrain from engaging in such socially harmful occupations as soldiering, or the manufacture of arms and intoxicating drugs. Christian moralists made and still make the enormous mistake of not insisting upon right means of livelihood. The church allows people to believe that they can be good Christians and yet draw dividends from armament factories, can be good Christians and yet imperil the well-being of their fellows by speculating in stocks and shares, can be good Christians and yet be imperialists, yet participate in war. All that is required of the good Christian is chastity and a modicum of charity in immediate personal relations. An intelligent understanding and appraisal of the long-range consequences of acts is not insisted upon by Christian moralists.⁴ One of the results of this doctrinal inadequacy is that there is a singular lack, as well in imaginative as in biographical literature, of intelligently virtuous, adultly non-attached personages, upon whom young people may model their behaviour. This is a deplorable state of things. Literary example is a powerful instrument for the moulding of character. But most of our literary examples, as we have seen, are mere idealizations of the average sensual man. Of the more heroic characters the majority are just grandiosely paranoiac; the others are good, but good incompletely and without intelligence; are virtuous within a bad system which they fail to see the need of changing; combine a measure of non-attachment in personal matters with loyalty to some creed, such as fascism or communism or nationalism, that entails, if acted upon, the commission of every kind of crime. There is a great need for literary artists as the educators of a new type of human being. Unfortunately most literary artists are human beings of the old type. They have been educated in such a way that, even when they are revolutionaries, they think in terms of the values accepted by the essentially

⁴ In the Middle Ages the Church made a serious effort to moralize economic activity—the attempt, as Tawney has shown in "Religion and the Rise of Capitalism," was abandoned after the Reformation.

militaristic society of which they are members *Quis custodiet custodes?* Who will educate the educators? The answer, of course, is painfully simple nobody but the educators themselves. Our human world is composed of an endless series of vicious circles, from which it is possible to escape only by an act, or rather a succession of acts, of intelligently directed will.

Dictatorial governments regard free intelligence as their worst enemy. In this they are probably perfectly right. Tyranny cannot exist unless there is passive obedience on the part of the tyrannized. But passive obedience to authority is not compatible with the free exercise of intelligence. It is for this reason that all tyrants try so hard either to suppress intelligence altogether or to compel it to exercise itself only within certain prescribed limits and along certain channels carved out for it in advance. Hence the systematic use which all dictators make of the instruments of propaganda.

In societies more primitive than our own, societies in which a traditional religion and a traditional code of morality are unquestioningly accepted, there is no need of deliberate propaganda. People behave in the traditional way "by instinct," and never stop dispassionately to consider what they are doing, feeling, thinking. Even in societies like ours there is an astonishing amount of unquestioning acceptance of customary behaviour patterns, thought patterns, feeling patterns. A very large number even of intelligent men and women use their intelligence only for the purpose of making a good job of what is traditionally regarded as their duty; they seldom or never use it to pass judgment upon the duty itself. Hence the dismal spectacle of scientists and technicians using all their powers to help their country's rulers to commit mass murder with increased efficiency and indiscriminateness, of scholars and men of letters prostituting their talents for the purpose of bolstering national prestige with learned lies and fascinating rhetoric. Even in the democratic countries, intelligence is generally used only to create (in Thoreau's words) improved means to unimproved ends—to ends that are dictated by socially sanctioned prejudice and the lowest passions. Such, I repeat, is generally the case, but fortunately not always. Where intelligence is permitted to exercise itself freely, there will always be a few people prepared to use their wits for the purpose of judging traditional ends as well as for devising effective means to those ends. It is thanks to such individuals that the very idea of desirable change is able to come into existence.

For the dictator such questioning free intelligences are exceedingly dangerous, for it is essential, if he is to preserve his position, that the socially sanctioned prejudices should not be questioned and that men should use their wits solely for the purpose of finding more effective means to achieve those ends which are compatible with dictatorship. Hence the persecution of daring individuals, the muzzling of the press, and the systematic attempt by means of propaganda to create a public opinion favourable to tyranny. In the dictatorial countries the individual is subjected to propaganda, as to military training, almost from infancy. All his education is propagandist and, when he leaves school, he is exposed to the influence of a controlled press, a controlled cinema, a controlled literature, a controlled radio. Within a few years controlled television and possibly a controlled teletype service functioning in every home will have to

be added to this list of weapons in the dictator's armoury. Nor is this all, it is likely enough that pharmacology will be called in as an ally of applied psychology. There are drugs, such as a mixture of scopolamine and chloral, that enormously increase the individual's suggestibility. It is more than likely that dictators will soon be making use of such substances in order to heighten their subjects' loyalty and blind faith.

In the democratic countries, intelligence is still free to ask whatever questions it chooses. This freedom, it is almost certain, will not survive another war. Educationists should therefore do all they can, while there is yet time, to build up in the minds of their charges a habit of resistance to suggestion. If such resistance is not built up, the men and women of the next generation will be at the mercy of any skilful propagandist who contrives to seize the instruments of information and persuasion. Resistance to suggestion can be built up in two ways. First, children can be taught to rely on their own internal resources and not to depend on incessant stimulation from without. This is doubly important. Reliance on external stimulation is bad for the character. Moreover such stimulation is the stuff with which propagandists bait their hooks, the jam in which dictators conceal their ideological pills. An individual who relies on external stimulations thereby exposes himself to the full force of whatever propaganda is being made in his neighbourhood. For a majority of people in the West, purposeless reading, purposeless listening-in, purposeless looking at films have become addictions, psychological equivalents of alcoholism and morphinism. Things have come to such a pitch that there are many millions of men and women who suffer real distress if they are cut off for a few days or even a few hours from newspapers, radio music, moving pictures. Like the addict to a drug, they have to indulge their vice, not because the indulgence gives them any active pleasure, but because, unless they indulge, they feel painfully subnormal and incomplete. Without papers, films and wireless they live a diminished existence; they are fully themselves only when bathing in sports news and murder trials, in radio music and talk, in the vicarious terrors, triumphs and eroticisms of the films. Even by intelligent people, it is now taken for granted that such psychological addictions are inevitable and even desirable, that there is nothing to be alarmed at in the fact that the majority of civilized men and women are now incapable of living on their own spiritual resources, but have become abjectly dependent on incessant stimulation from without. Recently, for example, I read a little book in which an eminent American biologist gives his view about the Future. Science, he prophesies, will enormously increase human happiness and intelligence—will do so, among other ways, by providing people with micro-cinematographs which they can slip on like spectacles whenever they are bored. Science will also, no doubt, be able very soon to supply us with micro-pocket-flasks and micro-hypodermic-syringes, micro-alcohol, micro-cigarettes and micro-cocaine. Long live science!

How can children be taught to rely upon their own spiritual resources and resist the temptation to become reading-addicts, hearing-addicts, seeing-addicts? First of all, they can be taught how to entertain themselves—by making things, by playing musical instruments, by purposeful study, by scientific observation,

by the practice of some art, and so on. But such education of the hand and the intellect is not enough. Psychology has its Gresham's Law, its bad money drives out the good. Most people tend to perform the actions that require least effort, to think the thoughts that are easiest, to feel the emotions that are most vulgarly commonplace, to give rein to the desires that are most nearly animal. And they will tend to do this even if they possess the knowledge and skill to do otherwise. Along with the necessary knowledge and skill must be given the will to use them, even under the pressure of incessant temptation to take the line of least resistance and become an addict to psychological drugs. Most people will not wish to resist these temptations unless they have a coherent philosophy of life, which makes it reasonable and right for them to do so, and unless they know some technique by means of which they can be sure of giving practical effect to their good intentions.

*Video meliora proboque,
Deteriora sequor*⁵

To see and approve the better is useless, if one then regularly proceeds to pursue the worse. What is the philosophy of life that should be taught? And what are the proper techniques by means of which people can persuade themselves to act upon their convictions?

So much for the first method of heightening resistance to suggestion. It will be seen that this consists essentially in teaching young people to dispense with the agreeable stimulations offered by the newspapers, wireless and films—stimulations which serve, as I have said, to bait the propagandist's hooks. A boycott of sports-news and murder stories, of jazz and variety, of film love, film thrills and film luxury, is simultaneously a boycott of political, economic and ethical propaganda. Hence the vital importance of teaching as many young people as possible how to amuse themselves and at the same time inducing them to wish to amuse themselves.

The other method of heightening resistance to suggestion is purely intellectual and consists in training young people to subject the devices of the propagandists to critical analysis. The first thing that educators must do is to analyse the words currently used in newspapers, on platforms, by preachers and broadcasters. What, for example, does the word "nation" mean? To what extent are speakers and writers justified in talking of a nation as a person? Who precisely is the "she," of whom people speak when discussing a nation's foreign politics? ("Britain is an imperial power. She must defend her Empire.") In what sense can a nation be described as having a will or national interests? Are these interests and will the interests and will of the entire population? or of a majority? or of a ruling caste and a few professional politicians? In what way, if any, does "the state" differ from Messrs. Smith, Brown, Jones and the other gentlemen who happen for the moment to have secured political power? Given the character of Brown, Jones, etc., why should "the state" be regarded as an institution worthy of almost religious respect? Where does national honour

⁵ 'I see and I approve the better course, I follow the worse'

reside? Why would the loss of Hong Kong, for example, be a mortal blow to Britain's honour, while its seizure after a war in which Britain attempted to force the Chinese to buy opium was in no way a stain upon the same honour? And so on "Nation" is only one of several dozens of rich and resonant words which are ordinarily accepted without a thought, but which it is essential, if we would think clearly, that we should subject to the most searching analysis.

It is no less important that children should be taught to examine all personifications, all metaphors and all abstractions occurring in the articles they read, the speeches they listen to. They must learn to translate these empty words into terms of concrete contemporary reality. When an Asquith says, "we shall not sheathe the sword which we have not lightly drawn," when an Archbishop of Canterbury affirms "that force, the sword, is the instrument of God for the protection of the people," they must learn to translate this noble verbiage into the language of the present. Swords have played no appreciable part in war for the last two hundred years. In 1914 Asquith's sword was high explosives and shrapnel, machine guns, battleships, submarines. In 1936 the "instrument of God for the protection of the people" was all the armaments existing in 1914 plus tanks, plus aeroplanes, plus thermite, plus phosgene, plus arsenic smokes, plus Lewisite and many other instruments of murder, more efficient and more indiscriminate than anything known in the past. It is frequently in the interest of the rulers of a country to disguise the true facts of contemporary reality under thick veils of misleading verbiage. It is the business of educators to teach their pupils to translate these picturesque or empty phrases into the language of contemporary reality.

Verbal propaganda is not the only nor even, perhaps, the most effective form of organized suggestion. There is another kind, specially favoured by modern commercial propagandists and used from time immemorial by such non-commercial advertisers as kings, priests and soldiers. This consists in arbitrarily associating the idea which is to be suggested with some object, some image, some sound, some literary description, that is either intrinsically delightful or in some way suggestive of pleasantness. For example, the advertiser of soap will show a picture of a young, voluptuous female, about to take a bath among plumbing fixtures of pink marble and chromium. The advertiser of cigarettes will show people dining in what the lady novelists describe as "faultless evening dress," or reproduce the photograph of some well-known film star, millionairess, or titled lady. The advertiser of whisky will illustrate a group of handsome men lounging in luscious upholstery and being waited upon by the most obsequious of family retainers. The aim in all such cases is the same—to associate the idea of the goods offered for sale with ideas which the public already regards as delightful, such as the idea of erotic pleasure, the idea of personal charm, the idea of wealth and social superiority. In other cases the idea of the merchandise is associated with intrinsically delightful landscapes, with funny or pathetic children, with flowers or pet animals, with scenes of family life. In countries where radio advertising is permitted, commercial propagandists find it worth their while to associate the idea of their cars, their cigarettes, their breakfast cereal or what not with performances by comedians or concerts of

vocal or orchestral music. This last is the type of association favoured by kings, soldiers and priests. From the beginning of history, rulers have "put themselves across" by associating the idea of their government with magnificent pageantry, with impressive architecture, with every kind of rare, splendid and beautiful thing. It is the same with the soldier. Military music intoxicates like wine and a military review is, in its own way, no less inebriating. (The author of the *Song of Songs* goes so far as to establish an emotional equivalence between a sexually desirable person and an army with banners.) Priests make use of an essentially similar type of propaganda. Systematically, they have always associated the idea of their god and of themselves as the god's representatives with intrinsically delightful works of art of every kind, from music and architecture to dressmaking, with symbols of wealth and power, with organized joy and organized terror and mystery, even, in many religions, with organized cruelty and lust.

Propaganda of this kind generally proves irresistible. Cigarettes are bought in ever increasing quantities, ever vaster and more loyal crowds flock to military reviews, to royal and dictatorial pageants, to the splendid ceremonials of nationalistic idolatry. Once again resistance to suggestion can be heightened only by sharpening the critical faculty of those concerned. The art of dissociating ideas should have a place in every curriculum. Young people must be trained to consider the problems of government, international politics, religion and the like in isolation from the pleasant images, with which a particular solution of these problems has been associated, more or less deliberately, by those whose interest it is to make the public think, feel and judge in a certain way. The training might begin with a consideration of popular advertising. Children could be shown that there is no necessity and organic connection between the pretty girl in her expensive dressing-gown and the merits of the tooth paste she is intended to advertise. This lesson might be brought home by practical demonstrations. Chocolates could be wrapped in a paper adorned with realistic pictures of scorpions, and castor oil and quinine distributed from containers in the form of Sealyham terriers or Shirley Temple. Having mastered the art of dissociation in the field of commercial advertising, our young people could be trained to apply the same critical methods to the equally arbitrary and even more dangerously misleading associations which exist in the fields of politics and religion. They would be shown that it is possible for a man to get the fullest esthetic enjoyment out of a military or religious pageant without allowing that enjoyment in any way to influence his judgment regarding the value of war as a political instrument or the truth and moral usefulness of the religion in question. They would be taught to consider monarchy and dictatorship on their own political and ethical merits, not on the choreographical merits of processions and court ceremonials, not on the architectural merits of palaces, not on the rhetorical merits of speeches, not on the organizational merits of a certain kind of technical efficiency. And so on.

That the art of dissociation will ever be taught in schools under direct state control is, of course, almost infinitely improbable. Those who use the power of the state always desire to preserve a certain given order of things. They there-

fore always try to persuade or compel their subjects to accept, as right and reasonable, certain solutions (hardly ever the best) of the outstanding problems of politics and economics. Hence the insistence, on the part of governments, that the ideas embodying these solutions shall always be associated with intrinsically pleasing images. The art of dissociation can be taught only by individuals who are not under direct government control. This is one of the reasons why it is so important that state-aided education shall, wherever possible, be supplemented by education in the hands of private persons. Some of this privately organized education will certainly be bad, some will probably exist solely for reasons of snobbery. But a few of the private educators will be genuinely experimental and intelligent, a few will use their blessed independence to make the desirable change which state-controlled teachers are not allowed to initiate.

THE LUXURY OF INTEGRITY¹

By Stuart Chase

Stuart Chase (born in Somersworth, New Hampshire, 1886), after he was graduated from Harvard in 1910, became a partner in the Harvey S. Chase Company (a firm of public accountants), and served with them until 1917. Since then he has investigated under the Federal Trade Commission the meat industry and the packers, as well as other industries. In a laudable manner he is pointing out the good and the bad in present-day products and methods of production. He is one of the outstanding constructive critics of modern business.

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ONCE upon a time I worked for the United States Government. In the course of my official duties I was directed to make a rather particular and painstaking analysis of the profits of certain mammoth corporations. The welcome of the mammoth corporations, needless to say, was not warm.

One of my subordinates in the investigation was continually getting into trouble. He was a likeable fellow, a good routine worker, always ready to do odd jobs after hours. I took a personal interest in his troubles; I loaned him money, patched up a quarrel between himself and his wife, gave him books to read, tried to help him slide a little more easily along his white-collar groove. That he was grateful, that he really respected and liked me, I do not doubt to this day. Yet here is what he did after two years of friendly association:

He ransacked my private files and turned over any evidence showing liberal political tendencies on my part to the aforesaid mammoth corporations. He came into my office late one evening—fortified by a drink or two—and said, "Chase, I'm a Bolshevik. I'm fed up with the whole damned capitalist system. I'd like to help kick it over. I'd like to join something. You know about these

¹ From *The Nemesis of American Business*. By permission of the author and The Macmillan Company, publishers.

socialists and I W W 's I see you reading pieces about them Tell me all about it, shoot the works, tell me what I ought to join I'll pay the dues "

At first I thought the poor boy had really come to the end of his rope, that this was a last desperate gesture before the white collar routine doomed him altogether Then I began to realize that he was lying, that he was hoping to pick up some information from me which could be twisted in such a way as to discredit my work in the investigation (Not that I had much to offer) I went on with my columns of figures, and gradually his receptive attitude waned "Aren't you going to tell me anything?" he whined "No," I said "And I guess you had better go "

He took his hat and went and, as the door closed behind him, I knew that the man I had befriended could not afford the luxury of integrity Some one was paying him to act as a spy His government salary was little enough, while his wife had definite ideas about her proper position in the world He had been bought (I doubt if the vendee got his money's worth) I was bitter at the time, but today that bitterness is tinged with pity He is only one among many Americans who increasingly cannot afford the luxury of integrity His case is more dramatic perhaps, but essentially on all fours with the plight of nearly every man you meet upon the street They, like him, have betrayed their personal sense of decency and honor because forces are loose, too powerful for ordinary clay to oppose

In the custody and handling of transferable property Americans grow ever more dependable, but in that more subtle definition of integrity which bids a man play fair with his own soul, never, it seems to me, has the Republic sunk to lower levels As the machine breeds increased specialization, increased technological unemployment, as mergers spread their threat to white-collar jobs, the case grows worse The greater one's economic insecurity, the greater the tendency to sacrifice spiritual independence and to chant in dreary unison the simple credo of the yes man It is my contention that for uncounted millions of Americans the price of integrity is more than they can afford Nor should I be surprised if the ratio of growth in the process bore more than a casual relationship to the growth in urban as against rural population

Even as the interlocking technical structure of industry makes for an increasing tenuousness in the condition of the live nerves of transport, power, and communication which provide city dwellers with physical necessities, so the psychological condition of the inhabitants of Megalopolis grows more precarious Living in a crowd, it has become highly important to *fit in* There are fewer square holes for square pegs, to make the close-locked wheels of industry turn, an employee must be as round as a ball-bearing This smooth and oily quality that eases the friction of the highly organized machine is in a way more vital than professional training, ability, or energy One man may be genial and tactful by nature, while nine have to achieve tact and geniality by effort For the milk of human kindness the most obvious substitute is soft soap

II

The yes man had no place in the pioneer tradition The pioneer had his faults and virtues The faults included a prodigal wastefulness, a disposition to befoul one nest and move on to the next, a certain laxity in respect to the social

amenities. The virtues included a sturdy independence, and the compulsion, if need arose, to look every man level in the eye and tell him to go to hell. Reasonably secure in the fruits of his own labor and thus economically independent, he could express in any company his honest opinions as forcibly as he pleased, and, subject to the local *mores*—the base line from which all human behavior must stem—he could translate his beliefs into tangible performance. He could vote for candidates he respected, agitate for reforms he believed in, refuse to do jobs which galled his sense of decency or craftsmanship, come and go as the seasons dictated, but not at the bidding of any overlord. His opinions may have been frequently deplorable, his acts often crude and peremptory, but he was free to be true to the best that he knew—and so, by the Eternal! a man, and not a rubber stamp.

His was not the gentleman's code of honor, but one less punctilious, more democratic, more human, and probably in the long run superior. The gentleman had a divided responsibility; he must not only seek to be true to himself, but he must maintain a wide margin between himself and the herd. The pioneer was of the herd and proud of it, and could thus devote himself singlemindedly to the one responsibility. Compare, let us say, a thousand assorted pioneers of the Berkshire Hills in Massachusetts in 1800, with a thousand assorted New York bank clerks in 1930, and, unless the monumental history of the Berkshires which I have lately ingested is a tissue of falsehoods, you will find about as many no men in the former area, as you will find yes men in the latter. The ratios, I should guess, have reversed themselves in one hundred and thirty years. With the no men will lie character, courage, individuality, saltiness. With the yes men will lie radios, automobiles, bath-tubs, and a complete paralysis of the will to act in accordance with their fundamental inclinations. That Berkshire babies were compounded of better stuff than bank-clerk babies, I absolutely deny. Opinion for opinion and belief for belief, it is probable that the New York thousand have a more civilized outlook, a better stock of human values in their heads, than had the Pittsfield thousand. But for the latter integrity was cheap and abundant, while for the former it is very dear. Like all luxuries, it can be bought, but few dare to pay the price. For the price may be the job, and the job means life or death.

If you object that most men and women are without a sense of honor, then call it early conditioning. From the cultural mulch in which we are reared—compounded of the influence of parents, school, church, folkways, literature—our personalities are formed. We take and we reject, we give lip service to much that our hearts do not subscribe to. But certain principles we make our own. Integrity consists in living up to them. I am not here concerned with those broad principles of morality which now as in the days of David and Solomon move more or less *in vacuo*, but rather with a far more concrete and personal standard. I ask only if your behavior squares with your conception of what honest behavior should be, and care not twopence how lofty or low the original conception. A stream can rise no higher than its source.

The point is not that we traduce our honor to climb up—such behavior has affected a fixed fraction of the race since the Cro-Magnon man—but that most of us today are forced to traduce our honor to cling to what we've got; aye, to

exist at all. It would be easier if life were simpler, but the perspiring super-salesmen take excellent care that life shall never simplify. No more have we won to a standard of living held respectable by our fellows, than presto! a new and higher standard confronts us—two cars per-family, college-for-all the children, annual models in furniture, country club memberships—and this we must attain on pain of social disapprobation. There is no level, but a steadily ascending curve which tolerates little margin of saving, no dependable economic security. While jobs grow more uncertain, desires, built in by the high-pressure fraternity, grow more clamorous. In this compound pressure pump, the way-faring man finds it almost impossible to be true to his innermost nature.

III

Consider initially the simple and widespread practice of yesing the boss—to use the current phrase. The man with the strong jaw sits at the head of the conference table, his confreres gathered around him, each with pad and sharpened pencil. From the strong jaw comes the announcement of a certain policy—perhaps a wage reduction, perhaps a wage increase, perhaps a universal system of time clocks. He looks about him. The policy may be utterly repugnant to his staff, but, “I check with you, chief,” “check,” “check,” “check,”—the little threadbare word runs round the table. Not always, to be sure, but frequently enough to make our case. On any given business day, the number of such checks and yeses must be astronomical in magnitude. It would be interesting to chart their yearly curve superimposed upon a curve exhibiting the growth of mergers.

The psychological effect of continually pretending to agree with that with which one does not agree is disastrous. An internal conflict is set up which tends to polarize work into neutrality. Initiative, concentration, straight thinking evaporate, leaving only purposeless activity. Probably less damage is suffered by the individual who knows in advance the fire he must pass through and deliberately makes up his mind to prostitute his talents. He is tragic enough, but a less unhappy exhibit on the whole than the hordes who fool themselves into thinking that they are doing honest work, unaware of the conflict beneath the surface. In business offices there is usually one of the former to ten of the latter.

Next let us consider that very considerable fraction of the population engaged in making commodities which the maker knows to be evil, shoddy, adulterated, and a rank imposition upon the public. He may whistle cheerfully enough, say, “What the hell?” and believe that the plight of the public troubles him hardly at all. But deep down inside the continued outrage to his instinct of workmanship troubles him considerably. It is contrary to the whole history of mankind to waste good hours of labor on worthless or evil products.

Not long ago I delivered an address on the Russian economic experiment. I told of the method whereby an oil pool was developed as a single geological unit without competitive drilling and its appalling waste. After the lecture an engineer came up to me. He seemed deeply stured. “My God,” he said, “do you suppose I could get a job in Russia? I’m sick of drilling wells in competitive fields, watching most of my work run to waste. I know how a pool

ought to be organized, but with all this offset drilling we aren't allowed to organize it" In his excitement, it was only too plain that there was a tragic breach between his standard of workmanship and the work that he had to do.

Of the ten million factory employees in America today, the two million in the building trades, and the two hundred thousand engineers, how many can hold up their hands and say that they take pride in what they make? Many of them, of course, are operating processes so specialized that they have no idea of what they are helping to produce, but the majority are probably still aware of it. The show of hands is not impressive. When one considers the weighted silks, the bulk of the patent-medicine traffic, jerky-built bungalows on Garden Crest developments (I have talked to the carpenters working on them), shoes that dissolve into their essential paper, rickety furniture brave in varnish—commodity after commodity, process after process, the reason is sufficiently clear.

Leaving the factory, we come out upon the market-place. Here we find a group almost as numerous as the producers, pushing goods which they know to be inferior or useless. A salesman has no canons of workmanship to be outraged, but if he has to sell an inferior product, and knows it, his case is not much happier than that of his fellow in the shop. He has to lie blatantly, loudly and continually. He has to tell the world that bad products are good. He becomes used to it, of course, he may even take a little pride in his sales charts. But that does not mean that somewhere behind the table-pounding, door-bell ringing, and copy-writing there is not a *man*, who, in the darkness of the night after an ill-advised dinner, does not sometimes wish to God he could earn his living doing something he believed in.

We now come to one of the saddest exhibits on the list. There may be more deplorable human behavior than the violation of hospitality practiced daily by uncounted thousands of house-to-house canvassers, but I am at a loss to know what it is. Since time out of mind it has been the kindly human custom to welcome the stranger at the gate. The reaction is doubtless tied up with a dim fear that, some day, you too may be a-wandering and need rest and welcome. On this ancient custom the up-and-coming canvasser is forced to trade. In company schools he is deliberately coached in ways and means for capitalizing the instinct of hospitality, for gaining admission, a chair, a respectful audience—only to outrage it in the end.

Here, to quote an actual case, is a woman canvasser who announces herself as a member of the local school committee—only she is not a member of the school committee but recites a name which induces the lady of the house to think that she is. The "committee," it appears, recommends a certain book to aid the children's education. The visitor mentions the children by name, their ages, their bright looks. The lady of the house is pleased. The cost of the book is five dollars. Her face falls. She cannot afford five dollars. Haltingly, ashamedly, she confesses it. The canvasser turns on her with the sure-fire line, "Mrs. Green, don't you care enough about the future of your children to pay five dollars?" What mother can resist such an accusation? Company statistics coldly demonstrate that seven times out of ten it consummates a sale. Yet what troubles me is not the plight of Mrs. Green with a worthless volume on the parlor table, but the utter abandonment of self-respect on the part of the lady

canvasser Had she hit Mrs Green with a blackjack as she stood defenseless and welcoming on her own doorstep, the loss of personal integrity could hardly have been greater Hospitality is a particularly precious custom in a civilization which drifts so rapidly to cities and apartment houses By ruthless violation the canvassers have all but killed it

Not content with the assault in person, enterprising vendors of commodities, particularly of certain types of securities, are lately using the telephone to effect a sale In one day at my office I was called to the telephone five times by total strangers giving a Wall Street address, succulently outlining the profit to be made by an immediate purchase of American Consolidated International Class B To the first man I tried to be polite, to the second I was curt, for the other three I simply hung up the receiver But the day was ruined by a feeling of baffled rage, partly at my assailants, and partly at myself for having to crush the habit of years of being courteous to those who had taken the trouble to call me on the telephone

Yet canvassers, like the rest of us, must eat I remember when I lived in Chicago a neighbor in the woolen business dropped in upon us one evening We welcomed him into the living room and were somewhat surprised to find that he had a large box under his arm His face was set He opened the box and disclosed some excellent woolen sweaters and hose, male and female We admired everything—the admiration of friends Would we buy some? We were thunderstruck, but kept our faces straight, and bought Obviously, our guest had struck a vein of bad luck and been reduced to capitalizing his acquaintanceships Always afterwards he avoided us Our friendship had come to an end How many friends did that hard winter cost him?

IV

This brings us to that growing army of "publicity men" and women who sometimes do not—but frequently do—give the best of their years and their vitality to pushing causes in which they have no faith, and to booming personalities whom privately they designate as stuffed shirts There are people among them whose shingle is out for any propaganda however worthless, and for any publicity seeker however shameless As in the textile industry, there is over-production in the publicity game, and a client is a client How many nationalists at heart are writing purple copy for peace societies, how many socialists at heart lauding the benign activities of the power companies, how many intelligent judges of human character stirring the tom-toms for men they despise?

In this connection, the testimonial writer demands a note If he—or she—really likes the product, well and good In many cases he or she has never tried it A thumping lie is exchanged for a bag of gold The flight of Lindbergh from America to France was a fine and stirring achievement But even finer to my mind is the fact that he has never sold his honor to a manufacturer

Consider the activities of the ghost writer According to the rules of this flourishing new profession, he writes the speech for somebody else to deliver or the article or book for somebody else to sign In certain cases he endeavors to put into words the somebody else's general thoughts, but in other cases the

somebody else has no general thoughts, and it is his function to supply them. Thus he foists on the public an entirely false picture of his client, he puts brains—his brains—into a man of straw; and far worse, he abuses the craft of letters which the Lord has given him by writing words in which he places no credence while neatly dodging responsibility by placing his client's name above them. As a writer I have frequently been invited to "ghost" under such circumstances and once or twice have been sorely tempted by the size of the fee. Fortunately my economic circumstances at the time were such that I could afford to refuse. Heaven knows when, unfortunately, they will be such that I cannot afford to refuse. But when I fall, I shall know that my position as a responsible professional man—voicing his own thoughts and signing his own stuff—has come to an end.

I know a writer of newspaper editorials. Himself a liberal, he has to grind out a thousand words daily which reflect the ultra-conservative policy of the paper for which he works. He keeps a record like a batting average chart, noting the editorials to which he can subscribe against those to which he cannot. When he last showed it to me he was scoring about 150—say one out of seven.

Pot boiling is no new phenomenon. Many of the Humanists' greatest heroes were known to stoop to the practice from time to time. It may be defined as doing, for a cash consideration, work markedly below the level of the artist's best. In the past, stark necessity was its chief inspiration. Today as I go about among novelists, poets, playwrights, painters, I find a new motive widely voiced. We will, they say, "ghost-write" success stories, produce canned editorials and advertising copy, concoct synthetic drama (a new type of laboratory research), illustrate magnificent brochures, or what you will, in order that we may lay aside a cash reserve, and *then* watch us burn up Olympus. I am still watching. The formula in most cases is spurious. A continued and calculated flow of second-rate work is more than liable to poison the original spring. One can cite names—a number of very promising names—but it would be too painful. Enough that American art and literature have lost some distinguished ornaments because integrity comes too high.

Lastly we shall consider a usage almost as widespread as yesing the boss, one indeed that may be said to be an integral part of the folkways of a pecuniary civilization. I refer to the art of backslapping in the interest of a profitable sale. Under the canons of this culture complex it is incumbent upon the vendor to welcome the prospective vendee with all the warmth and sympathy hitherto reserved for dear and chosen friends. He must be dined and wined (Mr. Jesse R. Sprague has admirably described the latter ceremony in a recent article in *Harper's*), his most infantile pronouncements must be received with the highest respect, one's home must be thrown open to him, his lightest fancy instantly satisfied. The fact that the company pays the bills is entirely beside the point. The point is that the whole procedure, like the canvasser's behavior, makes a mockery of natural human intercourse. Friendship is one of the few compensations for a complex life. To shower upon strangers and upon people who never could be one's friends, all the earnestness of comradeship is to debase rare metal. The dismal panorama passes before us: Manu-

facturers' agents departing with suit cases of gin to dentists' conventions Rotary club luncheons with members roaring songs, embracing one another "Jim" calling to "Joe" (and Jim hates Joe)—all in the hope of more business The hearty dinner at home to the chief buyer for the National Widget Corporation with one's wife in a new and alluring frock, and carefully coached in the art of drawing out Mr Blatterfein on his favorite topic—the postage stamps of the Hawaiian Islands The high and costly strategy employed by publisher B in weaning an author away from publisher A—the agent preferably to be an old college friend "Contact men" in dinner coats at week-end parties

Backslapping may not always be for business reasons, but it is usually for pecuniary reasons I recall participating in a dinner to a man who was as stupid as he was rich The basic idea of the dinner was to obtain money from him in order that a certain charity might make up its deficit At the close of the banquet our guest arose and delivered himself of as monumental a series of banalities as it has ever been my ill fortune to hear When he seated himself, amid vast applause, we, the hosts, arose one by one, and respectfully asked questions and were grateful for answers that we knew to be absurd Finally we gave our guest a rousing vote of thanks for a most instructive evening Later, because his publicity man had used my name, I wrote him a letter—a slimy, unctuous letter—recalling his brilliant address and the needs of the charity in question I was never so pleased in my life as when he kicked us all downstairs, and never gave a penny In some dim way it restored my self-respect Charities are worthy—some of them—but are they worth such abasement?

V

We have but touched the surface of the phenomenon, but already most of us are in it up to the waist, if not indeed completely mired Certain groups are less involved than others, and a rough appraisal of relative saturation might prove instructive

The independent farmer, standing closest to the pioneer tradition, leads the list Despite the steady encroachments of business motives upon his way of life—for agriculture is far more a way of life than a pecuniary pursuit—he still has the best chance among all classes of Americans to call his soul his own Perhaps the independent storekeeper, surviving in those few remote neighborhoods where chain stores and full-line forcing have not rendered his life a burden, takes second place I know a few still functioning in the White Mountains of New Hampshire They are the sort of men who will not send a bill when the neighbor who owes it is ill or out of luck

Next in line we might place the housewife More remote from the commercial front than her spouse, she still frequently reserves the right to speak her mind freely, "to stand right up in meeting," as we New Englanders say I recall the case of a brilliant young accountant who, shortly after winning his CPA, was given an opportunity to make a million dollars, more or less, in a few months' time All he had to do was to approach certain corporations with an offer to split whatever rebates he might earn for them in their filed income tax returns His share in turn was to be split with a government examiner who

supplied the names of such corporations as had legitimate claims for rebates in past tax payments. He told his mother of the glittering opportunity "Jim," she said, "you know when I come to wake you in the morning I shake you hard, and you don't stir?" "Yes," he said "And then I shake you even harder, and you give a little moan?" "Yes" "And finally I shake as hard as I can, and you open one sleepy eye?" "Yes" "I'd hate to come in morning after morning and find you awake" He turned down the job and has been sleeping soundly ever since.

Reasonably high in the comparative scale would come the skilled manual worker affiliated with a strong trade union. One does not find an unduly grave percentage of yes men among locomotive engineers, machinists, or building trades workers. In the main they are utterly dependent on their jobs, but their jobs are objective and technical, while the backing of the union—sometimes with its benefit clause—stiffens their independence and self-respect.

Next we might place independent manufacturers and entrepreneurs. The great corporations are fast undermining them, financially and spiritually; but many sturdily maintain the Forsyte tradition, refuse to grow maudlin about Service, honestly admit they are in business for profit and not for public welfare, and take pride in producing a sound article, honestly sold. Below them would stand professional men and women, with physicians at the head of the group and lawyers at the bottom. There was a time when this class topped the whole list, but that was before competition became so keen; before the days of split fees, ambulance chasing, and yesing the president of the University. Professors, like canvassers, must eat. If the gentle reader is of a professional persuasion, he is doubtless an exception, but as a journeyman member of his class, I know that all too frequently I am not an exception.

On a level with professional people would come the unskilled manual workers, with farm laborers at their head. They are largely a beaten lot, but many of them lose their jobs so often they get used to it, and accumulate, if not independence, at least a certain stoicism, a bitter crust against a bitter world. Not far below them we find the servant class—some two millions of them in America. Here we note a peculiar phenomenon. Servants are protected to a degree by their time-honored professional status. Nobody expects their work-a-day manners to reflect their real personalities, and thus they are enabled to preserve some semblance of integrity behind and remote from the frozen smiles and conventional obsequiousness of their trade.

From servants it is a long drop downward to the salesman, though here again we note, or are beginning to note, a loss of human dignity which is freezing into a convention. It is the salesman's business to be hypocritical if necessary, just as it is the servant's business to be servile. We do not expect much from a salesman or a blurb-writer save words, and presently he may be able to save his soul by taking, in his business hours, some such conventionalized and definite status as the butler or the waiter takes.

Salesmen are low in the scale of integrity, but at least they are alive. They have even been known to tell the boss what they thought of him and throw the job in his face. Clerks and office workers, being all but dead, must stand still lower. They are the saddest group of yes men on the whole list.

As we feel for the bottom, we encounter in the murky gloom a large round object. Dragging it with some reluctance toward the light, we discover it to be a politician. To expect integrity from an elected public servant is almost to expect a miracle. When Mr. Dwight Morrow, running for senator in New Jersey, actually and honestly spoke his mind about prohibition the shock was almost too great for the country to bear. Editorial writers lost their heads completely at the wonder of it. The politician leads a harrowing economic life, granted, there are often sound reasons for his debasement, but this incident would seem to make it plain that it is not always good business, or good publicity, to flounder so persistently in the lower depths. Once and again the poor fellow might come up for air.

We would seem to have touched the bottom. Not quite. We have yet to deal with certain types of corporation executives. As a class executives may be arranged up and down the scale, but enough of them at least to be identified as a sub-species are the least enviable exhibit in the whole national category; firmly anchored to the ocean floor. Their case is the more deplorable in that they have less excuse than most of us for being untrue to themselves. They have more economic security than all the rest of us combined. Instead of quaking for their jobs, they need quake only for their balance sheets. They have sold themselves, not to inexorable terms of livelihood, but to a legal abstraction, an almost mythical monster, in whose bowels is nothing more than a certificate of incorporation. (Some anthropologist should do a sound monograph on the totem worship and animism involved in the modern conception of a corporation.) They dare not open their mouths in public, put pen to paper, pronounce judgment on any social question, attend a banquet—almost take a bath—without first securing the received policy of the company for which they work. They move in a world of juggernauts and spooks which pass under the name of unfavorable publicity. They cower before the dire warnings of counsels on public relations. Instead of honestly admitting they are in business for profit, they squirt atomizers filled with the rank perfumes of "service," "good will," "public duty" in all directions, until the atmosphere of the nation bids fair to be choked with alien gases. They wriggle, this sub-species, into schools, universities, women's clubs, churches. They teach the teacher to teach the little children to wash their little hands with their little cakes of Banana Oil Soap. It is difficult to walk a block in Washington without bumping into one of their legislative agents. Even as the Russians substitute Communism for God, these gentlemen substitute their Corporation. It can do no wrong. Once I was walking the streets of Boston with the vice-president of a great financial institution. We came to a little decayed brick building near the docks. He stopped, with reverence in his every gesture, and all but took off his hat. "This," he said, "is where our Company first began to do business." We might have been visiting the birthplace of a saint.

I should like to see old Jolyon Forsyte at a few American directors' tables, I should like to hear him express his mind freely at a conference of Junior Executives. Here was a man who ransacked the world for tea, sold you only the finest, and took a good round profit on the transaction. He did not cower

before sticks of type, cared not a damn about "unfavorable publicity," had no animistic corporate god to serve, and could call his soul his own

I have been perhaps unduly harsh with that fraction of corporation executives who have forsworn all canons of personal integrity to serve a paper monster But I should like them to know how their activities impress the outside public, and I would point out, furthermore, that the lesson taught the politicians by Mr Morrow is equally applicable in their case They could afford to substitute facts for propaganda far more frequently than they do The type of publicity put out by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad may serve as an example of winning real good will by honest methods as against the tricky and spurious variety.

If you think that I have been passing moral judgments, I have completely failed in writing this article. Questionable morals as reflected in graft, speculation, and legal crime lie quite outside the discussion. Such behavior is to be found in every civilization since Mesopotamia, whether the ratio is worse in modern America I do not know, and for the moment do not care Owing to the colossal temptations for graft inspired by prohibition, it may well be worse at the present writing; but this, we trust, is a temporary phenomenon. All I have tried to say is that you and I, and Americans generally, have each a personal standard of honorable conduct Under prevailing conditions, largely economic, it is frequently impossible to live within striking distance of that standard. Dr Paul S Achilles of Columbia, professor of vocational psychology, estimates that over fifty per cent of Americans are not happy in their work. (The suicide rate per thousand has jumped fivefold in seventy years) I am but pointing out a major reason for that unhappiness There is better stuff in us than we are permitted to express, and callous as routine may have made us, the failure of self-expression still hurts In the end nothing but a greater margin of economic security—the rock which stiffened the backbone of the pioneer—can bring release.

A NOVELIST'S ALLEGORY¹

by John Galsworthy

In the following allegory John Galsworthy has set forth the leading principle of his own novels and plays a writer's function is not to gloss over conditions, not to force conclusions on the reader, but to present facts as impartially as he can

Galsworthy died January 31, 1933, at the age of sixty-five He had just been awarded the Nobel Prize for literature (1932) As a novelist his fame rests on *The Forsyte Saga*, a masterly study of the conflicts caused by the possessive instinct (as represented particularly by Soames Forsyte) and the need for beauty as such Essentially the novel shows the deterioration of the Forsyte family, and to that extent of special pleading is a violation of the principle stated above. In plays such as *Strife*,

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Justice, The Silver Box and *Loyalties*, Galsworthy has likewise tried to present crucial circumstances in an unbiased manner

As novelist and playwright he belongs to the nineteenth century tradition, and owes nothing to contemporary schools

ONCE upon a time the Prince of Felicitas had occasion to set forth on a journey. It was a late autumn evening with few pale stars and a moon no larger than the paring of a finger nail. And as he rode through the purlieus of his city, the white mane of his amber-colored steed was all that he could see in the dusk of the high streets. His way led through a quarter but little known to him, and he was surprised to find that his horse, instead of ambling forward with his customary vigor, stepped carefully from side to side, stopping now and then to curve his neck and prick his ears—as though at some thing of fear unseen in the darkness, while on either hand creatures could be heard rustling and scuttling, and little cold draughts as of wings fanned the rider's cheeks.

The Prince at last turned in his saddle, but so great was the darkness that he could not even see his escort.

"What is the name of this street?" he said.

"Sire, it is called the Vita Publica."

"It is very dark." Even as he spoke his horse staggered, but, recovering its foothold with an effort, stood trembling violently. Nor could all the incitements of its master induce the beast again to move forward.

"Is there no one with a lanthorn in this street?" asked the Prince.

His attendants began forthwith to call out loudly for anyone who had a lanthorn. Now, it chanced that an old man sleeping in a hovel on a pallet of straw was awakened by these cries. When he heard that it was the Prince of Felicitas himself, he came hastily, carrying his lanthorn, and stood trembling beside the Prince's horse. It was so dark that the Prince could not see him.

"Light your lanthorn, old man," he said.

The old man laboriously lit his lanthorn. Its pale rays fled out on either hand, beautiful but grim was the vision they disclosed. Tall houses, fair courtyards, and a palm-grown garden, in front of the Prince's horse a deep cesspool, on whose jagged edges the good beast's hoofs were planted, and, as far as the glimmer of the lanthorn stretched, both ways down the rutted street, paving stones displaced, and smooth tessellated marble, pools of mud, the hanging fruit of an orange-tree, and dark, scurrying shapes of monstrous rats bolting across from house to house. The old man held the lanthorn higher, and instantly bats flying against it would have beaten out the light but for the thin protection of its horn sides.

The Prince sat still upon his horse, looking first at the rutted space that he had traversed and then at the rutted space before him.

"Without a light," he said, "this thoroughfare is dangerous. What is your name, old man?"

"My name is Cethru," replied the aged churl.

"Cethru!" said the Prince. "Let it be your duty henceforth to walk with your lanthorn up and down this street all night and every night,"—and he looked

at Cethru: "Do you understand, old man, what it is you have to do?"

The old man answered in a voice that trembled like a rusty flute:

"Aye, aye!—to walk up and down and hold my lantern so that folk can see where they be goin'."

The Prince gathered up his reins; but the old man, lurching forward, touched his stirrup

"How long be I to go on wi' thiccy job?"

"Until you die!"

Cethru held up his lantern, and they could see his long, thin face, like a sandwich of dried leather, jerk and quiver, and his thin gray hairs flutter in the draughts of the bats' wings circling round the light

"'Twill be main hard!" he groaned; "an' my lantern's nowt but a poor thing."

With a high look, the Prince of Felicitas bent and touched the old man's forehead

"Until you die, old man," he repeated, and bidding his followers to light torches from Cethru's lantern, he rode on down the twisting street. The clatter of the horses' hoofs died out in the night, and the scuttling and the rustling of the rats and the whispers of the bats' wings were heard again.

Cethru, left alone in the dark thoroughfare, sighed heavily; then, spitting on his hands, he tightened the old girdle round his loins, and slinging the lantern on his staff, held it up to the level of his waist, and began to make his way along the street. His progress was but slow, for he had many times to stop and rekindle the flame within his lantern, which the bats' wings, his own stumbles, and the jostlings of footpads or of revelers returning home, were for ever extinguishing. In traversing that long street he spent half the night, and half the night in traversing it back again. The saffron swan of dawn, slow swimming up the sky-river between the high roof-banks, bent her neck down through the dark air-water to look at him staggering below her, with his still smoking wick. No sooner did Cethru see that sunlit bird than with a great sigh of joy he sat him down, and at once fell asleep.

Now when the dwellers in the houses of the Vita Publica first gained knowledge that this old man passed every night with his lantern up and down their street, and when they marked those pallid gleams gliding over the motley prospect of cesspools and garden gates, over the sightless hovels and the rich-carved frontages of their palaces, or saw them stay their journey and remain suspended like a handful of daffodils held up against the black stuffs of secrecy—they said:

"It is good that the old man should pass like this—we shall see better where we're going, and if the Watch have any job on hand, or want to put the pavements in order, his lantern will serve their purpose well enough." And they would call out of their doors and windows to him passing:

"Hola! old man Cethru! All's well with our house, and with the street before it?"

But, for answer, the old man only held his lantern up, so that in the ring of its pale light they saw some sight or other in the street. And his silence troubled them, one by one, for each had expected that he would reply.

"Aye, aye! All's well with *your* house, Sirs, and with the street before it!"

Thus they grew irritated with this old man who did not seem able to do anything but just hold his lanthorn up. And gradually they began to dislike his passing by their doors with his pale light, by which they could not fail to see, not only the rich-carved frontages and scrolled gates of courtyards and fair gardens, but things that were not pleasing to the eye. And they murmured amongst themselves "What is the good of this old man and his silly lanthorn? We can see all we want to see without him, in fact, we got on very well before he came"

So, as he passed, rich folk who were supping would pelt him with orange-peel and empty the dregs of their wine over his head, and poor folk, sleeping in their hutches, turned over, as the rays of the lanthorn fell on them, and cursed him for that disturbance. Nor did the revelers or footpads treat the old man civilly, but tied him to the wall, where he was constrained to stay till a kind passer-by released him. And ever the bats darkened his lanthorn with their wings and tried to beat the flame out. And the old man thought "This be a terrible hard job, I don't seem to please nobody." But because the Prince of Felicitas had so commanded him, he continued nightly to pass with his lanthorn up and down the street, and every morning as the saffron swan came swimming overhead, to fall asleep. But his sleep did not last long, for he was compelled to pass many hours each day in gathering rushes and melting down tallow for his lanthorn, so that his lean face grew more than ever like a sandwich of dried leather.

Now it came to pass that the Town Watch having had certain complaints made to them that persons had been bitten in the Vita Publica by rats, doubted of their duty to destroy these ferocious creatures, and they held investigation, summoning the persons bitten and inquiring of them how it was that in so dark a street they could tell that the animals which had bitten them were indeed rats. Howbeit for some time no one could be found who could say more than what he had been told, and since this was not evidence, the Town Watch had good hopes that they would not after all be forced to undertake this tedious enterprise. But presently there came before them one who said that he had himself seen the rat which had bitten him, by the light of the old man's lanthorn. When the Town Watch heard this they were vexed, for they knew that if this were true they would now be forced to prosecute the arduous undertaking, and they said

"Bring in this old man!"

Cethru was brought before them trembling.

"What is this we hear, old man, about your lanthorn and the rat? And in the first place, what were you doing in the Vita Publica at that time of night?"

Cethru answered "I were just passin' with my lanthorn!"

"Tell us—did *you* see the rat?"

Cethru shook his head "My lanthorn seed the rat, maybe!" he muttered.

"Old owl!" said the Captain of the Watch. "Be careful what you say! If you saw the rat, why did you then not aid this unhappy citizen who was bitten

by it—first, to avoid that rodent, and subsequently to slay it, thereby relieving the public of a pestilential danger?”

Cethru looked at him, and for some seconds did not reply, then he said slowly “I were just passin’ with my lanthorn”

“That you have already told us,” said the Captain of the Watch; “it is no answer.”

Cethru’s leathern cheeks became wine-colored, so desirous was he to speak, and so unable. And the Watch sneered and laughed, saying “This is a fine witness”

But of a sudden Cethru spoke

“What would I be duin’—killin’ rats; tidden my business to kill rats”

The Captain of the Watch caressed his beard, and looking at the old man with contempt, said:

“It seems to me, brothers, that this is an idle old vagabond, who does no good to anyone. We should be well advised, I think, to prosecute him for vagrancy. But that is not at this moment the matter in hand. Owing to the accident—scarcely fortunate—of this old man’s passing with his lanthorn, it would certainly appear that citizens have been bitten by rodents. It is then, I fear, our duty to institute proceedings against those poisonous and violent animals”

And amidst the sighing of the Watch, it was so resolved.

Cethru was glad to shuffle away, unnoticed, from the Court and sitting down under a camel-date tree outside the City Wall, he thus reflected

“They were rough with me! I done nothin’, so far’s I can see!”

And a long time he sat there with the bunches of the camel-dates above him, golden as the sunlight. Then, as the scent of the lyrie-flowers, released by evening, warned him of the night dropping like a flight of dark birds on the plain, he rose stiffly, and made his way as usual toward the Vita Publica.

He had traversed but little of that black thoroughfare, holding his lanthorn at the level of his breast, when the sound of a splash and cries for help smote his long, thin ears. Remembering how the Captain of the Watch had admonished him, he stopped and peered about, but owing to his proximity to the light of his own lanthorn he saw nothing. Presently he heard another splash and the sound of blowings and of puffings, but still unable to see clearly whence they came, he was forced in bewilderment to resume his march. But he had no sooner entered the next bend of that obscure and winding avenue than the most lamentable, lusty cries assailed him. Again he stood still, blinded by his own light. Somewhere at hand a citizen was being beaten, for vague, quick-moving forms emerged into the radiance of his lanthorn out of the deep violet of the night air. The cries swelled, and died away, and swelled; and the mazed Cethru moved forward on his way. But very near the end of his first traversage, the sound of a long, deep sighing, as of a fat man in spiritual pain, once more arrested him.

“Drat mel!” he thought, “this time I *will* see what ’tis,” and he spun round and round, holding his lanthorn now high, now low, and to both sides, “The devil an’ all’s in it tonight,” he murmured to himself; “there’s some ’at here

fetchin' of its breath awful loud" But for his life he could see nothing, only that the higher he held his lanthorn the more painful grew the sound of the fat but spiritual sighing And desperately, he at last resumed his progress

On the morrow, while he still slept stretched on his straw pallet, there came to him a member of the Watch

"Old man, you are wanted at the Court House, rouse up, and bring your lanthorn"

Stiffly Cethru rose

"What be they wantin' me fur now, mester?"

"Ah!" replied the Watchman, "they are about to see if they can't put an end to your goings-on"

Cethru shivered, and was silent

Now when they reached the Court House it was patent that a great affair was forward, for the Judges were in their robes, and a crowd of advocates, burgesses, and common folk thronged the carven, lofty hall of justice

When Cethru saw that all eyes were turned on him, he shivered still more violently, fixing his fascinated gaze on the three Judges in their emerald robes

"This then is the prisoner," said the oldest of the Judges, "proceed with the indictment!"

A little advocate in snuff-colored clothes rose on little legs, and commenced to read

"Forasmuch as on the seventeenth night of August fifteen hundred years since the Messiah's death, one Celestine, a maiden of this city, fell into a cess-pool in the Vita Publica, and while being quietly drowned, was espied of the burgess Pardonix by the light of a lanthorn held by the old man Cethru, and, forasmuch as, plunging in, the said Pardonix rescued her, not without grave risk of life and the ruin of his clothes, and today lies ill of fever, and forasmuch as the old man Cethru was the cause of these misfortunes to the burgess Pardonix, by reason of his wandering lanthorn's showing the drowning maiden, the Watch do hereby indict, accuse, and otherwise place charge upon this Cethru of 'Vagabondage without serious occupation'

"And, forasmuch as on this same night the Watchman Filepo, made aware, by the light of this said Cethru's lanthorn, of three sturdy footpads, went to arrest them, and was set on by the rogues and well-nigh slain, the Watch do hereby indict, accuse, and otherwise charge upon Cethru complicity in this assault, by reasons, namely, first, that he discovered the footpads to the Watchman and the Watchman to the footpads by the light of his lanthorn, and, second, that, having thus discovered them, he stood idly by and gave no assistance to the law

"And, forasmuch as on this same night the wealthy burgess Pranzo, who, having prepared a banquet, was standing in his doorway awaiting the arrival of his guests, did see, by the light of the said Cethru's lanthorn, a beggar woman and her children groveling in the gutter for garbage, whereby his appetite was lost completely, and forasmuch as he, Pranzo, has lodged a complaint against the Constitution for permitting women and children to go starved, the Watch do hereby indict, accuse, and otherwise make charge on

Cethru of rebellion and of anarchy, in that willfully he doth disturb good citizens by showing to them without provocation disagreeable sights, and doth moreover endanger the laws by causing persons to desire to change them

"These be the charges, reverend Judges, so please you!"

And having thus spoken, the little advocate resumed his seat

Then said the oldest of the Judges

"Cethru, you have heard, what answer do you make?"

But no word, only the chattering of teeth, came from Cethru

"Have you no defense?" said the Judge. "These are grave accusations!"

Then Cethru spoke

"So please your Highnesses," he said, "can I help what my lanthorn sees?"

And having spoken these words, to all further questions he remained more silent than a headless man

The Judges took counsel of each other, and the oldest of them thus addressed himself to Cethru

"If you have no defense, old man, and there is no one will say a word for you, we can but proceed to judgment"

Then in the main aisle of the Court there rose a youthful advocate

"Most reverend Judges," he said in a mellifluous voice, clearer than the fluting of a bell-bird, "it is useless to look for words from this old man, for it is manifest that he himself is nothing, and that his lanthorn is alone concerned in this affair. But, reverend Judges, bethink you well. Would you have a lanthorn ply a trade or be concerned with a profession, or do aught indeed but pervade the streets at night, shedding its light, which, if you will, is vagabondage? And, Sirs, upon the second count of this indictment. Would you have a lanthorn dive into cesspools to rescue maidens? Would you have a lanthorn to beat foot-pads? Or, indeed, to be any sort of partisan either of the Law or of them that break the Law? Sure, Sirs, I think not. And as to this third charge of fostering anarchy—let me but describe the trick of this lanthorn's flame. It is distilled, most reverend Judges, of oil and wick, together with that sweet secret heat of whose birth no words of mine can tell. And when, Sirs, this pale flame has sprung into the air swaying to every wind, it brings vision to the human eye. And, if it be charged on this old man Cethru that he and his lanthorn by reason of their showing not only the good but the evil bring no pleasure into the world, I ask, Sirs, what in the world is so dear as this power to see—whether it be the beautiful or the foul that is disclosed? Need I, indeed, tell you of the way this flame spreads its feelers, and delicately darts and hovers in the darkness, conjuring things from nothing? This mechanical summoning, Sirs, of visions out of blackness is benign, by no means of malevolent intent; no more than if a man, passing two donkeys in the road, one lean and the other fat, could justly be arraigned for malignancy because they were not both fat. This, reverend Judges, is the essence of the matter concerning the rich burgess, Pranzo, who, on account of the sight he saw by Cethru's lanthorn, has lost the equilibrium of his stomach. For, Sirs, the lanthorn did but show that which was there, both fair and foul, no more, and no less; and though it is indeed true that Pranzo is upset, it was not because the lanthorn maliciously pro-

duced distorted images, but merely caused to be seen, in due proportions, things which Pranzo had not seen before And surely, reverend Judges, being just men, you would not have this lanthorn turn its light away from what is ragged and ugly because there are also fair things on which its light may fall, how, indeed, being a lanthorn, could it, if it would? And I would have you note this, Sirs, that by this impartial discovery of the proportions of one thing to another, this lanthorn must indeed perpetually seem to cloud and sadden those things which are fair, because of the deep instincts of harmony and justice planted in the human breast However unfair and cruel, then, this lanthorn may seem to those who, deficient in these instincts, desire all their lives to see naught but what is pleasant, lest they, like Pranzo, should lose their appetites—it is not constant with equity that this lanthorn should, even if it could, be prevented from thus mechanically buffeting the holiday cheek of life I would think, Sirs, that you should rather blame the queazy state of Pranzo's stomach The old man has said that he cannot help what his lanthorn sees This is a just saying But if, reverend Judges, you deem this equiposed, indifferent lanthorn to be indeed blameworthy for having shown in the same moment, side by side, the skull and the fair face, the burdock and the tiger-lily, the butterfly and toad, then, most reverend Judges, punish it, but do not punish this old man, for he himself is but a flame of smoke, thistle-down dispersed—nothing!"

So saying, the young advocate ceased

Again the three Judges took counsel of each other, and after much talk had passed between them, the oldest spoke

"What this young advocate has said seems to us to be the truth We cannot punish a lanthorn Let the old man go!"

And Cethru went out into the sunshine

Now it came to pass that the Prince of Felicitas, returning from his journey, rode once more on his amber-colored steed down the Vita Publica

The night was dark as a rook's wing, but far away down the street burned a little light, like a red star truant from heaven The Prince riding by descried it for a lanthorn, with an old man sleeping beside it

"How is this, Friend?" said the Prince "You are not walking as I bade you, carrying your lanthorn"

But Cethru neither moved nor answered

"Lift him up!" said the Prince

They lifted up his head and held the lanthorn to his closed eyes So lean was that brown face that the beams from the lanthorn would not rest on it, but slipped past on either side into the night His eyes did not open He was dead

And the Prince touched him, saying "Farewell, old man! The lanthorn is still alight Go, fetch me another one, and let him carry it!"

THE MAKING OF A POEM¹

by Stephen Spender

Since the appearance of his first book of poems in 1936, when he was 27 years of age, Stephen Spender has been generally recognized as one of the most able and perceptive of contemporary British poets. Among his more recent books are *Poems for Spain* (1939), *The Still Centre* (1939), and *Life and the Poet* (1942).

APOLOGY

IT WOULD be inexcusable to discuss my own way of writing poetry unless I were able to relate this to a wider view of the problems which poets attempt to solve when they sit down at a desk or table to write, or walk around composing their poems in their heads. There is a danger of my appearing to put across my own experiences as the general rule, when every poet's way of going about his work and his experience of being a poet are different, and when my own poetry may not be good enough to lend my example any authority.

Yet the writing of poetry is an activity which makes certain demands of attention on the poet and which requires that he should have certain qualifications of ear, vision, imagination, memory and so on. He should be able to think in images, he should have as great a mastery of language as a painter has over his palette, even if the range of his language be very limited. All this means that, in ordinary society, a poet has to adapt himself, more or less consciously, to the demands of his vocation, and hence the peculiarities of poets and the condition of inspiration which many people have said is near to madness. One poet's example is only his adaptation of his personality to the demands of poetry, but if it is clearly stated it may help us to understand other poets, and even something of poetry.

Today we lack very much a whole view of poetry, and have instead many one-sided views of certain aspects of poetry which have been advertised as the only aims which poets should attempt. Movements such as free verse, imagism, surrealism, expressionism, personalism and so on, tend to make people think that poetry is simply a matter of not writing in metre or rhyme, or of free association, or of thinking in images, or of a kind of drawing room madness (surrealism) which corresponds to drawing room communism. Here is a string of ideas: Night, dark, stars, immensity, blue, voluptuous, clinging, columns, clouds, moon, sickle, harvest, vast camp fire, hell. Is this poetry? A lot of strings of words almost as simple as this are set down on the back of envelopes and posted off to editors or to poets by the vast army of amateurs who think that to be illogical is to be poetic, with that fond question. Thus I hope that this discussion of how poets work will imply a wider and completer view of poets.

¹ Copyright, June, 1946, by the *Partisan Review*

CONCENTRATION

The problem of creative writing is essentially one of concentration, and the supposed eccentricities of poets are usually due to mechanical habits or rituals developed in order to concentrate. Concentration, of course, for the purposes of writing poetry, is different from the kind of concentration required for working out a sum. It is a focussing of the attention in a special way, so that the poet is aware of all the implications and possible developments of his idea, just as one might say that a plant was not concentrating on developing mechanically in one direction, but in many directions, towards the warmth and light with its leaves, and towards the water with its roots, all at the same time.

Schiller liked to have a smell of rotten apples, concealed beneath the lid of his desk, under his nose when he was composing poetry. Walter de la Mare has told me that he must smoke when writing. Auden drinks endless cups of tea. Coffee is my own addiction, besides smoking a great deal, which I hardly ever do except when I am writing. I notice also that as I attain a greater concentration, this tends to make me forget the taste of the cigarette in my mouth, and then I have a desire to smoke two or even three cigarettes at a time, in order that the sensation from the outside may penetrate through the wall of concentration which I have built round myself.

For goodness' sake, though, do not think that rotten apples or cigarettes or tea have anything to do with the quality of the work of a Schiller, a de la Mare, or an Auden. They are a part of a concentration which has already been attained rather than the causes of concentration. De la Mare once said to me that he thought the desire to smoke when writing poetry arose from a need, not of a stimulus, but to canalize a distracting leak of his attention away from his writing towards the distraction which is always present in one's environment. Concentration may be disturbed by someone whistling in the street or the ticking of a clock. There is always a slight tendency of the body to sabotage the attention of the mind by providing some distraction. If this need for distraction can be directed into one channel—such as the odor of rotten apples or the taste of tobacco or tea—then other distractions outside oneself are put out of competition.

Another possible explanation is that the concentrated effort of writing poetry is a spiritual activity which makes one completely forget, for the time being, that one has a body. It is a disturbance of the balance of body and mind and for this reason one needs a kind of anchor of sensation with the physical world. Hence the craving for a scent or taste or even, sometimes, for sexual activity. Poets speak of the necessity of writing poetry rather than of a liking for doing it. It is spiritual compulsion, a straining of the mind to attain heights surrounded by abysses and it cannot be entirely happy, for in the most important sense, the only reward worth having is absolutely denied. For, however confident a poet may be, he is never quite sure that all his energy is not misdirected nor that what he is writing is great poetry. At the moment when art attains its highest attainment it reaches beyond its medium of words or paints or music, and the artist finds himself realizing that these instruments are inadequate to the spirit of what he is trying to say.

Different poets concentrate in different ways. In my own mind I make a

sharp distinction between two types of concentration one is immediate and complete, the other is plodding and only completed by stages. Some poets write immediately works which, when they are written, scarcely need revision. Others write their poems by stages, feeling their way from rough draft to rough draft, until finally, after many revisions, they have produced a result which may seem to have very little connection with their early sketches.

These two opposite processes are vividly illustrated in two examples drawn from music. Mozart and Beethoven. Mozart thought out symphonies, quartets, even scenes from operas, entirely in his head—often on a journey or perhaps while dealing with pressing problems—and then he transcribed them, in their completeness, onto paper. Beethoven wrote fragments of themes in note books which he kept beside him, working on and developing them over years. Often his first ideas were of a clumsiness which makes scholars marvel how he could, at the end, have developed from them such miraculous results.

Thus genius works in different ways to achieve its ends. But although the Mozartian type of genius is the more brilliant and dazzling, genius, unlike virtuosity, is judged by greatness of results, not by brilliance of performance. The result must be the fullest development in a created aesthetic form of an original moment of insight, and it does not matter whether genius devotes a lifetime to producing a small result if that result be immortal. The difference between two types of genius is that one type (the Mozartian) is able to plunge the greatest depths of his own experience by the tremendous effort of a moment, the other (the Beethovenian) must dig deeper and deeper into his consciousness, layer by layer. What counts in either case is the vision which sees and pursues and attains the end, the logic of the artistic purpose.

A poet may be divinely gifted with a lucid and intense and purposive intellect; he may be clumsy and slow, that does not matter, what matters is integrity of purpose and the ability to maintain the purpose without losing oneself. Myself, I am scarcely capable of immediate concentration in poetry. My mind is not clear, my will is weak, I suffer from an excess of ideas and a weak sense of form. For every poem that I begin to write, I think of at least ten which I do not write down at all. For every poem which I do write down, there are seven or eight which I never complete.

The method which I adopt therefore is to write down as many ideas as possible, in however rough a form, in note books (I have at least twenty of these, on a shelf beside my desk, going back over fifteen years). I then make use of some of the sketches and discard others.

The best way of explaining how I develop the rough ideas which I use, is to take an example. Here is a note book begun in 1944. About a hundred pages of it are covered with writing, and from this have emerged about six poems. Each idea when it first occurs is given a number. Sometimes the ideas do not get beyond one line. For example No. 3 (never developed) is the one line:—

A language of flesh and roses.

I shall return to this line in a few pages, when I speak of inspiration. For the moment, I turn to No. 13, because here is an idea which has been developed to its conclusion. The first sketch begins thus:—

unsaid inner meaning is revealed in the music and the tonality of the poem, and the poet is conscious of it in his knowledge that a certain tone of voice, a certain rhythm, are necessary

In the next twenty versions of the poem I felt my way towards the clarification of the seen picture, the music and the inner feeling. In the first version quoted above, there is the phrase in the second and third lines

*The waves
Like wires burn with the sun's copper glow*

This phrase fuses the image of the sea with the idea of music, and it is therefore a key-phrase, because the theme of the poem is the fusion of the land with the sea. Here, then, are several versions of these one and a quarter lines, in the order in which they were written —

- b) *The waves are wires
Burning as with the secret song of fires*
- c) *The day burns in the trembling wires
With a vast music golden in the eyes*
- d) *The day glows on its trembling wires
Singing a golden music in the eyes*
- e) *The day glows on its burning wires
Like waves of music golden to the eyes.*
- f) *Afternoon burns upon its wires
Lines of music dazzling the eyes*
- g) *Afternoon gilds its tingling wires
To a visual silent music of the eyes*

In the final version, these two lines appear as in the following stanza —

- h) *There are some days the happy ocean lies
Like an unfingered harp, below the land.*

*Afternoon gilds all the silent wires
Into a burning music of the eyes.*

*On mirroring paths between those fine-strung fires
The shore, laden with roses, horses, spires,
Wanders in water, imaged above ribbed sand.*

INSPIRATION

The hard work evinced in these examples, which are only a fraction of the work put into the whole poem, may cause the reader to wonder whether there is no such thing as inspiration, or whether it is merely Stephen Spender who is uninspired. The answer is that everything in poetry is work except inspiration, whether this work is achieved at one swift stroke, as Mozart wrote his music, or whether it is a slow process of evolution from stage to stage. Here

again, I have to qualify the word "work," as I qualified the word "concentration" the work on a line of poetry may take the form of putting a version aside for a few days, weeks or years, and then taking it up again, when it may be found that the line has, in the interval of time, almost rewritten itself

Inspiration is the beginning of a poem and it is also its final goal. It is the first idea which drops into the poet's mind and it is the final idea which he at last achieves in words. In between this start and this winning post there is the hard race, the sweat and toil.

Paul Valéry speaks of the "*une ligne donnée*" of a poem. One line is given to the poet by God or by nature, the rest he has to discover for himself.

My own experience of inspiration is certainly that of a line or a phrase or a word or sometimes something still vague, a dim cloud of an idea which I feel must be condensed into a shower of words. The peculiarity of the key word or line is that it does not merely attract, as, say, the word "braggadocio" attracts. It occurs in what seems to be an active, male, germinal form as though it were the centre of a statement requiring a beginning and an end, and as though it had an impulse in a certain direction. Here are examples —

A language of flesh and roses

This phrase (not very satisfactory in itself) brings to my mind a whole series of experiences and the idea of a poem which I shall perhaps write some years hence. I was standing in the corridor of a train passing through the Black Country. I saw a landscape of pits and pitheads, artificial mountains, jagged yellow wounds in the earth, everything transformed as though by the toil of an enormous animal or giant tearing up the earth in search of prey or treasure. Oddly enough, a stranger next to me in the corridor echoed my inmost thought. He said "Everything there is man-made." At this moment the line flashed into my head.

A language of flesh and roses

The sequence of my thought was as follows: the industrial landscape which seems by now a routine and act of God which enslaves both employers and workers who serve and profit by it, is actually the expression of man's will. Men willed it to be so, and the pitheads, slag-heaps and the ghastly disregard of anything but the pursuit of wealth, are a symbol of modern man's mind. In other words, the world which we create—the world of slums and telegrams and newspapers—is a kind of language of our inner wishes and thoughts. Although this is so, it is obviously a language which has got outside our control. It is a confused language, an irresponsible senile gibberish. This thought greatly distressed me, and I started thinking that if the phenomena created by humanity are really like words in a language, what kind of language do we really aspire to? All this sequence of thought flashed into my mind with the answer which came before the question: *A language of flesh and roses*.

I hope this example will give the reader some idea of what I mean by inspiration. Now the line, which I shall not repeat again, is a way of thinking imaginatively. If the line embodies some of the ideas which I have related above, these ideas must be further made clear in other lines. That is the

terrifying challenge of poetry Can I think out the logic of images? How easy it is to explain here the poem that I would have liked to write! How difficult it would be to write it For writing it would imply living my way through the imaged experience of all these ideas, which here are mere abstractions, and such an effort of imaginative experience requires a lifetime of patience and watching

Here is an example of a cloudy form of thought germinated by the word *cross*, which is the key word of the poem which exists formlessly in my mind Recently my wife had a son On the first day that I visited her after the boy's birth, I went by bus to the hospital Passing through the streets on the top of the bus, they all seemed very clean, and the thought occurred to me that everything was prepared for our child Past generations have toiled so that any child born today inherits, with his generation, cities, streets, organization, the most elaborate machinery for living Everything has been provided for him by people dead long before he was born Then, naturally enough, sadder thoughts colored this picture for me, and I reflected how he also inherited vast maladjustments, vast human wrongs Then I thought of the child as like a pin-point of present existence, the moment incarnate, in whom the whole of the past, and all possible futures *cross* This word *cross* somehow suggested the whole situation to me of a child born into the world and also of the form of a poem about his situation When the word *cross* appeared in the poem, the idea of the past should give place to the idea of the future and it should be apparent that the *cross* in which present and future meet is the secret of an individual human existence And here again, the unspoken secret which lies beyond the poem, the moral significance of other meanings of the word "cross" begins to glow with its virtue that should never be said and yet should shine through every image in the poem

This account of inspiration is probably weak beside the accounts that other poets might give I am writing of my own experience, and my own inspiration seems to me like the faintest flash of insight into the nature of reality beside that of other poets whom I can think of However, it is possible that I describe here a kind of experience which, however slight it may be, is far truer to the real poetic experience than Aldous Huxley's account of how a young poet writes poetry in his novel *Time Must Have a Stop*. It is hard to imagine anything more self-conscious and unpoetic than Mr. Huxley's account.

MEMORY

If the art of concentrating in a particular way is the discipline necessary for poetry to reveal itself, memory exercised in a particular way is the natural gift of poetic genius The poet, above all else, is a person who never forgets certain sense-impressions which he has experienced and which he can re-live again and again as though with all their original freshness

All poets have this highly developed sensitive apparatus of memory, and they are usually aware of experiences which happened to them at the earliest age and which retain their pristine significance throughout life. The meeting of Dante and Beatrice when the poet was only nine years of age is the experience which became a symbol in Dante's mind around which the *Divine*

Comedy crystallized The experience of nature which forms the subject of Wordsworth's poetry was an extension of a childhood vision of "natural presences" which surrounded the boy Wordsworth And his decision in later life to live in the Lake District was a decision to return to the scene of these childhood memories which were the most important experiences in his poetry There is evidence for the importance of this kind of memory in all the creative arts, and the argument certainly applies to prose which is creative Sir Osbert Sitwell has told me that his book *Before the Bombardment*, which contains an extremely civilized and satiric account of the social life of Scarborough before and during the last war, was based on his observations of life in that resort before he had reached the age of twelve

It therefore is not surprising that although I have no memory for telephone numbers, addresses, faces and where I have put this morning's correspondence, I have a perfect memory for the sensation of certain experiences which are crystallized for me around certain associations I could demonstrate this from my own life by the overwhelming nature of associations which, suddenly aroused, have carried me back so completely into the past, particularly into my childhood, that I have lost all sense of the present time and place But the best proofs of this power of memory are found in the odd lines of poems written in note books fifteen years ago A few fragments of unfinished poems enable me to enter immediately into the experiences from which they were derived, the circumstances in which they were written, and the unwritten feelings in the poem that were projected but never put into words

*Knowledge of a full sun
That runs up his big sky, above
The hill, then in those trees and throws
His smiling on the turf*

That is an incomplete idea of fifteen years ago, and I remember exactly a balcony of a house facing a road, and, on the other side of the road, pine trees, beyond which lay the sea Every morning the sun sprang up, first of all above the horizon of the sea, then it climbed to the tops of the trees and shone on my window And this memory connects with the sun that shines through my window in London now in spring and early summer So that the memory is not exactly a memory It is more like one prong upon which a whole calendar of similar experiences happening throughout years, collect A memory once clearly stated ceases to be a memory, it becomes perpetually present, because every time we experience something which recalls it, the clear and lucid original experience imposes its formal beauty on the new experiences It is thus no longer a memory but an experience lived through again and again

Turning over these old note books, my eye catches some lines, in a projected long poem, which immediately re-shape themselves into the following short portrait of a woman's face —

*Her eyes are gleaming fish
Caught in her nervous face, as if in a net
Her hair is wild and fair, halving her cheeks
Like a fantastic flare of Southern sun*

*There is madness in her cherishing her children
 Sometimes, perhaps a single time in years,
 Her wandering fingers stoop to arrange some flowers—
 Then in her hands her whole life stops and weeps*

It is perhaps true to say that memory is the faculty of poetry, because the imagination itself is an exercise of memory. There is nothing we imagine which we do not already know. And our ability to imagine is our ability to remember what we have already once experienced and to apply it to some different situation. Thus the greatest poets are those with memories so great that they extend beyond their strongest experiences to their minutest observations of people and things far outside their own self-centredness (the weakness of memory is its self-centredness, hence the narcissistic nature of most poetry).

Here I can detect my own greatest weakness. My memory is defective and self-centred. I lack the confidence in using it to create situations outside myself, although I believe that, in theory, there are very few situations in life which a poet should not be able to imagine, because it is a fact that most poets have experienced almost every situation in life. I do not mean by this that a poet who writes about a Polar Expedition has actually been to the North Pole. I mean, though, that he has been cold, hungry, etc., so that it is possible for him by remembering imaginatively his own felt experiences to know what it is like to explore the North Pole. That is where I fail. I cannot write about going to the North Pole.

FAITH

It is evident that a faith in their vocation, mystical in intensity, sustains poets. There are many illustrations from the lives of poets to show this, and Shakespeare's sonnets are full of expressions of his faith in the immortality of his lines.

From my experience I can clarify the nature of this faith. When I was nine, we went to the Lake District, and there my parents read me some of the poems of Wordsworth. My sense of the sacredness of the task of poetry began then, and I have always felt that a poet's was a sacred vocation, like a saint's. Since I was nine, I have wanted to be various things, for example, Prime Minister (when I was twelve). Like some other poets I am attracted by the life of power and the life of action, but I am still more repelled by them. Power involves forcing oneself upon the attention of historians by doing things and occupying offices which are, in themselves, important, so that what is truly powerful is not the soul of a so-called powerful and prominent man but the position which he fills and the things which he does. Similarly, the life of "action" which seems so very positive is, in fact, a selective, even a negative kind of life. A man of action does one thing or several things because he does not do something else. Usually men who do very spectacular things fail completely to do the ordinary things which fill the lives of most normal people, and which would be far more heroic and spectacular perhaps, if they did not happen to be done by many people. Thus in practice the life of action has always seemed to me an act of cutting oneself off from life.

Although it is true that poets are vain and ambitious, their vanity and ambition is of the purest kind attainable in this world, for the saint renounces

ambition. They are ambitious to be accepted for what they ultimately are as revealed by their inmost experiences, their finest perceptions, their deepest feelings, their uttermost sense of truth, in their poetry. They cannot cheat about these things, because the quality of their own being is revealed not in the noble sentiments which their poetry expresses, but in sensibility, control of language, rhythm and music, things which cannot be attuned by a vote of confidence from an electorate, or by the office of Poet Laureate. Of course, work is tremendously important, but, in poetry, even the greatest labor can only serve to reveal the intrinsic qualities of soul of the poet as he really is.

Since there can be no cheating, the poet, like the saint, stands in all his works before the bar of a perpetual day of judgment. His vanity of course is pleased by success, though even success may contribute to his understanding that popularity does not confer on him the favorable judgment of all the ages which he seeks. For what does it mean to be praised by one's own age, which is soaked in crimes and stupidity, except perhaps that future ages, wise where we are foolish, will see him as a typical expression of this age's crimes and stupidity? Nor is lack of success a guarantee of great poetry, though there are some who pretend that it is. Nor can the critics, at any rate beyond a certain limited point of technical judgment, be trusted.

The poet's faith is therefore, firstly, a mystique of vocation, secondly, a faith in his own truth, combined with his own devotion to a task. There can really be no greater faith than the confidence that one is doing one's utmost to fulfil one's high vocation, and it is this that has inspired all the greatest poets. At the same time this faith is coupled with a deep humility because one knows that, ultimately, judgment does not rest with oneself. All one can do is to achieve nakedness, to be what one is with all one's faculties and perceptions, strengthened by all the skill which one can acquire, and then to stand before the judgment of time.

In my note books, I find the following Prose Poem, which expresses these thoughts

Bring me peace bring me power bring me assurance Let me reach the bright day, the high chair, the plain desk, where my hand at last controls the words, where anxiety no longer undermines me. If I don't reach these I'm thrown to the wolves, I'm a restless animal wandering from place to place, from experience to experience.

Give me the humility and the judgment to live alone with the deep and rich satisfaction of my own creating not to be thrown into doubt by a word of spite or disapproval.

In the last analysis don't mind whether your work is good or bad so long as it has the completeness, the enormity of the whole world which you love.

SONG

Inspiration and song are the irreducible final qualities of a poet which make his vocation different from all others. Inspiration is an experience in which a line or an idea is given to one, and perhaps also a state of mind in which one writes one's best poetry. Song is far more difficult to define. It is the music

which a poem as yet unthought of will assume, the empty womb of poetry for ever in the poet's consciousness, waiting for the fertilizing seed

Sometimes, when I lie in a state of half-waking half-sleeping, I am conscious of a stream of words which seem to pass through my mind, without their having a meaning, but they have a sound, a sound of passion, or a sound recalling poetry that I know. Again sometimes when I am writing, the music of the words I am trying to shape takes me far beyond the words, I am aware of a rhythm, a dance, a fury, which is as yet empty of words

In these observations, I have said little about headaches, midnight oil, pints of beer or of claret, love affairs, and so on, which are supposed to be stations on the journeys of poets through life. There is no doubt that writing poetry, when a poem appears to succeed, results in an intense physical excitement, a sense of release and ecstasy. On the other hand, I dread writing poetry, for, I suppose, the following reasons. A poem is a terrible journey, a painful effort of concentrating the imagination, words are an extremely difficult medium to use, and sometimes when one has spent days trying to say a thing clearly one finds that one has only said it dully, above all, the writing of a poem brings one face to face with one's own personality with all its familiar and clumsy limitations. In every other phase of existence, one can exercise the orthodoxy of a conventional routine: one can be polite to one's friends, one can get through the day at the office, one can pose, one can draw attention to one's position in society, one is—in a word—dealing with men. In poetry, one is wrestling with a god.

Usually, when I have completed a poem, I think "this is my best poem," and I wish to publish it at once. This is partly because I only write when I have something new to say, which seems more worth while than what I have said before, partly because optimism about my present and future makes me despise my past. A few days after I have finished a poem, I relegate it to the past of all my other wasted efforts, all the books I do not wish to open.

Perhaps the greatest pleasure I have got from poems that I have written is when I have heard some lines quoted which I have not at once recognized. And I have thought "how good and how interesting," before I have realized that they are my own.

In common with other creative writers I pretend that I am not, and I am, exceedingly affected by unsympathetic criticism, whilst praise usually makes me suspect that the reviewer does not know what he is talking about. Why are writers so sensitive to criticism? Partly, because it is their business to be sensitive, and they are sensitive about this as about other things. Partly, because every serious creative writer is really in his heart concerned with reputation and not with success (the most successful writer I have known, Sir Hugh Walpole, was far and away the most unhappy about his reputation, because the "highbrows" did not like him). Again, I suspect that every writer is secretly writing for *someone*, probably for a parent or teacher who did not believe in him in childhood. The critic who refuses to "understand" immediately becomes identified with this person, and the understanding of many admirers only adds to the writer's secret bitterness if this one refusal persists.

Gradually one realizes that there is always this someone who will not like one's work. Then, perhaps, literature becomes a humble exercise of faith in being all that one can be in one's art, of being more than oneself, expecting little, but with a faith in the mystery of poetry which gradually expands into a faith in the mysterious service of truth.

Yet what failures there are! And how much mud sticks to one—mud not thrown by other people but acquired in the course of earning one's living, answering or not answering the letters which one receives, supporting or not supporting public causes. All one can hope is that this mud is composed of little grains of sand which will produce pearls.

THE POETIC EXPERIENCE¹

by I. A. Richards

I. A. Richards, a Fellow of Magdalene College, Cambridge, and a stimulating English thinker, emphasizes in his writings the philosophic and psychological analysis of literature. His *Practical Criticism* is an extensive and valuable study of student criticism of poetry, supplemented by the author's amplifications and corrective comments. Mr. Richards is the author also of *Principles of Literary Criticism*, *Philosophy of Rhetoric, Science and Poetry*, and (in collaboration with C. K. Ogden) *The Meaning of Meaning*.

The future of poetry is immense, because in poetry, where it is worthy of its high destinies, our race, as time goes on, will find an ever surer and surer stay. There is not a creed which is not shaken, not an accredited dogma which is not shown to be questionable, not a received tradition which does not threaten to dissolve. Our religion has materialized itself in the fact, in the supposed fact, it has attached its emotion to the fact, and now the fact is failing it. But for poetry the idea is every thing.—*Matthew Arnold*

EXTRAORDINARY claims have often been made for poetry—Matthew Arnold's words quoted at the head of this essay are an example—claims which very many people are inclined to view with astonishment or with the smile which tolerance gives to the enthusiast. Indeed a more representative modern view would be that the future of poetry is *nil*. Peacock's conclusion in his *The Four Ages of Poetry* finds a more general acceptance. "A poet in our times is a semi-barbarian in a civilized community. He lives in the days that are past." In whatever degree poetry is cultivated, it must necessarily be to the neglect of some branch of useful study, and it is a lamentable thing to see minds, capable of better things, running to seed in the specious indolence of these empty aimless mockeries of intellectual exertion. Poetry was the mental rattle that awakened the attention of intellect in the infancy

¹ From *Science and Poetry* by I. A. Richards, W. W. Norton and Co., Inc. 1926. By permission of the publishers.

of civil society but for the maturity of mind to make a serious business of the playthings of its childhood, is as absurd as for a grown man to rub his gums with coral, and cry to be charmed asleep by the jingle of silver bells" And with more regret many others—Keats was among them—have thought that the inevitable effect of the advance of science would be to destroy the possibility of poetry.

What is the truth in this matter? How is our estimate of poetry going to be affected by science? And how will poetry itself be influenced? The extreme importance which has in the past been assigned to poetry is a fact which must be accounted for whether we conclude that it was rightly assigned or not, and whether we consider that poetry will continue to be held in such esteem or not. It indicates that the case for poetry, whether right or wrong, is one which turns on momentous issues. We shall not have dealt adequately with it unless we have raised questions of great significance.

Very much toil has gone to the endeavor to explain the high place of poetry in human affairs, with, on the whole, few satisfactory or convincing results. This is not surprising. For in order to show how poetry is important it is first necessary to discover to some extent what it is. Until recently this preliminary task could only be very incompletely carried out, the psychology of instinct and emotion was too little advanced, and, moreover, the wild speculations natural in pre-scientific enquiry definitely stood in the way. Neither the professional psychologist, whose interest in poetry is frequently not intense, nor the man of letters, who as a rule has no adequate ideas of the mind as a whole, has been equipped for the investigation. Both a passionate knowledge of poetry and a capacity for dispassionate psychological analysis are required if it is to be satisfactorily prosecuted.

It will be best to begin by asking "What *kind of a thing*, in the widest sense, is poetry?" When we have answered this we shall be ready to ask "How can we use and misuse it?" and "What reasons are there for thinking it valuable?"

Let us take an experience, ten minutes of a person's life, and describe it in broad outline. It is now possible to indicate its general structure, to point out what is important in it, what trivial and accessory, which features depend upon which, how it has arisen, and how it is probably going to influence his future experience. There are, of course, wide gaps in this description; none the less it is at least possible to understand in general how the mind works in an experience, and what sort of stream of events the experience is.

A poem, let us say Wordsworth's *Westminster Bridge* sonnet, is such an experience, it is the experience the right kind of reader has when he peruses the verses. And the first step to an understanding of the place and future of poetry in human affairs is to see what the general structure of such an experience is. Let us begin by reading it very slowly, preferably aloud, giving every syllable time to make its full effect upon us. And let us read it experimentally, repeating it, varying our tone of voice until we are satisfied that we have caught its rhythm as well as we are able, and—whether our reading is such as to please other people or not—we ourselves at least are certain how it should "go."

Earth has not anything to show more fair
 Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
 A sight so touching in its majesty
 This City now doth, like a garment, wear
 The beauty of the morning silent, bare,
 Ships, towers, domes, theatres and temples lie
 Open unto the fields, and to the sky,
 All bright and glittering in the smokeless air
 Never did sun more beautifully steep
 In his first splendor, valley, rock or hill,
 Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
 The river glideth at his own sweet will
 Dear God! the very houses seem asleep
 And all that mighty heart is lying still!

We may best make our analysis of the experience that arises through reading these lines from the surface inwards, to speak metaphorically. The surface is the impression of the printed words on the retina. This sets up an agitation which we must follow as it goes deeper and deeper.

The first things to occur (if they do not, the rest of the experience will be gravely inadequate) are the sound of the words "in the mind's ear" and the feel of the words imaginarily spoken. These together give the *full body*, as it were, to the words, and it is with the full bodies of words that the poet works, not with their printed signs. But many people lose nearly everything in poetry through these indispensable parts escaping them.

Next arise various pictures "in the mind's eye", not of words but of things for which the words stand, perhaps of ships, perhaps of hills, and together with them, it may be, other images of various sorts. Images of what it feels like to stand leaning on the parapet of Westminster Bridge. Perhaps that odd thing an image of "silence." But, unlike the image-bodies of the words themselves, those other images of things are not vitally important. Those who have them may very well think them indispensable, and *for them* they may be necessary, but other people may not require them at all. This is a point at which differences between individual minds are very marked.

Thence onwards the agitation which is the experience divides into a major and a minor branch, though the two streams have innumerable interconnections and influence one another intimately. Indeed it is only as an expositor's artifice that we may speak of them as two streams.

The minor branch we may call the intellectual stream, the other, which we may call the active, or emotional, stream, is made up of the play of our interests.

The intellectual stream is fairly easy to follow, it follows itself, so to speak, but it is less important of the two. In poetry it matters only *as a means*, it directs and excites the active stream. It is made up of thoughts, which are not static little entities that bob up into consciousness and down again out of it, but fluent happenings, events, which reflect or point to the things the thoughts are of. Exactly how they do this is a matter which is still much disputed.

This pointing to or reflecting things is all that thoughts do. They appear to do much more, which is our chief illusion. The realm of thought is never a

sovereign state Our thoughts are the servants of our interests, and even when they seem to rebel it is usually our interests that are in disorder Our thoughts are pointers and it is the other, the active, stream which deals with the things which thoughts reflect or point to

Some people who read verse (they do not often read much of it) are so constituted that very little more happens than this intellectual stream of thoughts It is perhaps superfluous to point out that they miss the real poem To exaggerate this part of the experience, and give it too much importance on its own account, is a notable current tendency, and for many people explains why they do not read poetry

The active branch is what really matters, for from it all the energy of the whole agitation comes The thinking which goes on is somewhat like the play of an ingenious and invaluable "governor" run by, but controlling, the main machine Every experience is essentially some interest or group of interests swinging back to rest

To understand what an interest is we should picture the mind as a system of very delicately poised balances, a system which so long as we are in health is constantly growing Every situation we come into disturbs some of these balances to some degree The ways in which they swing back to a new equilibrium are the impulses with which we respond to the situation And the chief balances in the system are our chief interests

Suppose that we carry a magnetic compass about in the neighborhood of powerful magnets The needle waggles as we move and comes to rest pointing in a new direction whenever we stand still in a new position Suppose that instead of a single compass we carry an arrangement of many magnetic needles, large and small, swung so that they influence one another, some able only to swing horizontally, others vertically, others hung freely As we move, the perturbations in this system will be very complicated But for every position in which we place it there will be a final position of rest for all the needles into which they will in the end settle down, a general poise for the whole system But even a slight displacement may set the whole assemblage of needles busily readjusting themselves.

One further complication. Suppose that while all the needles influence one another, some of them respond only to some of the outer magnets among which the system is moving. The reader can easily draw a diagram if his imagination needs a visual support

The mind is not unlike such a system if we imagine it to be incredibly complex. The needles are our interests, varying in their importance, that is, in the degree to which any movement they make involves movement in the other needles. Each new disequilibrium, which a shift of position, a fresh situation, entails, corresponds to a need, and the waggings which ensue as the system rearranges itself are our responses, the impulses through which we seek to meet the need Often the new poise is not found until long after the original disturbance. Thus states of strain can arise which last for years.

The child comes into the world as a comparatively simple arrangement. Few things affect him comparatively speaking, and his responses also are few and simple, but he very quickly becomes more complicated His recurrent needs for food and for various attentions are constantly setting all his needles swinging.

Little by little separate needs become departmentalized as it were, sub-systems are formed, hunger causes one set of responses, the sight of his toys another, loud noises yet another, and so on. But the sub-systems never become quite independent. So he grows up, becoming susceptible to ever more numerous and more delicate influences.

He grows more discriminating in some respects, he is thrown out of equilibrium by slighter differences in his situation. In other respects he becomes more stable. From time to time, through growth, fresh interests develop, sex is the outstanding example. He needs increase, he becomes capable of being upset by quite new causes, he becomes responsive to quite new aspects of the situation.

This development takes a very indirect course. It would be still more erratic if society did not mold and remold him at every stage, reorganizing him incompletely two or three times over before he grows up. He reaches maturity in the form of a vast assemblage of major and minor interests, partly a chaos, partly a system, with some tracts of his personality fully developed and free to respond, others tangled and jammed in all kinds of accidental ways. It is this incredibly complex assemblage of interest to which the printed poem has to appeal. Sometimes the poem is itself the influence which disturbs us, sometimes it is merely the means by which an already existing disturbance can right itself. More usually perhaps it is both at once.

We must picture then the stream of the poetic experience as the swinging back into equilibrium of these disturbed interests. We are reading the poem in the first place only because we are in some way interested in doing so, only because some interest is attempting to regain its poise thereby. And whatever happens as we read happens only for a similar reason. We understand the words (the intellectual branch of the stream goes on its way successfully) only because an interest is reacting through that means, and all the rest of the experience is equally but more evidently our adaptation working itself out.

The rest of the experience is made up of emotions and attitudes. Emotions are what the reaction, with its reverberations in bodily changes, feels like. Attitudes are the impulses towards one kind of behavior or another which are set ready by the response. They are, as it were, its outward going part. Sometimes, as here in *Westminster Bridge*, they are very easily overlooked. But consider a simpler case—a fit of laughter which it is absolutely essential to conceal, in church or during a solemn interview, for example. You contrive not to laugh, but there is no doubt about the activity of the impulses in their restricted form. The much more subtle and elaborate impulses which a poem excites are not different in principle. They do not show themselves as a rule, they do not come out into the open, largely because they are so complex. When they have adjusted themselves to one another and become organized into a coherent whole, the needs concerned may be satisfied. *In a fully developed man a state of readiness for action will take the place of action when the full appropriate situation for action is not present.* The essential peculiarity of poetry as of all the arts is that the full appropriate situation is *not* present. It is an *actor* we are seeing upon the stage, not Hamlet. So readiness for action takes the place of actual behavior.

This is the main plan then of the experience. Signs on the retina, taken up

by sets of needs (remember how many other impressions all day long remain entirely *unnoticed* because no interest responds to them), thence an elaborate agitation of impulses, one branch of which is *thoughts* of what the words mean, the other an emotional response leading to the development of *attitudes*, preparations, that is, for action which may or may not take place, the two branches being in intimate connection

We must look now a little more closely at these connections. It may seem odd that we do not more definitely make the thoughts the rulers and causes of the rest of the response. To do just this has been in fact the grand error of traditional psychology. Man prefers to stress the features which distinguish him from the monkey, and chief among these are his intellectual capacities. Important though they are, he has given them a rank to which they are not entitled. Intellect is an adjunct to the interests, a means by which they adjust themselves more successfully. Man is not in any sense primarily an intelligence; he is a system of interests. Intelligence helps man but does not run him.

Partly through this natural mistake, and partly because intellectual operations are so much easier to study, the whole traditional analysis of the working of the mind has been turned upside down. It is largely as a remedy from the difficulties which this mistake involves that poetry may have so much importance in the future. But let us look again more closely at the poetic experience.

In the first place, why is it essential in reading poetry to give the words their full imagined sound and body? What is meant by saying that the poet works with this sound and body? The answer is that even before the words have been intellectually understood and the thoughts they occasion formed and followed, the movement and sound of the words is playing deeply and intimately upon the interests. How this happens is a matter which has yet to be successfully investigated, but that it happens no sensitive reader of poetry doubts. A good deal of poetry and even some great poetry exists (*e.g.*, some of Shakespeare's Songs and, in a different way, much of the best of Swinburne) in which the sense of the words can be *almost* entirely missed or neglected without loss. Never perhaps entirely without effort, however; though sometimes with advantage. But the plain fact that the relative importance of grasping the sense of the words may vary (compare Browning's *Before* with his *After*) is enough for our purpose here.

In nearly all poetry the sound and feel of the words, what is often called the *form* of the poem in opposition to its *content*, get to work first, and the sense in which the words are taken is subtly influenced by this fact. Most words are ambiguous as regards their plain sense, especially in poetry. We can take them as we please in a variety of senses. The sense we are pleased to choose is the one which most suits the impulses already stirred through the form of the verse. The same thing can be noticed in conversation. Not the strict logical sense of what is said, but the tone of voice and the occasion are the primary factors by which we interpret. Science, it is worth noting, endeavors with increasing success to bar out these factors. We believe a scientist because he can substantiate his remarks, not because he is eloquent or forcible in his enunciation. In fact, we distrust him when he seems to be influencing us by his manner.

In its use of words poetry is just the reverse of science. Very definite thoughts

do occur, but not because the words are so chosen as logically to bar out all possibilities but one. No. But because the manner, the tone of voice, the cadence and the rhythm play upon our interests and make *them* pick out from among an indefinite number of possibilities the precise particular thought which they need. This is why poetical descriptions often seem so much more accurate than prose descriptions. Language logically and scientifically used cannot describe a landscape or a face. To do so it would need a prodigious apparatus of names for shades and nuances, for precise particular qualities. These names do not exist, so other means have to be used. The poet, even when, like Ruskin or De Quincey, he writes in prose, makes the reader pick out the precise particular sense required from an indefinite number of possible senses which a word, phrase or sentence may carry. The means by which he does this are many and varied. Some of them have been mentioned above, but the way in which he uses them is the poet's own secret, something which cannot be taught. He knows how to do it, but he does not himself know how it is done.

Misunderstanding and under-estimation of poetry are mainly due to over-estimation of the thought in it. We can see still more clearly that thought is not the prime factor if we consider for a moment not the experience of the reader but that of the poet. Why does the poet use these words and no others? Not because they stand for a series of thoughts which in themselves are what he is concerned to communicate. It is never what a poem *says* which matters, but what it *is*. The poet is not writing as a scientist. He uses these words because the interests which the situation calls into play combine to bring them, just in this form, into his consciousness *as a means of ordering, controlling and consolidating* the whole experience. The experience itself, the tide of impulses sweeping through the mind, is the source and the sanction of the words. They represent this experience itself, not any set of perceptions or reflections, though often to a reader who approaches the poem wrongly they will seem to be only a series of remarks about other things. But to a suitable reader the words—if they actually spring from experience and are not due to verbal habits, to the desire to be effective, to factitious excogitation, to imitation, to irrelevant contrivances, or to any other of the failings which prevent most people from writing poetry—the words will reproduce in his mind a similar play of interests putting him for the while into a similar situation and leading to the same response.

Why this should happen is still somewhat of a mystery. An extraordinarily intricate concourse of impulses. The words which seem to be the effect of the experience in the first instance, seem to become the cause of a similar experience in the second. A very odd thing to happen, not exactly paralleled outside communication. But this description is not quite accurate. The words, as we have seen, are not simply the effect in one case, nor the cause in the other. In both cases they are the part of the experience which binds it together, which gives it a definite structure and keeps it from being a mere welter of disconnected impulses. They are *the key*, to borrow a useful metaphor from McDougall, for this particular combination of impulses. So regarded, it is less strange that what the poet wrote should reproduce his experience in the mind of the reader.

INFORMAL ESSAYS

OLD CHINA, 1823

by Charles Lamb

Although a hundred years have passed since Charles Lamb (1775-1834) died, he still speaks to us from the pages of his essays with the same charm and intimacy that endeared him as a living person to his contemporaries. Rarely has an author had to struggle against as many handicaps as he. Throughout his life he was poor, during his last thirty-four years he was the solicitous guardian of his sister Mary (in a fit of insanity she had stabbed her mother to death, and thereafter was subject to recurring fits), he himself for a brief spell had been in an asylum, and a serious stutter handicapped him in conversation. And yet his essays are devoid of the bitterness which we might reasonably expect.

In 1805, through the mediation of William Hazlitt, he was introduced to William Godwin (famous in the preceding decade as the author of *Caleb Williams* and *Political Justice*, and now a publisher of children's books). For him Charles and Mary Lamb wrote *Tales from Shakespeare*. In the following year appeared Lamb's *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets Contemporary with Shakespeare*, which established his reputation.

Meanwhile Lamb was serving as clerk in the India House (he had been appointed in 1792, and remained there for the next thirty-three years). In 1820 he began to contribute the "Elia" essays to the *London Magazine*, and by them he is best known today. As a "familiar essayist" Lamb has not been surpassed. Preferring as he did the city to the country, he has cast a glamor over elements of city life that would otherwise be quite drab.

I HAVE an almost feminine partiality for old china. When I go to see any great house, I inquire for the china-closet, and next for the picture gallery. I cannot defend the order of preference, but by saying that we have all some taste or other, of too ancient a date to admit of our remembering distinctly that it was an acquired one. I can call to mind the first play, and the first exhibition, that I was taken to; but I am not conscious of a time when china jars and saucers were introduced into my imagination.

I had no repugnance then—why should I now have?—to those little, lawless, azure-tinctured grotesques, that under the notion of men and women, float about, uncircumscribed by any element, in that world before perspective—a china tea-cup.

I like to see my old friends—whom distance cannot diminish—figuring up in the air (so they appear to our optics), yet on *terra firma* still—for so we must in courtesy interpret that speck of deeper blue, which the decorous artist, to prevent absurdity, has made to spring up beneath their sandals.

I love the men with women's faces, and the women, if possible, with still more womanish expressions.

Here is a young and courtly Mandarin, handing tea to a lady from a salver—two miles off! See how distance seems to set off respect! And here the same lady, or another—for likeness is identity on tea cups—is stepping into a little fairy boat, moored on the hither side of this calm garden river, with a dainty mincing foot, which in a right angle of incidence (as angles go in our world) must infallibly land her in the midst of a flowing mead—a furlong off on the other side of the same strange stream!

Farther on—if far or near can be predicated of their world—see horses, trees, pigdons, dancing the hays

Here—a cow and rabbit couchant, and co-extensive—so objects show, seen through the lucid atmosphere of fine Cathay

I was pointing out to my cousin last evening, over our Hyson (which we are old fashioned enough to drink unmixed still of an afternoon), some of these *speciosa mnacula* upon a set of extraordinary old blue china (a recent purchase) which we were now for the first time using, and could not help remarking how favorable circumstances had been to us of late years, that we could afford to please the eye sometimes with trifles of this sort—when a passing sentiment seemed to over-shade the brows of my companion. I am quick at detecting these summer clouds in Bridget

“I wish the good old times would come again,” she said, “when we were not quite so rich. I do not mean that I want to be poor, but there was a middle state”,—so she was pleased to ramble on,—“in which I am sure we were a great deal happier. A purchase is but a purchase, now that you have money enough and to spare. Formerly it used to be a triumph. When we coveted a cheap luxury (and, O! how much ado I had to get you to consent in those times!) we were used to have a debate two or three days before, and to weigh the *for* and *against*, and think what we might spare it out of, and what saving we could hit upon, that should be an equivalent. A thing was worth buying then, when we felt the money that we paid for it.

“Do you remember the brown suit, which you made to hang upon you, till all your friends cried shame upon you, it grew so thread-bare—and all because of that folio Beaumont and Fletcher, which you dragged home late at night from Barker’s in Covent-garden? Do you remember how we eyed it for weeks before we could make up our minds to the purchase, and had not come to a determination till it was near ten o’clock of the Saturday night, when you set off from Islington, fearing you should be too late—and when the old bookseller with some grumbling opened his shop, and by the twinkling taper (for he was setting bedwards) lighted out the relic from his dusty treasures—and when you lugged it home, wishing it were twice as cumbersome—and when you presented it to me—and when we were exploring the perfectness of it (*collating* you called it)—and while I was repairing some of the loose leaves with paste, which your impatience would not suffer to be left till day-break—was there no pleasure in being a poor man? or can those neat black clothes which you wear now, and are so careful to keep brushed, since we have become rich and finical, give you half the honest vanity with which you flaunted it about in that over-worn suit—your old corbeau—for four or five weeks longer than you should have done, to pacify your conscience for the mighty sum of fifteen—or sixteen shillings was it?—a great affair we thought it then—which you had lavished on the old folio. Now you can afford to buy any book

that pleases you, but I do not see that you ever bring me home any nice old purchases now

"When you came home with twenty apologies for laying out a less number of shillings upon that print after Lionardo, which we christened the *Lady Blanch*, when you looked at the purchase, and thought of the money—and thought of the money, and looked again at the picture—was there no pleasure in being a poor man? Now, you have nothing to do but to walk into Colnaghi's, and buy a wilderness of Lionardos. Yet do you?"

"Then, do you remember our pleasant walks to Enfield, and Potter's Bar, and Waltham, when we had a holyday—holydays, and all other fun, are gone, now we are rich—and the little hand-basket in which I used to deposit our day's fare of savory cold lamb and salad—and how you would pry about at noon-tide for some decent house, where we might go in, and produce our store—only paying for the ale that you must call for—and speculate upon the looks of the landlady, and whether she was likely to allow us a table-cloth—and wish for such another honest hostess, as Izaak Walton has described many a one on the pleasant banks of the Lea, when he went a-fishing—and sometimes they would prove obliging enough, and sometimes they would look grudgingly upon us—but we had cheerful looks still for one another, and would eat our plain food savorily, scarcely grudging Piscator his Trout Hall? Now, when we go out a day's pleasuring, which is seldom moreover, we *ride* part of the way—and go into a fine inn, and order the best of dinners, never debating the expense—which, after all, never has half the relish of those chance country snaps, when we were at the mercy of uncertain usage, and a precarious welcome

"You are too proud to see a play anywhere now but in the pit. Do you remember where it was we used to sit, when we saw *The Battle of Hexham*, and *The Surrender of Calais*, and Bannister and Mrs. Bland in *The Children in the Wood*—when we squeezed out our shillings a-piece to sit three or four times in a season in the one-shilling gallery—where you felt all the time that you ought not to have brought me—and more strongly I felt obligation to you for having brought me—and the pleasure was the better for a little shame—and when the curtain drew up, what cared we for our place in the house, or what mattered it where we were sitting, when our thoughts were with Rosalind in Arden, or with Viola at the Court of Illyria? You used to say that the gallery was the best place of all for enjoying a play socially—that the relish of such exhibitions must be in proportion to the infrequency of going—that the company we met there, not being in general readers of plays, were obliged to attend the more, and did attend, to what was going on, on the stage—because a word lost would have been a chasm, which it was impossible for them to fill up. With such reflections we consoled our pride then—and I appeal to you, whether, as a woman, I met generally with less attention and accommodation than I have done since in more expensive situations in the house? The getting in indeed, and the crowding up those inconvenient staircases, was bad enough,—but there was still a law of civility to women recognized to quite as great an extent as we ever found in the other passages—and how a little difficulty overcome heightened the snug seat, and the play, afterwards! Now we can only pay our money, and walk in. You cannot see, you say, in the galleries now. I am sure we saw, and heard too, well enough then—but sight, and all, I think, is gone with our poverty

"There was pleasure in eating strawberries before they became quite common—in the first dish of peas while they were yet den—to have them for a nice supper, a treat. What treat can we have now? If we were to treat ourselves now—that is, to have dainties a little above our means, it would be selfish and wicked. It is the very little more that we allow ourselves beyond what the actual poor can get at, that makes what I call a treat—when two people living together, as we have done, now and then indulge themselves in a cheap luxury, which both like, while each apologizes, and is willing to take both halves of the blame to his single share. I see no harm in people making much of themselves in that sense of the word. It may give them a hint how to make much of others. But now—what I mean by the word—we never do make much of ourselves. None but the poor can do it. I do not mean the veriest poor of all, but persons as we were, just above poverty.

"I know what you were going to say, that it is mighty pleasant at the end of the year to make all meet—and much ado we used to have every Thirty-first Night of December to account for our exceedings—many a long face did you make over your puzzled accounts, and in contriving to make it out how we had spent so much—or that we had not spent so much—or that it was impossible we should spend so much next year—and still we found our slender capital decreasing—but then, betwixt ways, and projects, and compromises of one sort or another, and talk of curtailing this charge, and doing without that for the future—and the hope that youth brings, and laughing spirits (in which you were never poor till now), we pocketed up our loss, and in conclusion, with 'lusty brimmers' (as you used to quote it out of *hearty cheerful Mr. Cotton*, as you called him), we used to welcome in the 'coming guest.' Now we have no reckoning at all at the end of the old year—no flattering promises about the new year doing better for us."

Bridget is so sparing of her speech, on most occasions, that when she gets into a rhetorical vein, I am careful how I interrupt it. I could not help, however, smiling at the phantom of wealth which her dear imagination had conjured up out of a clear income of poor — hundred pounds a year. "It is true we were happier when we were poorer, but we were also younger, my cousin. I am afraid we must put up with the excess, for if we were to shake the superfluous into the sea, we should not much mend ourselves. That we had much to struggle with, as we grew up together, we have reason to be most thankful. It strengthened, and knit our compact closer. We could never have been what we have been to each other, if we had always had the sufficiency which you now complain of. The resisting power—those natural dilations of the youthful spirit, which circumstances cannot straiten—with us are long since passed away. Competence to age is supplementary youth, a sorry supplement indeed, but I fear the best that is to be had. We must ride, where we formerly walked, live better, and lie softer—and shall be wise to do so—than we had means to do in those good old days you speak of. Yet could those days return—could you and I once more walk our thirty miles a day—could Bannister and Mrs. Bland again be young, and you and I be young to see them—could the good old one-shilling gallery days return—they are dreams, my cousin, now—but could you and I at this moment, instead of this quiet argument, by our well-carpeted fire-side, sitting on this luxurious sofa—be once more struggling up those inconvenient stair-cases, pushed about, and squeezed, and elbowed by the

poorest rabble of poor gallery scramblers—could I once more hear those anxious shrieks of yours—and the delicious *Thank God, we are safe*, which always followed when the topmost stair, conquered, let in the first light of the whole cheerful theatre down beneath us—I know not the fathom line that ever touched a descent so deep as I would be willing to bury more wealth in than Croesus had, or the great Jew R—— is supposed to have, to purchase it And now do just look at that merry little Chinese waiter holding an umbrella, big enough for a bed-tester, over the head of that pretty insipid half-Madonna-ish chit of a lady in that very blue summer-house.”

AN APOLOGY FOR IDLERS¹

by Robert Louis Stevenson

By family tradition Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894) should have been an engineer. By training he should have been a lawyer. The former profession was too arduous for him, however, since from boyhood he had suffered from serious lung trouble, and the latter he relinquished even though he had passed his bar examinations, because of a distaste for a confined life and a desire to travel and write.

In 1876 he began to contribute to the *Cornhill Magazine* the essays which were later collected as *Virginibus Puerisque* and *Familiar Studies of Men and Books*. Unfortunately, ill health continually forced him to seek mild climates. In 1888, thanks to S. S. McClure, who offered him two thousand pounds for a series of travel letters, he sailed for the South Seas. Two years later he began his residence in Samoa, where during the next four years his health improved greatly. His death in 1894 resulted from a ruptured blood-vessel.

As a writer Stevenson is remarkably versatile. *Treasure Island* has been the delight of countless boys; *A Child's Garden of Verses* pleases young and old, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is one of the world's best thrillers; *Kidnapped*, *The Master of Ballantrae*, *David Balfour*, and the splendid fragment of *The Weir of Hermiston* rank high in English fiction; and in his essays he reveals the charm and common sense which we demand of the “familiar essayist.”

BOSWELL: *We grow weary when idle.*

JOHNSON: *That is, sir, because others being busy, we want company; but if we were idle, there would be no growing weary; we should all entertain one another.*

JUST now, when every one is bound, under pain of a decree in absence convicting him of *lèse-respectability*, to enter on some lucrative profession, and labor therein with something not far short of enthusiasm, a cry from the opposite party who are content when they have enough, and like to look on and enjoy in the meanwhile, savors a little of bravado and gasconade. And yet this should not be. Idleness so-called, which does not consist of doing nothing, but in doing a great deal not recognized in the dogmatic formularies of the ruling class, has as good a right to state its position as industry itself. It is admitted that the presence of people who refuse to enter in the great handicap race for sixpenny pieces is at once an insult and a disenchantment

¹ From *Virginibus Puerisque*.

for those who do. A fine fellow (as we see so many) takes his determination, votes for the sixpences, and, in the emphatic Americanism, "goes for ' them. And while such an one is plowing distressfully up the road, it is not hard to understand his resentment, when he perceives cool persons in the meadows by the wayside, lying with a handkerchief over their ears and a glass at their elbow. Alexander is touched in a very delicate place by the disregard of Diogenes. Where was the glory of having taken Rome for these tumultuous barbarians who poured into the Senate house and found the Fathers sitting silent and unmoved by their success? It is a sore thing to have labored along and scaled the arduous hilltops, and, when all is done, find humanity indifferent to your achievement. Hence physicists condemn the unphysical, financiers have only a superficial toleration for those who know little of stocks, literary persons despise the unlettered, and people of all pursuits combine to disparage those who have none.

But, though this is one difficulty of the subject, it is not the greatest. You could not be put in prison for speaking against industry, but you can be sent to Coventry for speaking like a fool. The greatest difficulty with most subjects is to do them well, therefore, please to remember this is an apology. It is certain that much may be judiciously argued in favor of diligence, only there is something to be said against it, and that is what, on the present occasion, I have to say. To state one argument is not necessarily to be deaf to all others, and that a man has written a book of travels in Montenegro is no reason why he should never have been to Richmond.

It is surely beyond a doubt that people should be a good deal idle in youth. For though here and there a Lord Macaulay may escape from school honors with all his wits about him, most boys pay so dear for their medals that they never afterward have a shot in their locker, and begin the world bankrupt. And the same holds true during all the time a lad is educating himself, or suffering others to educate him. It must have been a very foolish old gentleman who addressed Johnson at Oxford in these words: "Young man, ply your book diligently now, and acquire a stock of knowledge, for when years come upon you, you will find that poring upon books will be but an irksome task." The old gentleman seems to have been unaware that many other things besides reading grow irksome, and not a few become impossible by the time a man has to use spectacles and cannot walk without a stick. Books are good enough in their own way, but they are a mighty bloodless substitute for life. It seems a pity to sit, like the Lady of Shalott, peering into a mirror, with your back turned on all the bustle and glamor of reality. And if a man reads very hard, as the old anecdote reminds us, he will have little time for thoughts.

If you look back on your own education, I am sure it will not be the full, vivid, instructive hours of truantry that you regret, you would rather cancel some lack-luster periods between sleep and waking in the class. For my own part, I have attended a good many lectures in my time. I still remember that the spinning of a top is a case of kinetic stability. I still remember that emphyseus is not a disease, nor stillicide a crime. But, though I would not willingly part with such scraps of science, I do not set the same store by them as by certain other odds and ends that I came by in the open street while I was playing truant. This is not the moment to dilate on that mighty place of education, which was the favorite school of Dickens and of Balzac and turns out

yearly many inglorious masters in the Science of the Aspects of Life. Suffice it to say this if a lad does not learn in the streets, it is because he has no faculty of learning. Nor is the truant always in the streets, for, if he prefers, he may go out by the gardened suburbs into the country. He may pitch on some tuft of lilacs over a burn and smoke innumerable pipes to the tune of the water on the stones. A bird will sing in the thicket. And there he may fall into a vein of kindly thought and see things in a new perspective. Why, if this be not education, what is? We may conceive Mr. Worldly Wiseman accosting such an one and the conversation that should thereupon ensue

"How now, young fellow, what dost thou here?"

"Truly, sir, I take mine ease."

"Is not this the hour of the class? and shouldst thou not be plying thy Book with diligence, to the end thou mayest obtain knowledge?"

"Nay, but thus also I follow after Learning, by your leave."

"Learning, quotha! After what fashion, I pray thee? Is it mathematics?"

"No, to be sure."

"Is it metaphysics?"

"Nor that."

"Is it some language?"

"Nay, it is no language."

"Is it a trade?"

"Nor a trade neither."

"Why, then, what is't?"

"Indeed, sir, as a time may soon come for me to go upon Pilgrimage, I am desirous to note what is commonly done by persons in my case, and where are the ugliest Sloughs and Thickets on the Road; as also, what manner of Staff is of the best service. Moreover, I lie here, by this water, to learn by root-of-heart a lesson which my master teaches me to call Peace, or Contentment."

Hereupon Mr. Worldly Wiseman was much commoved with passion, and, shaking his cane with a very threatening countenance, broke forth upon this wise: "Learning, quotha!" said he; "I would have all such rogues scourged by the Hangman!"

And so he would go his way, ruffling out his cravat with a crackle of starch, like a turkey when it spreads its feathers.

Now this, of Mr. Wiseman's, is the common opinion. A fact is not called a fact, but a piece of gossip, as it does not fall into one of your scholastic categories. An inquiry must be in some acknowledged direction, with a name to go by, or else you are not inquiring at all, only lounging; and the work-house is too good for you. It is supposed that all knowledge is at the bottom of a well or the far end of a telescope. Sainte-Beuve, as he grew older, came to regard all experience as a single great book in which to study for a few years ere we go hence; and it seemed all one to him whether you should read in chapter XX, which is the differential calculus, or in chapter XXXIX, which is hearing the band play in the gardens. As a matter of fact, an intelligent person, looking out of his eyes and harkening in his ears, with a smile on his face all the time, will get more true education than many another in a life of heroic vigils. There is certainly some chill and arid knowledge to be found upon the summits of formal and laborious science; but it is all round about you, and for the trouble of looking, you will acquire the warm and palpitating facts of

life While others are filling their memory with a lumber of words, one-half of which they will forget before the week be out, your truant may learn some really useful art to play the fiddle, to know a good cigar, or to speak with ease and opportunity to all varieties of men Many who have "plied their book diligently" and know all about some one branch or another of accepted lore come out of the study with an ancient and owl like demeanor and prove dry, stockish, and dyspeptic in all the better and brighter parts of life Many make a large fortune, who remain underbred and pathetically stupid to the last And meantime there goes the idler, who began life along with them—by your leave—a different picture He has had time to take care of his health and his spirits, he has been a great deal in the open air, which is the most salutary of all things for both body and mind, and, if he has never read the great Book in very recondite places, he has dipped into it and skimmed it over to excellent purpose Might not the student afford some Hebrew roots, and the business man some of his half-crowns, for a share of the idler's knowledge of life at large and Art of Living? Nay, and the idler has another and more important quality than these I mean his wisdom He who has much looked on at the childish satisfaction of other people in their hobbies will regard his own with only a very ironical indulgence He will not be heard among the dogmatists He will have a great and cool allowance for all sorts of people and opinions If he finds no out-of-the-way truths, he will identify himself with no very burning falsehood His way takes him along a by-road, not much frequented, but very even and pleasant, which is called Commonplace Lane and leads to the Belvedere of Common Sense Thence he shall command an agreeable, if no very noble prospect, and while others behold the East and West, the Devil and the Sunrise, he will be contentedly aware of a sort of morning hour upon all sublunary things, with an army of shadows running speedily and in many different directions into the great daylight of Eternity The shadows and the generations, the shrill doctors and the plangent wars, go by into ultimate silence and emptiness, but, underneath all this, a man may see out of the Belvedere windows much green and peaceful landscape, many firelit parlors, good people laughing, drinking, and making love as they did before the Flood or the French Revolution, and the old shepherd telling his tale under the hawthorn

Extreme busyness, whether at school or college, kirk or market, is a symptom of deficient vitality, and a faculty for idleness implies a catholic appetite and a strong sense of personal identity There is a sort of dead-alive, hackneyed people about, who are scarcely conscious of living except in the exercise of some conventional occupation Bring these fellows into the country, or set them aboard ship, and you will see how they pine for their desk or their study They have no curiosity, they cannot give themselves over to random provocations, they do not take pleasure in the exercise of their faculties for its own sake, and, unless Necessity lays about them with a stick, they will even stand still It is no good speaking to such folk, they cannot be idle, their nature is not generous enough, and they pass those hours in a sort of coma which are not dedicated to furious mowing in the gold-mill When they do not require to go to the office, when they are not hungry and have no mind to drink, the whole breathing world is a blank to them If they have to wait an hour or so for a train, they fall into a stupid trance with their eyes open To see them, you

would suppose there was nothing to look at and no one to speak with; you would imagine they were paralyzed or alienated, and yet very possibly they are hard workers in their own way, and have good eyesight for a flaw in a deed or a turn of the market. They have been to school and college, but all the time they had their eye on the medal, they have gone about in the world and mixed with clever people, but all the time they were thinking of their own affairs. As if a man's soul were not too small to begin with, they have dwarfed and narrowed theirs by a life of all work and no play until here they are at forty, with a listless attention, a mind vacant of all material of amusement, and not one thought to rub against another, while they wait for the train. Before he was breeched he might have clambered on the boxes, when he was twenty he would have stared at the girls; but now the pipe is smoked out, the snuff-box empty, and my gentleman sits bolt upright upon a bench, with lamentable eyes. This does not appeal to me as being Success in Life.

But it is not only the person himself who suffers from his busy habits, but his wife and children, his friends and relations, and down to the very people he sits with in a railway carriage or an omnibus. Perpetual devotion to what a man calls his business is only to be sustained by perpetual neglect of many other things. And it is not by any means certain that a man's business is the most important thing he has to do. To an impartial estimate it will seem clear that many of the wisest, most virtuous, and most beneficent parts that are to be played upon the Theatre of Life are filled by gratuitous performers, and pass, among the world at large, as phases of idleness. For in that Theatre not only the walking gentlemen, singing chambermaids, and diligent fiddlers in the orchestra, but those who look on and clap their hands from the benches do really play a part and fulfill important offices toward the general result. You are no doubt very dependent on the care of your lawyer and stockbroker, of the guards and signalmen who convey you rapidly from place to place, and the policemen who walk the streets for your protection, but is there not a thought of gratitude in your heart for certain other benefactors who set you smiling when they fall in your way, or season your dinner with good company? Colonel Newcome helped to lose his friend's money; Fred Bayham had an ugly trick of borrowing shirts; and yet they were better people to fall among than Mr. Barnes. And, though Falstaff was neither sober nor very honest, I think I could name one or two long-faced Barabbases whom the world could better have done without. Hazlitt mentions that he was more sensible of obligation to Northcote, who had never done him anything he could call a service, than to his whole circle of ostentatious friends; for he thought a good companion emphatically the greatest benefactor. I know there are people in the world who cannot feel grateful unless the favor has been done them at the cost of pain and difficulty. But this is a churlish disposition. A man may send you six sheets of letter-paper covered with the most entertaining gossip, or you may pass half an hour pleasantly, perhaps profitably, over an article of his; do you think the service would be greater if he had made the manuscript in his heart's blood, like a compact with the devil? Do you really fancy you should be more beholden to your correspondent if he had been damning you all the while for your importunity? Pleasures are more beneficial than duties because, like the quality of mercy, they are not strained, and they are twice blest. There must always be two to a kiss, and there may be a score in a jest; but wherever there is an element

of sacrifice, the favor is conferred with pain, and, among generous people, received with confusion. There is no duty we so much underrate as the duty of being happy. By being happy, we sow anonymous benefits upon the world, which remain unknown even to ourselves, or, when they are disclosed, surprise nobody so much as the benefactor. The other day a ragged, barefoot boy ran down the street after a marble with so jolly an air that he set every one he passed into a good humor, one of these persons, who had been delivered from more than usually black thoughts, stopped the little fellow and gave him some money with this remark: "You see what sometimes comes of looking pleased." If he had looked pleased before, he had now to look both pleased and mystified. For my part, I justify this encouragement of smiling rather than tearful children, I do not wish to pay for tears anywhere but upon the stage, but I am prepared to deal largely in the opposite commodity. A happy man or woman is a better thing to find than a five-pound note. He or she is a radiating focus of good-will, and their entrance into a room is as though another candle had been lighted. We need not care whether they could prove the forty-seventh proposition, they do a better thing than that—they practically demonstrate the great Theorem of the Livableness of Life. Consequently, if a person cannot be happy without remaining idle, idle he should remain. It is a revolutionary precept, but, thanks to hunger and the workhouse, one not easily to be abused, and, within practical limits, it is one of the most incontestable truths in the whole Body of Morality. Look at one of your industrious fellows for a moment, I beseech you. He sows hurry and reaps indigestion, he puts a vast deal of activity out to interest and receives a large measure of nervous derangement in return. Either he absents himself entirely from all fellowship, and lives a recluse in a garret, with carpet slippers and a leaden inkpot, or he comes among people swiftly and bitterly, in a contraction of his whole nervous system, to discharge some temper before he returns to work. I do not care how much or how well he works, this fellow is an evil creature in other people's lives. They would be happier if he were dead. They could easier do without his services in the Circumlocution Office than they can tolerate his fractious spirits. He poisons life at the well-head. It is better to be beggared out of hand by a scapegrace nephew than daily hag-ridden by a peevish uncle.

And what, in God's name, is all this pother about? For what cause do they embitter their own and other people's lives? That a man should publish three or thirty articles a year, that he should finish or not finish his great allegorical picture, are questions of little interest to the world. The ranks of life are full, and, although a thousand fall, there are always some to go into the breach. When they told Joan of Arc she should be at home minding women's work, she answered there were plenty to spin and wash. And so even with your own rare gifts! When nature is "so careless of the single life," why should we coddle ourselves into the fancy that our own is of exceptional importance? Suppose Shakespeare had been knocked on the head some dark night in Sir Thomas Lucy's preserves, the world would have wagged on better or worse, the pitcher gone to the well, the scythe to the corn, and the student to his book, and no one been any the wiser of the loss. There are not many works extant, if you look the alternative all over, which are worth the price of a pound of tobacco to a man of limited means. This is a sobering reflection for the proudest of our earthly vanities. Even a tobacconist may, upon consideration,

find no great cause for personal vainglory in the phrase, for, although tobacco is an admirable sedative, the qualities necessary for retailing it are neither rare nor precious in themselves. Alas and alas! you may take it how you will, but the services of no single individual are indispensable. Atlas was just a gentleman with a protracted nightmare! And yet you see merchants who go and labor themselves into a great fortune and thence into the bankruptcy court, scribblers who keep scribbling at little articles until their temper is a cross to all who come about them, as though Pharaoh should set the Israelites to make a pin instead of a pyramid; and fine young men who work themselves into a decline, and are driven off in a hearse with white plumes upon it. Would you not suppose these persons had been whispered, by the Master of the Ceremonies, the promise of some momentous destiny; and that this luke-warm bullet on which they play their farces was the bull's-eye and center point of all the universe? And yet it is not so. The ends for which they give away their priceless youth, for all they know, may be chimerical or hurtful, the glory and riches they expect may never come, or may find them indifferent; and they and the world they inhabit are so inconsiderable that the mind freezes at the thought.

CONCERNING THE AMERICAN LANGUAGE¹

by Mark Twain

"Mark Twain," the pseudonym of Samuel Langhorne Clemens (1835-1910), is a term, meaning two fathoms deep, used by pilots on the Mississippi River. Twain himself was such a pilot and he recounted his adventures on the river in *Life on the Mississippi*. As the author of *Tom Sawyer*, *Huckleberry Finn*, and *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* he needs no introduction to any American.

THERE was an Englishman in our compartment, and he complimented me on—on what? But you would never guess. He complimented me on my English. He said Americans in general did not speak the English language as correctly as I did. I said I was obliged to him for his compliment, since I knew he meant it for one, but that I was not fairly entitled to it, for I didn't speak English at all,—I only spoke American.

He laughed, and said it was a distinction without a difference. I said no, the difference was not prodigious, but still it was considerable. We fell into a friendly dispute over the matter. I put my case as well as I could, and said,—

"The languages were identical several generations ago, but our changed conditions and the spread of our people far to the south and far to the west have made many alterations in our pronunciation, and have introduced new words among us and changed the meanings of many old ones. English people talk through their noses; we do not. We say *know*, English people say *nao*, we say *cow*, the Briton says *kaow*, we—"

"Oh, come! that is pure Yankee; everybody knows that."

"Yes, it is pure Yankee; that is true. One cannot hear it in America outside

¹ From *The Stolen White Elephant*, by Mark Twain. By permission of Harper & Brothers.

of the little corner called New England, which is Yankee land. The English themselves planted it there, two hundred and fifty years ago, and there it remains, it has never spread. But England talks through her nose yet, the Londoner and the backwoods New-Englander pronounce 'know' and 'cow' alike, and then the Briton unconsciously satirizes himself by making fun of the Yankee's pronunciation."

We argued this point at some length, nobody won, but no matter, the fact remains,—Englishmen say *nao* and *kuow* for "know" and 'cow,' and that is what the rustic inhabitant of a very small section of America does.

"You conferred your *a* upon New England, too, and there it remains, it has not travelled out of the narrow limits of those six little States in all these two hundred and fifty years. All England uses it, New England's small population—say four millions—use it, but we have forty-five millions who do not use it. You say 'glahs of wawtah,' so does New England, at least, New England says *glahs*. America at large flattens the *a*, and says 'glass of water.' These sounds are pleasanter than yours, you may think they are not right,—well, in English they are *not* right, but in 'American' they are. You say *flahsk*, and *bahsket*, and *jackahss*, we say 'flask,' 'basket,' 'jackass,'—sounding the *a* as it is in 'tallow,' 'fallow,' and so on. Up to as late as 1847 Mr Webster's Dictionary had the impudence to still pronounce 'basket' *bahsket*, when he knew that outside of his little New England all America shortened the *a* and paid no attention to his English broadening of it. However, it called itself an English Dictionary, so it was proper enough that it should stick to English forms, perhaps. It still calls itself an English Dictionary today, but it has quietly ceased to pronounce 'basket' as if it were spelt *bahsket*. In the American language the *h* is respected, the *k* is not dropped or added improperly."

"The same is the case in England,—I mean among the educated classes, of course."

"Yes, that is true, but a nation's language is a very large matter. It is not simply a manner of speech obtaining among the educated handful, the manner obtaining among the vast uneducated multitude must be considered also. Your uneducated masses speak English, you will not deny that, our uneducated masses speak American,—it won't be fair for you to deny that, for you can see, yourself, that when your stable-boy says, 'It isn't the 'unting that 'urts the 'orse, but the 'ammer, 'ammer, 'ammer on the 'ard 'ighway,' and our stable-boy makes the same remark without suffocating a single *h*, these two people are manifestly talking two different languages. But if the signs are to be trusted, even your educated classes used to drop the *h*. They say *humble*, now, and *heroic*, and *historic*, etc, but I judge that they used to drop those *h*'s because your writers still keep up the fashion of putting *an* before those words, instead of *a*. This is what Mr Darwin might call a 'rudimentary' sign that that *an* was justifiable once, and useful,—when your educated classes used to say *umble*, and '*eroic*, and '*istorical*. Correct writers of the American language do not put *an* before those words."

The English gentleman had something to say upon this matter, but never mind what he said,—I'm not arguing his case. I have him at a disadvantage, now I proceeded—

"In England you encourage an orator by exclaiming 'H'yaah! h'yaah!' We

pronounce it *heer* in some sections, 'h'yer' in others, and so on; but our whites do not say 'h'yaah,' pronouncing the *a*'s like the *a* in *ah* I have heard English ladies say 'don't you'—making two separate and distinct words of it, your Mr Bernand has satirized it But we always say 'donthu.' This is much better Your ladies say, 'Oh, it's oful nice!' Ours say, 'Oh, it's awful nice!' We say, 'Four hundred,' you say 'For'—as in the word *or*. Your clergymen speak of 'the Lawd,' ours of 'the Lord', yours speak of 'the gawds of the heathen,' ours of 'the gods of the heathen' When you are exhausted, you say you are 'knocked up' We don't When you say you will do a thing 'directly,' you mean 'immediately', in the American language—generally speaking—the word signifies 'after a little.' When you say 'clever,' you mean 'capable'; with us the word used to mean 'accommodating,' but I don't know what it means now Your word 'stout' means 'fleshy'; our word 'stout' usually means 'strong.' Your words 'gentleman' and 'lady' have a very restricted meaning; with us they include the bar-maid, butcher, burglar, harlot, and horse-thief. You say, 'I haven't got any stockings on,' 'I haven't got any memory,' 'I haven't got any money in my purse', we usually say, 'I haven't any stockings on,' 'I haven't any memory,' 'I haven't any money in my purse' You say 'out of window'; we always put in a *the* If one asks 'How old is that man?' the Briton answers, 'He will be about forty', in the American language, we should say, 'He is about forty' However, I won't tire you, sir; but if I wanted to, I could pile up differences here until I not only convinced you that English and American are separate languages, but that when I speak my native tongue in its utmost purity an Englishman can't understand me at all"

"I don't wish to flatter you, but it is about all I can do to understand you now."

That was a very pretty compliment, and it put us on the pleasantest terms directly,—I use the word in the English sense

ON THE NEED FOR A QUIET COLLEGE¹

by Stephen Leacock

It is always something of a shock to be reminded that Stephen Leacock (1869-1944) was as fine a political economist as he was a humorist Nevertheless, the general reader will always best remember this Canadian professor for the keen wit, the laughs, and the sharp thrusts of such books as *Nonsense Novels*, *Moonbeams from the Larger Lunacy*, and *Model Memoirs*, from the last of which the following selection is taken.

IF SOMEBODY would give me about two dozen very old elm trees and about fifty acres of wooded ground and lawn—not too near anywhere and not too far from everywhere—I think I could set up a college that would put all the big universities of today in the shade. I am not saying that it would be better. But it would be different

¹ From *Model Memoirs* by Stephen Leacock Copyright, 1938, by Dodd, Mead & Company, Inc Reprinted by permission of Dodd, Mead & Company

I would need a few buildings, but it doesn't take many—stone, if possible—and a belfry and a clock. The clock wouldn't need to go, it might be better if it didn't. I would want some books—a few thousand would do—and some apparatus. But it's amazing how little apparatus is needed for scientific work of the highest quality in fact "the higher the fewer."

Most of all, I should need a set of professors. I would need only a dozen of them—but they'd have to be real ones—disinterested men of learning, who didn't even know they were disinterested. And, mind you, these professors of mine wouldn't sit in "offices" dictating letters on "cases" to stenographers, and only leaving their offices to go to "committees" and "conferences." There would be no "offices" in my college and no "committees," and my professors would have no time for conferences, because the job they would be on would need all eternity and would never be finished.

My professors would never be findable at any fixed place except when they were actually giving lectures. Men of thought have no business in an office. Learning runs away from "committees." There would be no "check up" on the time of the professors: there would be no "hire and fire" or "judge by results" or "standards" or "norms" of work for them or any fixed number of hours.

But, on the other hand, they would, if I got the ones I want, be well worth their apparent irresponsibility: and when they lectured each one would be, though he wouldn't know it, a magician—with such an interest and absorption that those who listened would catch the infection of it, and hurry from the lecture to the library, still warm with thought.

It must be understood that the work of professors is peculiar. Few professors, real ones, ever complete their work: what they give to the world is fragments. The rest remains. Their contributions must be added up, not measured singly. Every professor has his "life work" and sometimes does it, and sometimes dies first.

I can recall—I say it by way of digression—one such who was working on Machiavelli. When I first met him he had worked fourteen years. He worked in a large room covered a foot deep with Machiavelli—notes, pamphlets, remains. I asked him—it seemed a simple question—what he thought of Machiavelli. He shook his head. He said it was too soon to form an opinion. Later, ten years later, he published his book, *Machiavelli*. One of the great continental reviews—one of the really great ones (you and I never hear of them: they have a circulation of about 300) said his work was based on premature judgments. He was hurt, but he felt it was true. He had rushed into print too soon.

Another such devoted himself—he began years ago—to the history of the tariff. He began in a quiet lull of tariff changes when for three or four years public attention was elsewhere. He brought his work up to within a year or so of actual up-to-date completeness. Then the tariff began to move: two years later he was three years behind it. Presently, though he worked hard, he was five years behind it.

He has never caught it. His only hope now is that the tariff will move back towards free trade, and meet him.

Not that I mean to imply that my professors would be a pack of nuts or freaks. Not at all. Their manners might be dreamy and their clothes untidy but they'd be—they'd have to be—the most eminent men in their subjects. To get them would be the main effort of the college to coax them, buy them, if need be, to kidnap them. Nothing counts beside that. A college is made of men, not by the size of buildings, number of students and football records. But trustees don't know this, or, at best, catch only a glimmer of it and lose it. Within a generation all the greatest books on the humanities would come from my college.

The professors bring the students. The students bring, unsought, the benefactions. The thing feeds itself like a flame in straw. But it's the men that count. A college doesn't need students. It's the students who need the college.

After twenty years my college would stand all alone. There are little colleges now but they ape bigness. There are quiet colleges but they try to be noisy. There are colleges without big games but they boom little ones. Mine would seem the only one, because the chance is there, wide open, and no one takes it. After twenty years people would drive in motor cars to see my college and wouldn't be let in.

Round such a college there must be no thought of money. Money ruins life. I mean, to have to think of it, to take account of it, to know that it is there. Men apart from money, men in an army, men on an expedition of exploration, emerge to a new life. Money is gone. At times and places whole classes thus lift up, or partly: as in older countries like England the class called "gentry" that once was. These people lived on land and money from the past—stolen, perhaps, five hundred years ago—and so thought no more of it. They couldn't earn more; they didn't know how. They kept what they had, or dropped out, fell through a trestle bridge of social structure and were gone in the stream. This class, in America, we never had. They grow rare everywhere. Perhaps we don't want them. But they had the good luck that, in their lives, money in the sense here meant, didn't enter. Certain money limits circumscribed their life, but from day to day they never thought of it. A cow in a pasture, a fairly generous pasture, doesn't know it's in. It thinks it's outside. So did they.

So I would have it in my college. Students not rich and not poor—or not using their wealth and not feeling their poverty—an equality as unconscious as that where Evangeline lived.

Nor would their studies lead to, or aim at, or connect with wealth. The so-called practical studies are all astray. Real study, real learning must, for the individual, be quite valueless or it loses its value. The proper studies for my college are history and literature and philosophy and thought and poetry and speculation, in the pursuit of which each shall repeat the eager search, the unending quest, of the past. Looking for one thing he shall find another. Looking for ultimate truth, which is unfindable, they will learn at least to repudiate all that is false.

I leave out at one sweep great masses of stuff usually taught: all that goes under such a name as a university faculty of Commerce. There is no such thing. The faculty of Commerce is down at the docks, at Wall Street, in the steel mills. A "degree" in Commerce is a salary of ten thousand a year. Those

who fail to pass go to Atlanta—and stay there. Certain things in Commerce are teachable: accountancy, corporate organization and the principles of embezzlement. But that's not a university.

Out goes economics, except as speculation: not a thing to teach in instalments and propositions like geometry. You *can't* teach it. No one knows it. It's the riddle of the Sphinx. My graduates will be just nicely fitted to think about it when they come out. A first-year girl studying economics is as wide of the mark as an old man studying cosmetics. The philosophical speculative analysis of our economic life is the highest study of all, next to the riddle of our existence. But to cut it into classes and credits is a parody. Out it goes.

Out—but to come back again—goes medicine. Medicine is a great reality; it belongs in a *school*, not a college. My college fits people to study medicine, study it in crowded cities among gas lights and ambulances and hospitals and human suffering, and keep their souls alive while they do it. Then later, as trained men in the noblest profession in the world, the atmosphere of the college, which they imbibed among my elm trees, grows about them again. The last word in cultivation is, and always has been, the cultivated "medicine man."

The engineers?—that's different. Theirs is the most "manly" of all the professions—among water power and gold mines and throwing bridges half a mile at a throw. But it's a *school* that trains them, not a college. They go to my college but they don't like it. They say it's too damn dreamy. So they kick out of it into engineering. For a time they remember the Latin third declension. Presently they forget it. Doctors grow cultivated as they grow older. Engineers get rougher and rougher.

What I mean is that our studies have drifted away, away from the single-minded absorption of learning. Our students of today live in a whirl and clatter of "student activities." They have, in any large college, at least a hundred organizations and societies. They are "all up!" for this today and "all out!" for that tomorrow. Life is a continuous rally! a rah, rah! a parade! They play no games: they use teams for that. But exercise, and air, is their life. They *root*, in an organized hysteria, a code of signals telling them what to feel. They root, they rush, they organize, they play politics, run newspapers—and when they step from college into life, they fit it absolutely, having lived already.

No one is denying here what fine men and women college makes, physically fine and mentally alert. Any one of them could run an elevator the day he steps out of college.

But there's something wanting: do they *think*? Or is there anything after all to think about? And yet, surely, in the long run the world has lived on its speculative minds. Or hasn't it?

Some who think of course there must be. You can't submerge humanity in two generations. But mostly, I believe, the little poets fade out on their first-year benches, and the wistful intelligence learns to say "*Rah! Rah!*" and is lost.

Not so in my college. There will be no newspaper, except a last week's paper from the back counties of New England. There will be no politics because there will be no offices to run for. My students will control nothing. The whole

movement of student control is a mistake. They're so busy controlling that they're not students.

They shall play games all they want to, but as games, not as a profession, not as college advertising—and no gate receipts. Till only a few years ago the country that taught the world its games, played them as apart from money—as far apart as sheer necessity allowed. If Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton (it wasn't, really—it was won in Belgium), there was at least no stadium at two dollars a seat.

One asks, perhaps, about the endowments, about the benefactors of my ideal college. The benefactors are all dead: or at least they must act as if they were. Years ago on the prairies many authorities claimed that the only good Indian was a dead Indian. It may not have been true. But it is certainly true that the best college benefactor is a dead one. After all, the reward in the long run is his, those sculptured letters graven in the stone, "To the greater glory of God and in memory of Johannes Smith." That, in a college among elm trees—that's worth a lifetime of gifts, given and given gladly. Such things should best be graven in Latin. In my college they will be, Latin and lots of it, all over the place, with the mystic conspiracy of pretence, the wholesome humbug, that those who see it know what it means. Latin lasts. English seems to alter every thousand years or so. It's like the tariff that I named above—too mobile for academic use.

As with the benefactors, so with the managing trustees who look after the money and never lose it. Not dead, these, but very silent, solid men who don't need to talk and don't, but who can invest a million dollars over three depressions, and there it still is, like gold in a pot in the Pyramids. You find them chiefly in New England, at least I seem to have seen them there, more than anywhere else. They are at the head of huge investment businesses, so big that you never hear of them. Mostly, if they don't talk, it means that they are thinking where to place fifty million dollars. You see, they hate to break it.

And women? The arrangements in my college for the women students, and the women's dormitories? Oh, no—no, thank you. There aren't any women. Coeducation is a wonderful thing for women: college girls under coeducation leave college more fit to leave college than any others. College girls are better companions, better wives (as your own or as someone else's) than any others. It's the women who have made our college life the bright, happy thing it is—too bright, too happy.

But men can't *study* when women are around. And it's not only the students. If I let the women in, they'd get round some of my dusty old professors, and marry them—and good-bye to Machiavelli, and the higher thought.

WHAT MEN LIVE BY¹

by Christopher Morley

After graduating from Haverford College in 1910, Christopher Morley (b 1890) went on to Oxford as Rhodes scholar, the first of three brothers who all won this distinctive honor. Novelist and essayist, he is best known for *Where the Blue Begins*, *Thunder on the Left*, *Kitty Foyle*, and *Thorofare*. Today he is one of the judges of the Book of the Month Club.

WHAT a delicate and rare and gracious art is the art of conversation! With what a dexterity and skill the bubble of speech must be manoeuvred if mind is to meet and mingle with mind.

There is no sadder disappointment than to realize that a conversation has been a complete failure. By which we mean that it has failed in blending or isolating for contrast the ideas, opinions, and surmises of two eager minds. So often a conversation is shipwrecked by the very eagerness of one member to contribute. There must be give and take, parry and thrust, patience to hear and judgment to utter. How uneasy is the qualm as one looks back on an hour's talk and sees that the opportunity was wasted, the precious instant of intercourse gone forever, the secrets of the heart still incommunicate. Perhaps we were too anxious to hurry the moment, to enforce our own theory, to adduce instance from our own experience. Perhaps we were not patient enough to wait until our friend could express himself with ease and happiness. Perhaps we squandered the dialogue in tangent topics, in a multitude of irrelevances.

How few, how few are those gifted for real talk! There are fine merry fellows, full of mirth and shrewdly minted observation, who will not abide by one topic, who must always be lashing out upon some new by-road, snatching at every bush they pass. They are too excitable, too ungoverned for the joys of patient intercourse. Talk is so solemn a rite it should be approached with prayer and must be conducted with nicety and forbearance. What steadiness and sympathy are needed if the thread of thought is to be unwound without tangles or snapping! What forbearance, while each of the pair, after tentative gropings here and yonder, feels his way toward truth as he sees it. So often two in talk are like men standing back to back, each trying to describe to the other what he sees and disputing because their visions do not tally. It takes a little time for minds to turn face to face.

Very often conversations are better among three than between two, for the reason that then one of the trio is always, unconsciously, acting as umpire, interposing fair play, recalling wandering wits to the nub of the argument, seeing that the aggressiveness of one does no foul to the reticence of another. Talk in twos may, alas! fall into speaker and listener talk in threes rarely does so.

It is little realized how slowly, how painfully, we approach the expression of

¹ From *Mince Pie*. Copyright, 1919, 1947, by Christopher Morley, published by J. B. Lippincott Co.

truth We are so variable, so anxious to be polite, and alternately swayed by caution or anger The mind oscillates like a pendulum it takes some time for it to come to rest And then, the proper allowance and correction has to be made for our individual vibrations that prevent accuracy. Even the compass needle doesn't point the true north, but only the magnetic north. Similarly our minds at best can but indicate magnetic truth, and are distorted by many things that act as iron filings do on the compass The necessity of holding one's job what an iron filing that is on the compass card of a man's brain!

We are all afraid of truth we keep a battalion of our pet prejudices and precautions ready to throw into the argument as shock troops, rather than let our fortress of Truth be stormed. We have smoke bombs and decoy ships and all manner of cunning colorizations by which we conceal our innards from our friends, and even from ourselves How we fume and fidget, how we bustle and dodge rather than commit ourselves

In days of hurry and complication, in the incessant pressure of human problems that thrust our days behind us, does one never dream of a way of life in which talk would be honored and exalted to its proper place in the sun? What a zest there is in that intimate unreserved exchange of thought, in the pursuit of the magical blue bird of joy and human satisfaction that may be seen flitting distantly through the branches of life. It was a sad thing for the world when it grew so busy that men had no time to talk. There are such treasures of knowledge and compassion in the minds of our friends, could we only have time to talk them out of their shy quarries. If we had our way, we would set aside one day a week for talking. In fact, we would reorganize the week altogether We would have one day for Worship (let each man devote it to worship of whatever he holds dearest); one day for Work; one day for Play (probably fishing); one day for Talking; one day for Reading, and one day for Smoking and Thinking That would leave one day for Resting, and (incidentally) interviewing employers.

The best week of our life was one in which we did nothing but talk. We spent it with a delightful gentleman who has a little bungalow on the shore of a lake in Pike County He had a great many books and cigars, both of which are conversational stimulants We used to lie out on the edge of the lake, in our oldest trousers, and talk. We discussed ever so many subjects; in all of them he knew immensely more than we did We built up a complete philosophy of indolence and good will, according to Food and Sleep and Swimming their proper share of homage. We rose at 10 in the morning and began talking, we talked all day and until 3 o'clock at night. Then we went to bed and regained strength and combativeness for the coming day. Never was a week better spent. We committed no crimes, planned no secret treaties, devised no annexations or indemnities. We envied no one. We examined the entire world and found it worth while. Meanwhile our wives, who were watching (perhaps with a little quiet indignation) from the veranda, kept on asking us, "What on earth do you talk about?" Bless their hearts, men don't have to have anything to talk *about*. They just talk.

And there is only one rule for being a good talker: learn how to listen.

THE SILVER HORN¹

by Thomas Sancton

Thomas Sancton began his writing career as a reporter on the New Orleans *Times Picayune*. For some years he was a Contributing Editor on the *New Republic*, today he is a reporter on the Pascagoula, Mississippi, *Chronicle Star*. Since he is a native of Louisiana, we are safe in assuming that in the following essay he writes whereof he lived.

THE SCENE IS a Boy Scout summer camp, thickly grown with pines and cypress. There is a row of green clapboard cabins, with clean floors and neat double decker bunks, there is an open field and a flag hanging still in the heavy air, and at the field's edge the land drops down a little to the dark water of a bayou. I spent five summers here, from the time I was twelve until I entered college. I did my first real living and my first real thinking in this camp.

And I think of it now. Like some reader of a long novel who turns back through the pages to find a forgotten part of the plot, and who comes with a flash of recognition across old scenes and dialogues, and characters who have gone out of the narrative but whose personalities and substance once filled pages and pages, I have gone turning back through the pages of my life. When was it and where was it—I have been asking—that I first began to believe what I now believe about the Southern world I left not many years ago, about Negroes, about democracy, about America, about life and death, about men and all their curious fates? This search has been long and turning. Often it has led me back to the years of my early teens and to the summers I spent in the camp.

I was born to the sidewalks and asphalt of the largest city and the widest street in the South. In New Orleans, broad Canal Street was never empty of speeding automobiles and streetcars, even late at night, and of people walking by, their footsteps echoing on the sidewalk. But here on the bayou another world existed. In the morning it was the strange, thin call of a bugle that broke into our sleep. Almost before we were awake we could smell the wet exercise field and the forest. Birds popped from tree to tree, plump and colorful, blue-jays, mockingbirds, cardinals, flickers—Audubon had painted in these woods. Rabbits ran into the bushes. Snakes we had no fear of, long thick blue racers and speckled king snakes, slid through the weeds at our approach.

Standing in the wet grass, still yawning and sleepy, we took the morning exercises. Night chill was in the air, but behind our backs the sun was rising, and its warmth crept onto our shoulders. After the exercises we raced along a wagon road to the swimming pool, and as we ran up, shouting and excited, two or three startled frogs made tremendous leaps and plumped beneath the glassy surface of the water. After the swim we dried our skinny sunburned bodies and ran to the mess hall.

¹ From *Harper's Magazine* February 1944. Reprinted by permission of the author.

Most of us in the camp were poor boys, or boys who were almost poor. It was not a welfare camp, but the fees were low, less than a dollar a day for a camper. As a consequence it was filled with boys from modest New Orleans neighborhoods and also from the tough ones. There was always a smattering of the democratic rich the son of the traction company president came every summer. So did his cousin from Texas, a wild, hard towhead with plenty of money and the soul of a true picaroon. He fascinated and dominated the rest of us. He was the first colorful outlaw I ever knew. But most of the well-to-do families sent their boys to camps in the Maine woods or the North Carolina mountains. Our camp was only forty miles from the city. Department store clerks, streetcar motormen, little grocers could afford the fees.

We had no saddle horses, no golf course, and only a weed-grown tennis court which no one used. For diversion we fell back on nature. In the morning we performed a work detail, cutting a patch of weeds or hauling dirt in wheelbarrows to mend a road. After this we were free to swim, to paddle on the bayou in slender little Louisiana boats called pirogues, to fish for the boisterous black bass and yellow perch and fat blue catfish, and to work for our Boy Scout medals and merit badges, tracking through the grassy cut-over pine lands, cooking dough and bacon on sweet-gum spits, bandaging one another with first-aid splints.

These little medals and bits of colored ribbon meant a great deal to us. We wrote home enthusiastic letters about our progress, describing in detail how we had passed the tests, forwarding the comments of some eighteen-year-old camp officer as though it really mattered. Our parents, most of whom did not have very big events happening in their own lives, were just as eager and simple-hearted about these things, and one or two of the fathers were foolishly ambitious to have their sons win the highest number of merit badges in the area.

Little things that happened during these years seemed of great importance. I remember that in my first year at camp I wore an ill-fitting Boy Scout hat. One of the councillors, a boy five years my senior who seemed to me to belong already to the grown-up world of brilliance and authority, began, in a pleasant way, to tease me about the hat. Every morning for a week he led us to the abandoned logging road and clocked us as we walked and trotted a measured mile. My hat was anchored down by a heavy chin strap; it flopped and sailed about my head as I ran to the finish line. The boy began to laugh at me. He waved his arms and called out, "Come on, you rookie!" The other kids took it up and Rookie became my first nickname. I loved it. I tingled when someone called it out. I painted it on my belt, carved it in my packing case, inked it into my hatband, and began to sign it to my letters home. Years later when we were grown I knew this camp officer again. The gap between our ages had vanished and in real life now he seemed to me a rather colorless young lawyer. He did not remember about the hat.

At mealtime we ate ravenously in the mess hall. There were steaming platters of pork and beans and cabbage and stew. As we walked to the long clapboard building with our hair freshly combed and water glistening on our faces, which we washed at the flowing pipe of a big artesian well, we existed in a transport

of driving hunger In the steamy fragrance of the mess hall we set up a clatter of knives and forks and china, and afterward we went to our cabins and flopped on the bunks in a state of drowsy satisfaction Somehow, fat never formed on our skinny frames We ran too much We paddled in the boats We swam We cut firewood and played softball after supper When there was nothing else to do we climbed in the rafters of our cabins, trying to invent complicated monkey swings that no one else could do Every year some campers broke their arms

II

A giant Negro named Joe did the camp's heavy work He cut and trimmed the big trees, dug the deep post holes, mixed the cement, cleaned out the underbrush His strength was a never-ending fascination for the rest of us Joe was a light-eyed Negro, with a tan cast of skin and a huge bald dome of a head One of his grandparents must certainly have been a white man He lived half a mile down the bayou with his large and hazily defined family, in an old "plantation house"

Actually it was not, and never had been, a pretentious place, and I do not know what kind of plantation could have been there The ground round it was alternately sandy and swampy and there are no plantations where pine trees grow Pines mean sandy land In slave days the Negroes had boiled Southern history down to a couplet

Can't make a living on sandy lan'—
Ruther be a nigger den a po' white man

Joe's place stood on a cleared bend in the bayou The weatherboards and shingles were green with age The house rested on high slender pillars and there were patches of bright red brick where the covering mortar had fallen away The yard was shaded by two enormous water oaks, hung with gray Spanish moss, and an iron kettle stood beneath the trees where women did the washing At the bank of the bayou five or six towering cypress trees leaned heavily toward the water, for the slow currents of a century had washed their roots completely bare of soil To get a new anchorage on the land the trees had sent out a forest of gnarled roots and stubby knees along the shoreline The house seemed beautiful and somber in these surroundings as we paddled past it on our expeditions down the bayou to the lake

Obviously a white man had built this place long ago, and if he had not been a plantation owner, he had at least been a man of substance Perhaps this had been the summer home for some wealthy old New Orleans Frenchman in years gone by Sometimes the camp officers spoke of Joe as "caretaker" on the place But that was hardly possible He and his family inhabited every room, chickens roamed freely, and washing hung on lines stretched across the wide porch It was clear to us that the Negro giant was no caretaker here He possessed this place, to have and to hold How he got it and why we never asked him, and his presence there did not seem a very curious thing to us Already a dark, subjective understanding of Louisiana's history was in our blood and bones

Joe smoked strong cigarettes and chewed tobacco His teeth were rotted

stumps We delighted in bringing him supplies of smokes from the nearby town on Saturdays to win his quick and genuine appreciation There were two or three measures of a Cajun French ditty he used to sing, dancing and stomping the ground, waving his hat and swaying his heavy shoulders with real grace The words and the stomping finished together, with two hard accents. He would do this every time in exchange for a gift. Yet he did it in such a way that we knew always that this was nothing more than a grown-up man doing monkey-shines for children. He enjoyed making us laugh. There was nothing servile about it.

He got to be one of the people I liked best of all—not only in the camp but in my whole circumscribed world. I liked Joe very simply because he was a nice man He recognized me every year when I returned to the camp, and after the second or third year I could tell that he considered me a real friend and was glad to have me back. We talked together often, equally and easily, and when I was sixteen and seventeen and by then a councillor in the camp, Joe would do me the honor of becoming quite serious with me and of placing our whole friendship on a mature plane I do not remember many of the things we talked about, but I do remember that a conversation with him was a reassurance and a satisfaction; that it was always good to find him walking on the road and to fall in with him.

I saw a brief notice in the paper, some years after I had stopped going to the camp, that Joe had died of blood poisoning in the New Orleans Charity Hospital I thought of those stumps of teeth, and of the many years they had been seeping infection into his system I thought also of the tall trees I had seen him fell, and that now Joe too had come toppling to the earth. And, though I felt a quiet sorrow, I felt no anguish. Life grew rank and lush along the bayou. His old house was teeming with the spawn of his years The sun would beat upon the water forever, the trout would break the surface, the rushes would grow thick and green Joe had done his share of hauling and of digging. Now he could lie down in the warm and sun-drenched earth and sleep.

III

During those summers in camp a love grew up in me for the rhythms of nature, for tropical rains that came sweeping through the pines and oaks, for the fiery midday sun, for long evenings, and the deep black nights. Great campfires were lit beside the bayou and a rushing column of luminous smoke and sparks ascended to the cypress trees. Fire gleamed in the water where bass were sleeping in the stumps. Campers wandered toward the meeting place, their flashlights swinging in the woods. We sat about the fire, singing, beating deep rumbling tom-toms made of hollowed oak logs, performing an ageless repertoire of skits and mimicry And after these sessions one leader took the Protestant boys and another the Catholics and, standing in the open fields, in our separate groups, we prayed aloud.

My heart had strayed already from the formal, repetitious praying. A towering pine tree at the field's edge made a silhouette in the starry sky. I knew the constellations, the Giant, the Dipper, the Bear. I looked for the two inseparable stars, Misar and Alcar, horse and rider, and sensed the fact that Arabs named

these stars a thousand years before me, and even in my boy's ignorance I felt aware of man's long and varied time upon the earth. I knew this night filled wilderness had stretched beneath these stars for endless ages before Frenchmen had come in boats to build New Orleans. I thought of the Indians who had fished and hunted here, whose bones and broken pottery we sometimes found in grassy mounds. I felt worshipful of the earth, the pine tree, the night itself.

Sometimes we packed provisions and tents and mosquito bars and paddled down the bayou to the lake, ten miles away. The lake was a great inland finger of the Gulf of Mexico, twenty miles long, ten wide. Twenty miles below us, in prehistoric times, the mouth of the Mississippi river had built up new land, and these watery prairies had pinched off the small inland gulf and made a lake of it, but it connected still through a series of passes with the Mexican Gulf. The lake teemed with croakers, catfish, shrimp, and big blue-clawed crabs. At the northern end, where we camped, a network of tributary bayous emptied into the lake. For the last mile or so of their crooked lengths, where the brackish water of the lake crept into the slow-moving bayous, fish and small life were abundant, bass fed in the rushes, and muskrats built their cities of the plains.

There was a relatively high, sandy point near the mouth of the bayou, where we camped. The sun went down red into the lake and left a long, clear twilight. A few stars came out. A salty wind blew in from the Mexican Gulf, it came out of the south every night. The breeze swept over the rushes and made small waves break on the sandy, grassy shore. There was a red beacon light on weather-beaten piles out in the lake and its long reflection shimmered in the water. We sprayed our mosquito netting with citronella and built up a drift wood fire and lay down on canvas bedrolls spread upon the thin, tough grass and sand. The trade wind blew through our tents throughout the night. We listened to the waves. We could smell the vast salt marshes far below us. A yellow moon came out of the gulf. Far down the lake we could see the lights of a railroad bridge. We felt the beauty of this wilderness like a hunger.

After two days of fishing and swimming in the lake, our shoulders and faces darker from the sun, we paddled back up the winding bayou.

IV

One summer when I was sixteen a party of us, paddling upstream to buy some candy at a crossroads store, came upon three young girls who were bathing in a sandy cove. There were four of us in the long pirogue, all of an age. For a long moment we were speechless. At last we said hello, and they answered in warm gay voices. We drifted the boat into the cove and began to speak to them. Two of the girls were sisters. The three of them had come to visit a relative who kept a fine summer lodge in the woods across the bayou from the camp. One of the sisters was fifteen and the others were seventeen. They were aglow with fresh and slender beauty, and their bathing suits were bright flags of color. Their impact upon us was overwhelming. We grew silly, tongue-tied, said foolish things we did not mean to say, shoved one another about in the boat, and finally overturned it. The loreless laughed musical little laughs. They seemed unbearably beautiful. We had no idea what to do about it.

The girls had been at the lodge for a week. They missed their beaux in

New Orleans, they missed the dating and the dancing and the music. It was a gay town in the summertime. The older girls looked upon us as children, but still—they must have reflected—we were not such children at that. The younger sister, a slender child with thick brown hair and heavily crimsoned lips, sat on the bank and regarded us with a happy open face.

At last we took courage and asked if we could call on them that night.

"Oh, yes!" they cried eagerly. Life at that moment was dazzling.

Making this rendezvous was an impulsive thing to do, for it was midweek and we should have to steal away after taps and walk down a path without flashlights through a snake-infested lowland and—because the boats were counted and chained at nightfall—swim across the bayou, holding our clothes above our heads.

We crept from our cabins at ten o'clock that night and met in the pine woods. One of us intoned a counting-out rhyme, the loser had to walk first down the path through the snake hole. He cut a long gum sapling and rattled it down the path ahead of us. We walked bunched tightly together, tense with fear, giggling at our own unbelievable audacity, trembling in our eagerness. At the bayou's edge we slipped out of our shorts and shirts and sneakers and, holding them above our heads with one hand, we felt our way round the knees and along the sunken roots of a cypress tree, and pushed off into the bayou and began to swim.

The moon had not yet risen. We had only the silhouettes of trees to guide us. We swam closely together, cautioning one another to silence, bursting into convulsive squeals as water lilies brushed against our bodies or when a fish broke the surface near us. We swam upstream from the camp, past two bends, and waded from the water in the cove where we had met the girls. Now we were laughing with relief and excitement, and popping one another on the backsides. We scraped the glistening water from our bodies, dressed, and combed our wet hair and hurried off down the wagon path into the woods. Long ago the cove had been a landing stage for small schooners which came to load pine firewood for New Orleans.

The girls were waiting for us, dressed in bright print cotton dresses and wearing hair ribbons. The soft light gave age and mystery to their youthful shoulders, to their slender bodies, and, like nameless night-blooming vines in the woods about us, they bore a splendid fragrance all their own, a fragrance of youth and cleanliness and fresh cosmetics. They were playing a phonograph on the wide porch of the lodge. This was the summer of Maurice Chevalier's great success in American movies. The little sister sang his song, rolling her eyes, turning out her soft pink lip.

If ze night-ting gail
Cood zing lak you . .

And she sang another:

. . you make me feel so grand
I want to hand the world to you
You seem to understand
Each foolish little dream I'm dreaming, scheme I'm scheming . .

I was so in love with her I could hardly catch my breath I was in love with the other sister too, and with their friend All of the boys were in love with all of the girls, the girls—so they said—had crushes on each of us Our hearts were afire

We walked hand in hand down the wagon trail to the cove and built a bonfire We stretched out on blankets, laughing, singing We sang the songs that people always sing by rivers and campfires, "Here's a Long, Long Trail A-winding," "The Sweetheart of Sigma Chi," all the rest We kissed the girls and they held fast to us Before this night we had been only boys, holding hands with girls in movies, not quite sure why we pursued them and acted silly Now, lying beneath the open sky, for the first time we understood the poignance and the beauty of the human heritage

Every night for two weeks we came to see them And when they told us good-by the last kiss was as much a discovery as the first, and we knew that love was a thing that could never grow old After they had gone we would steal from our cabins to sit on the back porch of the camp hospital, on a hill, where we could see the bayou and the cove and the woods where we had found them, and we sat there talking late into the night, like dreamon lovers in the ballads of old I never passed the cove again, even years later when I would paddle down the bayou fishing, without remembering our meetings with a suddenly racing heart First love is unforgettable

v

I had no lessons to do in those summer months of camp life There was plenty of time to think I was living a communal life with other boys Among us were embryonic bullies, scoundrels, cheats, promoters, Babbitts, Christs, and stuffed shirts, and there were also the boys of good heart, the unselfish, the humorous, the courageous, boys who were the salt of the earth, but who, often in their later lives, would be misled and preyed upon and set against one another by the sharp ones One and all we lived together, ate together, slept together Our personalities clashed, fermented, or formed amalgams Sitting together at night in the lamplit cabins, with darkness and towering woods closing in upon us, we had our first grave talks about religion, about death, about sex The future stretching before us was wide and fathomless And all about us, in the grass, in the underbrush, in towering summer skies, we beheld the face of nature and the earth's wide harmonies as they had never been revealed in our city lives At night we could stretch out upon the field, observe the stars, and grasp for the first time the fact that some were vastly deeper in space than others In our star-study courses we heard phrases like "light years" It began to seep into the consciousness of many of us that a hundred years or the life of an individual had little meaning in the total universe, and from this point some of us began our first gropings after moral philosophy, gropings for a belief that could give the total universe a meaning in our own lives

There was a bugler in our camp who was the first consummate expert, in any field, that I had known He had no other talent but his music He was a good-natured, chubby, curly-headed Italian boy, rather lazy, and when he was

not back in the woods practicing his cornet he walked round with a dreamy look, as though our own handicrafts could not possibly be of interest to him.

Paolo had a silver trumpet and he preferred it to the bugle. He wanted to be a great musician. He would take his horn and music back into a pine clearing a quarter of a mile from the camp and all day long we could hear him practicing the runs. He blew the trumpet with a clear, sweet tone. We had supreme confidence as we stood at attention on the parade grounds and the flag came down the creaking flagpole pulley in the late afternoon sunlight, and Paolo stood alone, with everyone watching, and bugled. We were proud of him when visitors came. He had that ability of experts to create a sense of possessiveness in others.

It was at bedtime that Paolo gathered up into his clear, thin music all the ineffable hungering of our awakening lives. At ten o'clock he climbed a high ladder to a life-guard platform we had nailed into the branches of a tall cypress tree beside the bayou. Paolo lived for this moment and, with the whole camp silent and listening below him in the darkness, he blew taps with a soft and ghostly beauty all his own. Somehow the music spoke for us, uttered the thing we knew but had no words for, set up a wailing in the pine trees of the brevity and splendor of human life. Lying in our bunks in the darkness of the cabin, some of us fell into sleep; but some lay in silence thinking longer, alive to the night, and I was of these.

One night some ten years later I entered a smoke-filled tavern in another city where Paolo was playing in a band. By this time he had made a small reputation as a boy with a hot trumpet. I watched his now older face as he tore through the hot routines. He was tired. The silver horn made noise but, though I knew little about it, I could see that he was not a great jazz musician.

I did not go to see him any more. I wanted to remember Paolo before he had lost something, before any of us had lost it, a kind of innocence. I wanted to remember him in the land of our first discoveries, when he had climbed into a cypress tree to blow his horn, and there was a kind of Gothic night-drench in our lives.

BASIC ISSUES

EDUCATION AND WORLD TRAGEDY¹

by Howard Mumford Jones

Howard Mumford Jones (b 1892) is a professor of English in Harvard University and president of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Equally renowned as scholar and essayist, he has in the book of which the following essay forms the title chapter powerfully depicted the impact of World War II on our educational system and suggested the possible impact of our educational system on the concept of war itself.

IF ANY human being brought up in the tradition of western civilization could, by some miracle, step outside the familiar patterns of that culture, if history could come to him with the same shock of surprise that a new and stimulating novel brings him, if, in sum, retaining the moral idealism of western civilization as a standard of measurement, he could yet discover for the first time what has happened to mankind in the last fifty years, such a person would, I think, be overwhelmed by a single tragic conviction, namely, that the history of mankind for the last half century has been a history of deepening horror.

Since 1896 the earth has scarcely known a year without warfare, armed revolt, massacre, pogrom or other ingenious form of slaughter. During the first thirty years of the present century, according to Quincy Wright's authoritative study of war, European powers alone fought seventy-four wars, which lasted a total of 297 years, roughly, the average war was four years long. One has to go back to the twelfth century to find a comparable record. In that unenlightened century the average war lasted only three years and a half.

The years since 1896 include two infernal conflicts—World War I and World War II. They include such disastrous struggles as the Boer War of 1899-1902, the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05, the two bloody Balkan Wars of 1912-13, the innumerable wars, revolts, "interventions," and massacres in Finland, the Caucasus, the Ukraine, Poland, Hungary, Manchuria, Siberia, and other "border" areas, which followed the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. They include the long drawn out agony of China, which, beginning with the massacre of garrison troops in 1917, continues to this hour. They include the intermittent civil war in Spain. These are the major events.

But there were other episodes, tragic in their time. Who now vividly remembers the Formosa rebellion of 1896? The Cretan massacre of 1897, when Christians slaughtered the Moslem peasantry? The Boxer rebellion of 1900?

¹ Reprinted by permission of the publishers from Howard Mumford Jones, *Education and World Tragedy*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1946.

The Philippine insurrection and the "water cure"? The massacre of a million Armenians between 1896 and 1919? Yet all these are soberly chronicled in any encyclopedia

The year 1922 is as representative as any. The Irish civil war was raging, and there were Black and Tan outrages. The year opened with the slaughter of 300 Greek civilians in Samsun. By August about 100,000 Greeks had been killed or captured (I do not know the figures for the Turkish dead), some tens of thousands of civilians having been slain. The bloody climax of 1922 was reached at the taking of Smyrna, when an estimated 200,000 Christians were rendered homeless and the city was given over to pillage, rapine, massacre and fire.

Even at the risk of monotony one must chronicle other wars in this unhappy half century. There was an earlier Graeco-Turkish war in 1897-98, and an Italo-Turkish war in 1911. Between 1928 and 1935 Bolivia and Paraguay fought to exhaustion over the possession of a tropical jungle. Indeed, during many, if not most, of these fifty years there have been rebellions in Latin America, and though it is sometimes said that armed revolt is the standard form of presidential election in that distressed area, a man dead of a bullet in Caracas or Asunción will no more come to life again than a man dead of a bullet at Vimy Ridge or Bataan.

The half century has seen armed rebellion sweep through such famous capitals as Paris, Berlin, Madrid, Athens and Rome. It has seen more or less protracted revolutionary struggles in Russia, Mexico, Spain, France, Germany, India, Egypt, Palestine, the other Arabian states, Mongolia, China, Hungary, Austria, Greece, Iran, and various other countries, besides what uncounted minor uprisings—Nicaragua, Haiti, Albania, Thailand and the like—only the *World Almanac* now tells us. Ours is a sick age.

How many human beings have been killed directly or indirectly in the course of this terrible history? It is almost impossible to find out. One man's guess is as good as another's. Statistics about death by warfare are not kept in some continents, and, moreover, by its very nature modern warfare sometimes destroys both record and statistician. For example, we do not know and probably shall never know how many hundreds of thousands have died of violence in Asia and Africa during these fifty years. How many perished during the obscure struggle for the control of Tannu-Tuwa, a country twice as large as Scotland, lying between Mongolia and Siberia? How many Koreans were slaughtered by their Japanese overlords? How many natives died during the struggle for the control of the Belgian Congo? We do not know, just as we do not know how many hundreds of thousands died in Russia, on its borders, or in neighboring states during the terrible convulsions that swept over the future Soviet Union between 1914 and the adoption of the constitution of 1925. We do not know how many millions Hitler and his agents killed. But what we know with rough accuracy is sufficiently appalling.

Before 1900 about 25 per cent of all battle casualties died; in World War I this increased to 33½ per cent. In the seventeenth century it is estimated that, out of every thousand Frenchmen, 11 died in military service; in the twentieth century, up to World War II, 63 thus perished, an increase of almost 600 per

cent Out of every thousand Europeans alive in the twelfth century it is thought that two died as battle casualties, in the first twenty-five years of the twentieth century 54 out of every thousand so died, an increase of 1700 per cent Professor Pitirim Sorokin estimates that during the first third of this century Europe suffered 24 million war casualties If we slaughtered or wounded every man, woman, and child in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey tomorrow, we should about equal this number

From the eleventh to the twentieth centuries war casualties totaled about 18 million In the first three decades of the present century we have therefore killed $33\frac{1}{2}$ per cent more human beings than were killed in the previous 800 years But these figures do not include five other continents, and they take us only to the rise of Hitler There were, it is thought, ten million dead in World War I Influenza, typhus, starvation, and other destroying agencies killed some ten million more But these figures are principally for Europe, the best guess for the whole world is that 40 million died, directly or indirectly, in World War I To equal this number of Americans we shall have to add to the slaughter of New England, New York, and New Jersey, the deaths of every man, woman and child in Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and the District of Columbia—a little less than one-third of the total population of the United States

We do not yet know the figures for World War II or for the conflicts that preceded it like the civil war in Spain, which, however, accounted for about two and one-half million dead One tiny state—Luxembourg—lost 4000 in battle and at least 500 others executed by the conquerors Twenty-five thousand civilians alone were killed in Belgium The dead in Holland were at least 200,000 (this does not include later deaths by malnutrition) In Yugoslavia during the resistance to the Germans in 1942-43 there were one million dead, a million more were killed from 1943 to 1945 The Japanese dead are reckoned at more than three million About three and one-half million Poles were shot, murdered, gassed, starved or tortured to death According to a correspondent writing in *The Christian Science Monitor* for November, 1945, from Poznan to Stettin the Polish plain, once a granary for Germany, is for 150 miles as "barren and neglected as a desert" and cannot support a new population for indefinite months

The German dead up to the summer of 1945 are estimated at eight and one-half million, how many have since died of starvation or of vengeance is unknown The military dead in China from 1937 to 1944 are nearly three million, the civilian dead anything you like—ten million, twelve million, twenty million One figure for Russian losses gives 21 million casualties of all sorts A United Press dispatch from the Vatican in November, 1945, estimated the dead, military and civilian, in World War II at over 22 million, the wounded at 34 and one-half million, or 56 million casualties in all The population of the entire South, including Delaware and Maryland, in 1940 was 41 millions If every man, woman, and child in Alabama were butchered they would number less than half the number of Jews butchered in Europe since

1933. If the entire population of the United States were wiped out tomorrow, their number would be less than the number of human beings who have died of violence, disease or starvation in war or as a result of it during the last half century. It doesn't make sense.

While this blind struggle continues, it increases its ferocity. Through the mouth of Satan in *The Mysterious Stranger* Mark Twain sardonically remarks, "No brute ever does a cruel thing—that is the monopoly of those with the Moral Sense." I turn to the formal indictment listing the criminal acts of the Nazis for illustrations of the Moral Sense of mankind. This document includes only those crimes for which there is legal evidence. Here is a summary of one sub-section of one indictment only—the sub-section covering murders and tortures in eastern Germany and western Russia.

The figures run: at Maidanek 1,500,000 persons exterminated; at Auschwitz, 4,000,000; in Lwow and its environs, 700,000, in the Livenitz forest and environs, 133,000 Jews tortured and shot; in Ganov, 200,000 peaceful citizens exterminated by "the most refined methods of cruelty," mass shootings taking place to the accompaniment of orchestral music furnished by players who were next to be shot, in the Ozarichi region, tens of thousands interned, many dying of typhus injections, in Esthonia, on one day only, at Camp Klooga, 2,000 persons shot; in Lithuania, at Paneriai, at least 100,000 killed; in Kaunas, more than 70,000; in Alytus, about 60,000; at Prenai, about 3,000; at Ukmerge, about 8,000; in Mariampole, about 7,000; in Trakai and its environs, about 37,640, in Latvia, 577,000 murdered; at Smolensk, 135,000; near Leningrad, about 172,000; in Stravopol, tens of thousands; in Pyatigorsk, an unknown number; in Krasnodar, 6,700; at Stalingrad, 50,000; in Orel, 5,000; in Novgorod, many thousands; near Kiev, 100,000; in and about Rovno, one million. There is another column of particulars for this part of Europe alone.

Here is one of the more bearable paragraphs describing the manner of these deaths. "After the Germans were expelled from Stalingrad more than 1,000 mutilated bodies of local inhabitants were found with marks of torture. One hundred and thirty-nine women had their arms painfully bent backward and held by wires. From some, their breasts had been cut off and their ears, fingers, and toes had been amputated. The bodies bore the marks of burns. On the bodies of the men the five-pointed star was burned with an iron or cut with a knife. Some were disemboweled." The full bill of particulars may be read in *The New York Times* for October 19, 1945.

These dead are at peace. Unnumbered thousands of human beings live on in a world-wide condition of famine. Unnumbered thousands of human beings whose lives have been wrecked by war or starvation or despair or disease still exist. Regarding the long-range results of war upon our lives Professor Wright tells us.

Closely related to the racial [i.e., human] cost of war but . . . less susceptible to objective measurement are the social and cultural costs of war in the deterioration of standards. Wars of large magnitude have been followed by anti-intellectual movements in art, literature and philosophy; by waves of crime, sexual license, suicide, venereal disease, delinquent youth; by class, racial and religious intolerance,

persecution, refugees, social and political revolution, by abandonment of orderly processes for settling disputes and changing law, and by a decline in respect for international law and treaties²

The standards of only a few, he says, are elevated by war, a minor gain which by contrast deepens the gloom of the general picture

"Deterioration of standards" is a vague phrase. Three sets of parallel instances may make vivid what Professor Wright has in mind. In 1903 Americans were horrified to learn of an anti-Jewish pogrom in the city of Kiev. Strong denunciations of Russia were uttered by church groups and others. In this pogrom 47 Jews were killed and 700 houses destroyed—together an amateur affair. Yet in 1945, although the Germans are known to have massacred between six and seven million Jews by means extending from simple shooting to "the most refined methods of cruelty," foreign correspondents reported that many American soldiers were finding the Germans the most agreeable Europeans they had met and deciding that the horrors of the concentration camps were either incidental or the invention of propagandists.

Again in 1937 Vittorio Mussolini, warring against the blameless Ethiopians, was roundly scolded by sensitive Americans for saying "To me war is a sport—the most glorious sport in existence. I remember that one group of horsemen gave me the impression of a budding rose as the bombs fell in their midst." One supposes that if a hundred horsemen were killed as petals of the budding rose, the bomb was singularly successful. Five or six years later, American airmen were regularly cheered for their sporting prowess in bringing down Japanese planes, and the science reporter of *The New York Times* was thought in 1945 to have written a singularly effective prose masterpiece about the rare beauty of the atomic bomb upheaval over Hiroshima. This killed or mutilated, we are told, 140,000 or 150,000 human beings, 30,000 so completely that no trace of them remains.

The official report of the United States Strategic Bombing Survey as printed in *The New York Times* Sunday, June 30, 1946, says that the mortality rate per square mile destroyed at Hiroshima was 15,000 and at Nagasaki, 20,000, and after discussing death by "flash burns" ("radiant heat of incredible temperatures that struck its victims with the speed of light") remarks that other victims were bombarded with visible and invisible rays.

The victims of these rays who did not die instantly were made sterile, pregnant women suffered miscarriages, some lost their hair, suffered diseases of the mouth, pharynx and intestinal tract, or they had hemorrhages of gums, nose and skin.

There is reason to believe that if the effects of blast and fire had been entirely absent from the bombing, the number of deaths among people within a radius of one half mile would have been almost as great as the actual figures and the deaths among those within one mile would have been slightly less.

The principal difference would have been in the time of the deaths. Instead of being killed outright they would have survived for a few days or even three or four weeks, only to die eventually of radiation disease.

² Quincy Wright, *A Study of War*, 2 vols (University of Chicago Press, 1942), I, 246

It is encouraging to read that at distances between 6,500 and 10,000 feet from "zero point" of the bomb, one-third of the pregnant women gave birth to apparently normal children

A third and final example in 1917 one-tenth of the city of Halifax was destroyed by the accidental explosion of 3,000 tons of TNT. Immediately cities like Boston rushed food and supplies to the devastated area, asking no question about the politics of the sufferers or of the administrators of the relief work. In 1945, when the lives of millions, some of them our allies in World War II, almost literally depended upon our ability to move food into devastated Europe, the Congress of the United States haggled for months over the politics of the administrators, refusing to appropriate necessary money though hundreds of thousands starved. Such are the coarsening effects upon our finer sensibilities of an uninterrupted diet of blood.

II

It would of course be possible to add other illustrative examples. One of our chief reasons for entering World War I was that we were morally outraged by unrestricted submarine warfare; in World War II we delighted to wage successful unrestricted submarine warfare ourselves. In 1937 the destruction of men, women and children in the city of Guernica by aerial bombardment during the Spanish civil war seemed to many liberals morally outrageous. In 1945 American aviators blasted Nagasaki off the map, killing civilian men, women and children by the thousands, but there was no effective protest. So deep have we descended into the pit that Dr. Irving Langmuir, Nobel Prize winner, physical chemist and associate director of the General Electric Research Laboratories, solemnly warned a joint meeting of the American Philosophical Society and the National Academy of Sciences in the autumn of 1945 in Philadelphia that so-called atomic warfare, unless the release of nuclear energy is controlled by the world, may make the entire earth uninhabitable, wiping out the ignoble race of men. Dr. Langmuir is a conservative scientist. He spoke sadly and seriously. The Americans read his words in such of our irresponsible newspapers as bothered to publish them and then turned to the sports pages. We do not believe things like this because we do not wish to believe them.

Dr. Langmuir's statement suggests a second basic fact in this brutal history. It is that modern warfare is increasingly a function of education, and education is increasingly dominated by war. We do not like to think that this is so. We try desperately to deceive ourselves. One form of optimistic rationalization is the "progress" fallacy. The progress fallacy assumes that mankind always survives any conceivable weapon.

Thus, precisely as the bow and arrow rendered the club ineffective, so the invention of gunpowder made the bow and arrow obsolete. Precisely as the airplane made horsemen useless, so the atomic bomb has rendered existing weapons obsolete. But as mankind survived these earlier shifts to deadlier modes of destruction, so mankind will survive Dr. Langmuir's threat of planetary suicide. Therefore, although the problem is serious, the terms of the problem of atomic energy are the same terms as those of the bow and arrow problem. We need not worry, or at least not worry too much. The argument

of course ignores the mounting tide of unnecessary destruction, the loss of potential human energy, and the setbacks to genuine development along our historic road

Let us examine this logic Doubtless the first club bearer wounded by a distant Bowman marvelled at the new technology before he died Ere long, however, his tribe had been trained to manufacture bows and arrows So, too, after gunpowder superseded bows and arrows, both sides eventually manufactured gunpowder But there was a significant difference Fewer men in any society can manufacture rifles than can make bows and arrows, because the manufacture of rifles depends upon the possession by a minority of the population of technological skills, proper factories, power, and sufficient raw materials To insure the existence of these things requires a higher concentration of educational facilities than is required in the bow and arrow society And of course a still smaller number of persons can make or use the highly complex artillery of yesterday's warfare than can make or use rifles and shotguns, and only a few scientists and technologists and only a few industrial societies can turn out atomic bombs Therefore it is that the increasing intricacy of our lethal weapons is a function of the increasing technological skills of the human race This of course means that in modern civilizations a constantly decreasing percentage of the population is directly capable of creating the weapons of modern warfare, so that some H. G. Wells of the future, taking a leaf from Aristophanes, may show how a future war was stopped by a sit-down strike of scientists, technicians, and skilled laborers

Of course our technological skills are not used solely for warfare, but in view of the increasing length, ferocity, and destruction of modern war this is not now the point, especially since, in time of war, technological skill devoted to destruction has the highest possible priority Certain it is, moreover, that the latest destroyers of humanity—the torpedo, the submarine, the airplane, the tank, poison gas, the rocket, and the A-bomb—are products of highly educated, or at least highly trained, personnel All but one or two of these are principally or wholly the products of American technological ingenuity We missed out on poison gas, but we made it up on the atom bomb

However, the connection between warfare and education goes deeper than the simple but impressive connection between destruction and technical training The training of soldiers, sailors and airmen grows increasingly complex If Hitler and Mussolini were men of no particularized education, their rise to military power was abnormal rather than typical, and for the most part, in modern times, the men who launch wars and who manage them are products of professional education at least as exhaustive and specialized as the education of a doctor, a physicist or a lawyer Members of a modern general staff devote their lives to study, so that a traditional military leader like General Forrest or Mad Anthony Wayne would not know what to make of these studious and intellectual careers

Indeed, during World War I, William Jennings Bryan was quaintly out of date when he said that in case of invasion the American people would spring to arms—something that the technological advance of the nineteenth century rendered ineffective and impossible Nowadays it is impossible for a nation to

spring to arms in the old-fashioned sense, and if minute men leaving the plow for the musket sufficed for Lexington and Concord, not even the Home Guard would have sufficed for the Battle of Britain if the German invasion had come. The *levée en masse* of the French Revolution is antiquated in a world in which the elementary education of a private or of a common sailor takes three months, and a year is considered essential for lasting training—a year filled with educational exercises of such rigor that the colleges cannot compete in intensity. If anarchy should settle over the globe, it is of course possible that a new and illiterate Attila or Genghis Khan might raise, equip and lead popular armies, but in the contemporary world warfare like industry depends primarily upon the continuation and advance of highly complex engineering and scientific studies.

This dependence comes by and by to affect not merely the training of the fighting man, it affects in time the life of the civilian. The difference between a war fought by the professional army of Frederick the Great and total warfare in the twentieth century is that the entire population participates in modern warfare, not merely in the sense that it may reasonably expect to get killed or wounded, but also in the sense that it shares to greater or less degree this professional training, even if it is no more than civilian street patrolling, the care of children in deep underground shelters, or assignment to an "essential" factory. One has to look back at the relative indifference of most of the population in the American Revolution, the War of 1812, or the Mexican War to see how far we have come. Even during the Civil War life in the North went on as usual, and civilian energies were so little controlled by warfare that the settlement of the West went forward, mining was developed, and shipping, agriculture, and industry increased, partly, to be sure, as a function of warfare, but mainly in a normal mode of progression which the war stimulated but which the fighting did not bend to its own purpose. Contrast the control of civilian life by Washington in World War II. Contrast the even more rigid control of national existence in the British Isles during the same period and since.

Education, then, becomes more and more involved with warfare as warfare develops. Use and wont have of course accustomed us to this strange alliance between destruction and education. Looking backward, we can see how far we have advanced along our fatal road. When in 1808 Napoleon created the University of France as a single body to direct education in his empire, he may have intended to conscript men's minds as he conscripted their bodies, but the ministry of war did not take over the University of Paris, invade its classrooms or establish a special military curriculum. On the contrary, even under despotism, the University of Paris operated as a civilian institution. So, too, when Frederick William III founded the University of Berlin in 1810, that institution, though it was meant to be "a weapon of war as well as a nursery of learning," made its martial contribution in the field of the spirit only. Its curriculum was not dictated by Prussian generals, and *Lehrfreiheit* and *Lernfreiheit*, two essentially civilian concepts, were from the beginning the theoretical principles of its life. In the same epoch Britain sometimes stood alone and sometimes feared an invasion from the Continent. Yet Oxford, Cambridge,

St Andrews, Edinburgh and Dublin universities pursued the peaceful tenor of their civilian ways

In the United States neither the War of 1812 nor the war with Mexico touched the life of our colleges significantly. During the American Civil War Northern colleges and universities, though diminished in manpower, continued to function, and Professor Theodore W. Hunt of Princeton, who lived through that period, tells us that "during the four years of war there was 'no general or protracted suspension of college work, no such nervous tension existing as that which we have noticed in these tragic days of international strife'" (He is talking about World War I). In the South, of course, colleges ceased to exist where the students enlisted or where the buildings were destroyed, but these institutions were never taken over by the Confederate War Department as institutions. Even so recent a conflict as the Spanish-American War left the American universities to themselves.

The American Civil War nevertheless had a profound effect upon our collegiate education. It is true that in the light of modern science and technology, that war was fought on lines as primitive as the wars of Xerxes. But in 1862 the Morrill Act extended federal aid to individual states which would agree to create technological and agricultural colleges. This act sprang from the growing conviction that the superior potential of the nation in transportation and industry must be preserved. The effects of this act, adopted during a period of war, have been epochal. In 1860 there were four engineering schools in the country, in 1929 there were 148 technical colleges. In 31 years ending in 1866 only 300 engineering degrees had been granted, by 1917 these degrees numbered 60,000, and the number of engineering graduates per million of our population had increased from 3 to 43. Among the institutions owing much to the Morrill Act are the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Cornell University. The law requires each college profiting by it to institute courses in military training or to offer equivalent instruction.

In 1916 the National Defense Act further enriched the alliance between war and education by creating in the colleges the Reserve Officers' Training Corps, which was for a brief period eclipsed by the Students' Army Training Corps, established in October, 1918, in more than 400 colleges and enrolling 140,000 men. The significant fact is not the success or failure of this short-lived enterprise, the significant fact is that the colleges accepted it almost without protest, as part of their duty to the nation. Drs. Capen and W. C. John averred that the Students' Army Training Corps "saved colleges from virtual extinction" in World War I. But the War Department Committee on Education and Special Training had earlier declared that the "sole purpose . . . repeatedly stated by the War Department was to increase the military power of the country." In other words, education was made subordinate. President Thwing of Western Reserve University, in his history of higher education in World War I, flatly states that "the colleges became, like the railroads, essentially government institutions," that "students pursued a course of study which was either military or colored by military conditions," that "academic standards were arbitrarily set aside, academic methods were condemned, military standards, manners, and methods were installed" and that "in the development of the Students'

Army Training Corps the Federal Government approached more nearly than by any other method or measure to the German procedure of the control of higher education." To Dean Boyd of the University of Kentucky, writing in 1919, it seemed a happy thing that "our educational system" was "still virile enough to make of itself a special tool for a special purpose." But of course an educational system thus virile, when it becomes a special tool for a special purpose—in this case, technological preparation for destruction—ceases to exist except as a special tool. And albeit the colleges were returned to civilian aims, the fact had been discovered that they could be quickly converted to war.

However, the creation of soldiers, particularly of a skilled officer personnel, was not the only task of higher education in World War I. The present American Council on Education grew out of a movement organized in January, 1918, to "place the resources of the educational institutions of our country more completely at the disposal of the National Government." That one of the highest purposes of an educational institution operating on *Lernfreiheit* and *Lehrfreiheit* might be to avoid commitment to governmental policies was something the statement ignored. War research under the National Research Council then, as later, occupied the attention of academic research workers, to the exclusion of pure science. Commitment to governmental policies was more important in technological warfare than commitment to the increase of knowledge. The change was defended as necessary to national existence. The defense, if it be one, illumines the history of the increasing alliance between education and war.

Of the six aims set up by the National Research Council two were avowedly military: "the quickening of research in the sciences and in their application to the useful arts, in order to increase knowledge, *to strengthen national defense*, and to contribute in other ways to the public welfare" was one; and "to call the attention of scientific and technical investigators *to the importance of military and industrial problems in connection with the war*, and to the furthering of the solution of these problems by specific researches" was the other. (My italics.) All this was doubtless necessary, but if the processes of history are necessary, we cannot avoid facing the implications of historical determinism. If scientists have been lately perturbed by the threat of governmental control of research, the various bills in Congress designed to safeguard the secrets of nuclear energy for military purposes or to subsidize scientists as a means of strengthening the national defense are simply the logical carrying out of the aims of the National Research Council established by the Academy of Sciences in 1916.

In World War I half the college laboratories were working on war problems under conditions which had nothing to do with the search after knowledge for its own sake. Training was characteristically military. Replying to a questionnaire, the Case School of Applied Science could say that "all courses are taught more or less with war in view." The *Princeton Alumni Weekly* declared in 1917 that "every day Princeton becomes less an academic college and more a school of war." Another educational historian, Dr. Kolbe, describes World War I as "in a broad sense a college man's war," says that the "colleges practically forced their services on the Nation," and remarks that "a period of war

made of us a military nation and has militarized our system of higher education."

At the conclusion of hostilities war time controls were taken off the colleges, which reverted to their civilian status. The explanation is sometimes therefore advanced that the conscription of the colleges for military purposes is a highly abnormal procedure, which must not be mistaken for national policy. The defense does not defend. Having discovered in World War I how useful the colleges could be, the nation in World War II converted them to adjuncts of its military system much more quickly and efficiently because it had the experience of World War I to go on. World War II, in sum, simply broadened and extended the relation between war and education worked out some thirty years ago, and our experience is so recent and familiar as to require no exposition here. So gradually does one become accustomed to imperceptible change that it surprised nobody to find the laboratories of great universities surrounded by armed guards and inaccessible even to officers of the institutions which owned them. One further step in the story must, however, be noted. If World War I put college men into uniform, World War II turned women's colleges into military and naval establishments, and one beheld without any amazement an institution like Smith College become a training ground for the WAVES and young women in uniform marched by platoons to classes in the Harvard Business School.

III

A final fact to be observed in this strange, eventful history is to note how nationalism increasingly invades education. The eighteenth century was perhaps the last period when a truly international culture was the common object of study, at least among cultivated classes in the western world. But the schools of the eighteenth century were still characteristically under the control of the church, of princes who prided themselves on participating in the Enlightenment, or of private persons and corporations. As yet education was not customarily created or paid for by the state.

Throughout the nineteenth century, however, and increasingly in the twentieth, the doctrine that education is a proper charge against the public purse has meant that the state, in greater and greater degree, has made education the instrument of its own support. Thus a leading element in the Chinese Revolution was the demand for state-supported schools, schools that would in fact teach doctrines acceptable to Dr. Sun Yat-sen or, latterly, doctrines acceptable to the ministry of education of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. Thus the Bolshevik revolution destroyed every vestige of Czarist or Greek Orthodox schools and created a system of education which is as much an arm of the state as the Russian air force or the Russian infantry. Even in a small and unmilitaristic country like Norway, government has in fact forced the abolition of private schools. In Italy, in Germany, in Japan, in Spain, the educational system has been integrated with the state to such a degree that in taking over conquered countries the Allies had to begin by abolishing the remnants of existing schools, destroying textbooks and substituting new systems of education that would mirror and support their own political doctrine. And in France it is a nice question whether the church or the state shall control the schools.

Again, in a self-conscious state like Eire one finds government through the schools forcing Gaelic, a cumbersome and artificial language, upon the people as essential to a "national" culture

Nor is the New World exempt from this nationalism. In Latin American countries political revolution so frequently starts in the universities that successful dictators—Cuban history will furnish examples—either close down these institutions or control the faculties and the students by repression, censorship, "coordination" or exile. The struggle in Mexico for the control of education has been one of the spectacular elements of the cultural history of that nation in the twentieth century. The unhappiness of "liberal" Argentine intellectuals is increased under the Perón regime by government determination that education shall support the state in return for state support of education.

For Thomas Jefferson it was sufficient that teachers should possess rationality and virtue, he did not envision the teachers' oath law now common among the states of the American Union. The compulsory flag salute, almost universal in American schools, is a twentieth century invention. *The New York Times* launches a campaign to make American history compulsory in high school or in college. State legislatures pass laws forbidding state-supported institutions to employ those who are not American citizens.

Even at advanced levels it is usually difficult and sometimes impossible for experts to examine in American classrooms theories of the state, of politics or of economic development held to be "un-American," as witness the recent tempest about courses in Russian civilization at Cornell. An American historian writes a whole book in answer to the question: Are American teachers free? and accumulates innumerable instances to show that they are not free to contradict or question national prejudices and policies, even though the teacher is convinced these are wrong.

Negatively, this pervid nationalism is part of the xenophobia of an age in which instruments of communication have prematurely thrown cultures into collision with each other before the peoples were ready to understand one another. Positively, this nationalism, which has rallied religion, culture, technology and science itself to its support, now includes education—it is a necessary part of something called "national defense." The idea would, however, have been completely incomprehensible in the medieval university.

In connection with this nationalism the admirable "Report of the United States Education Mission to Japan" submitted to General MacArthur at Tokyo on March 30, 1946, is interesting and illuminating. This document is the product of a committee of 27 American educators called to Japan to advise the commanding general about the Japanese educational system. Again and again the report recurs to the excessive nationalism of schools in that island empire before defeat. The committee felt that the "purging of vicious elements" in the teaching profession was well along and that "the spirit of national Shintoism and military aggression" was being eradicated from the schools by "straight-forward directives." It felt that educational reform must deny "ultra-nationalism." As the first step in any conceivable reform, it approved "the discontinuance, in the public schools, of partisan teaching, political or religious," and recommended the ending of centralized control of textbooks, teachers, and

schools, the stopping of ceremonies that have served "the purposes of a militant nationalism" and the abolition of "Thought Control." It suggests many wise improvements. It urges that a revamped Ministry of Education should be given "veto powers concerning militaristic or ultra-nationalistic activities in the schools, such powers to be explicitly stated in the law and limited." This is certainly admirable, and one does not see, in the limited time at the disposal of the Mission, how its recommendations could have been improved.

But if a thoughtful Japanese were to inquire whether any official body in the United States possesses "veto powers concerning militaristic or ultra-nationalistic activities in the schools," limited or not, the answer would have to be no. Moreover, the Mission found itself in an insoluble dilemma. On the one hand, it wanted to abolish "ultra-nationalism" because ultra-nationalism had become a menace to the world. On the other hand, it could not abolish Japanese tradition, history, or culture. Negatively, it knew what it wanted. Positively, it took refuge in phrases like these:

It should be the task of all engaged in the educational activities of Japan to analyze their cultural traditions in order to discover what is worth preserving as humane ideas and ideals that will give strength to the new plans. Here the Japanese will find a legitimate and inspiring basis for loyalty and patriotism.

Freedom of teaching and of inquiry must be encouraged not only for the preservation but for the enrichment of the national culture of Japan.

Boys and girls alike should grow up knowing their national constitution, for it is the institution under which majority rule prevails.

[Children] must be prepared to take the lead. The future of Japan rests upon their shoulders.

One has every admiration for this report, perhaps one of the most remarkable educational documents of the twentieth century. But at what point are the children, upon whose shoulders rests the future of Japan, to check their loyalty and patriotism? Suppose a majority of the Japanese under the constitution decide to reinstitute the system the Allies have just abolished? Suppose that, in their study of ways and means for the preservation and enrichment of the national culture of Japan, the Japanese decide that the Allied attempt to abolish Shintoism was a misguided venture, motivated by Occidental capitalism and cunningly designed to reduce Japan forever to the inferior status of a vassal nation? Is perfervid nationalism right in the United States and wrong in Japan? If the majority of Americans vote for flag salutes, why should the majority of Japanese be prevented from voting for a ceremonial bow in the direction of the imperial palace? If the fortunes of war had reversed themselves, would the Americans be satisfied with an "inspiring basis for loyalty and patriotism" strictly limited to Oriental notions of international comity and the exchange of teachers?

All this is said, not in disparagement of the commission, but because the report innocently throws a flood of light upon the interconnections of nationalism and education in the modern world. Our problem is the ancient problem *Quis custodiet custodes?* When even the international comity of scientists is disrupted by an iron curtain across Europe, governmental controls of investigations into nuclear energy, passport difficulties, military interference, and the

discharge of investigators, however brilliant, who are not of the right political faith, the concept of learning as an a-nationalistic body of knowledge common to educated men everywhere has suffered some severe practical limitations. In the field of the social scientists, it is commonplace, the judgments of an expert in Moscow and one at the University of Texas, for example, about the defects and merits of free capitalistic enterprise will scarcely coincide. The cautious suggestion of the Japanese educational mission that Japan had better begin thinking about birth control was so worded as to avoid a quarrel with the Vatican, and the sociology permitted in the Turkey of Mustapha Kemal was, one suspects, not quite on all fours with the sociology taught in Brazil. As for the humanities, literary censorship in Eire seems to ban books for study that are commonplace in London or Oxford, Mr. Walter Lippmann complained that there is now no common tradition of philosophy, literature and the arts to which, amid the jarring nationalisms of our time, western men can rally, and the approach in Mediterranean countries to the study of the classics differs *toto caelo* from that in the United States.

War, technology in preparation for war, and nationalism—these are, then, three great forces warping the healthy development of education in what we quaintly call the civilized world. The problems they raise are deeper and darker than those polite fictions discussed in most educational meetings, especially at the college level. In truth, one sometimes fears that our concern for the nature of education, notably at higher levels, seldom rises above the plane of the genteel tradition. Certain it is, however, that an uneasy sense of something wrong, of some radical error, haunts our schools and colleges, troubles philosophers, and leads even the common man to endless speculation about the future of his own civilization. The sense that western culture is wildly astray, western civilization in its decline, is everywhere about us as men turn once again to examine the fundamentals of what they believe. If this chapter is gloomy, one cannot alter it. We can only ask, so far as the subject of this book is concerned, what educators themselves have to say on these, the terrible problems of our time.

Face to face with the spectre of war, with technology controlled by war, and with an intense and irrational nationalism which, as in the case of the atom bomb, dreams of going to war before some other nation shall invent an even more terrible weapon—and this, in a world in which the nations have solemnly pledged themselves to unite for peace—what have American schoolmen to offer for the guiding of mankind? There is no more tremendous question before the United States.

For, as Dr. Raymond B. Fosdick said on almost the last day of the victorious year of 1945,

No greater crisis was ever faced by any generation in history. Our enemies are not Alaric and his Goths pouring over the frontiers of the north. The enemies that threaten us are of our own creation, they are the techniques which we have ourselves perfected and which we have allowed to be perverted to unworthy ends. How do we bring these techniques under social control? How do we keep them from making a mockery of all we have hoped or dreamed of good? That is the challenge of the present crisis, those are the insistent questions that are hurled at our

generation, and whether or not the future is to be a nightmare without end depends upon our ability to make some headway in finding the answers

What does educational theory propose? And if, as may be the case, the proposals of educational theory shall prove not altogether satisfactory, how shall we set about finding more satisfactory answers to the problem of education and world tragedy?

THE MILITARIST AND THE PACIFIST IDEALS¹

by G Lowes Dickinson

Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson (1862-1932), urbane critic of contemporary life, was educated at Charterhouse and at King's College, Cambridge. Trained in the Latin and Greek classics he has written with poise and clarity such delightful volumes as *The Greek View of Life* and *A Modern Symposium*. The fact that Dickinson wrote the essay which follows thirty years ago, during World War I, adds immeasurably to its impact.

IN THE preceding chapters I have set forth the results that must reasonably be expected to follow from a continuation of the existing international anarchy. I have written in the hope that the reader will think those results intolerable and will consequently be ready to urge or support a radical movement in the opposite direction. But I am aware that some who may read this book, and many who will not read it, will be affected differently by the prospect before us. They will not be repelled by it. They may tolerate it. They may even welcome it. And as it is essential that those who intend to fight for peace should understand what it is they have to oppose, I shall now proceed to examine the ideal impulses which make for war and contrast them with those which make for peace.

And first I must point out, what lovers of peace are apt to forget, that there is such a thing as the love of war, either for itself or for its supposed effects on character and life, and that that is one element making for the perpetuation of war. Few people frankly admit this. Yet the admission may be found, and not only among Germans. And it is much more often felt than it is expressed. Here, for example, is an utterance to which it is worth while to attend:

I do not myself understand our theoretical craze for no-war, which would mean a constipated civilization, all great creative movements have flourished in or sprung from warlike conditions. The idea that as a result of this war Europe is going to develop into an abode of Arcady, where men no longer fight or learn to fight or want to fight, while lawyers and politicians rule over us with unctuous infallibility, and there is no longer need for a stout heart and a dripping sword—this is one of the drollest views ever kibbled for the democratic table. The spirit of fighting is directly associated with the sex instinct. Atrophy of the one inevitably brings about atrophy of the other. To talk of the abolition of war is to conceive of life without strife, which is its inherent reason and beauty.

¹ From *The Choice Before Us* by G Lowes Dickinson. Copyright, 1917, by Dodd, Mead & Company, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Dodd, Mead & Company.

We who believe in peace as a necessary condition of Good are apt to meet utterances like this with silence, or indignation, or wordy argument. But in doing so we miss our antagonist's point and so underestimate the forces we have to oppose. The words cited are a foolish and trivial expression of a genuine feeling—the feeling that life without war would be a dull and drab affair. The feeling is superficial. It is due to inexperience both of life and of war. But it influences a great many people; more people than we choose to admit. And it will continue to do so, and to do so the more in proportion as the memory of what war really is sinks once again into the background. Let us try to realize, then, what was in the mind of this writer, however crudely he may have expressed it.

At bottom, what appeal to him are certain states of feeling. He likes to imagine himself, and to imagine other men, engaged in a struggle of body and wits so intense that all energies are absorbed in it. It is this release of energy from the checks of reason, of conscience, and of self-interested calculation that appeals to him, the functioning as a unity, free from the paralysis of doubt or the boredom of half-interests, the activity (as he imagines) of all the faculties at their keenest under the stress of imminent and continuous risk. This kind of experience can no doubt be partly obtained in various forms of sport. And, in fact, the men we are considering do often spend the greater part of their peace-life in sport. The connection between war and sport is very close, at any rate among Englishmen. But sport lacks some of the most important elements of war. It lacks first the sense of "consecration," which lays the conscience to sleep. It lacks, secondly, the enormous enhancement which is given to all emotion by its being shared by great numbers of men. Few people can resist the contagion of a march past, even in a cinematograph. And in one aspect war is (or rather is thought to be, by those at a distance) a continuous march in time, if not physically yet spiritually. This sense of unquestioning comradeship, in acts reduced as nearly as possible to instinctive reaction, seems to be what at bottom attracts men to war. And I suppose that the most "pacifist" of us are not without comprehension of that.

Now it is true that all this makes an appeal not only to what is bad, but also to something that is good in human nature. But the appeal is that of an illusion about war, not of the reality. Real war is something very different, as all who have experienced it would be the first to admit. Literature has invented a fiction which still inspires boys and old men and romanticists. Vague remembrances of Marathon and Thermopylae blend with medieval tales of chivalry. Pictures of hand-to-hand conflict according to the rules, of chivalrous reconciliations, of mutual honor and respect, move confusedly before the imagination. The sentiment and the ethic of a method of war as extinct as the Stone Age are applied to what has long ago become a matter of cold-blooded calculation and organized butchery by machines. For modern war is summed up in such phrases as these, inadequate though they be to represent its monstrous horror. The men who go out to it and go through with it have indeed a courage not the less admirable because, as is now clear, almost everyone possesses it. But admirable, too, is the courage of the worshiper who flings himself under the car of Juggernaut. And the nobler the victim the more the pity.

Editors and bishops who take a kind of holiday jaunt along the front, personally conducted and carefully shielded from the real facts, may come back talking cheerfully of war. That is what they went for. It is only those who have lived weeks and months in the trenches, those who have taken part in a bayonet charge, those who have struggled like brutes with feet and hands and knives and clubs, who have trampled on the faces and mangled limbs of wounded men, and staggered away at last hardly knowing what they have been doing, those who have lain hour after hour between the lines at night, tortured themselves and listening to the screams of the tortured, those who have hung in agony on barbed wire till a spout of liquid fire released them—these men, with their bowels dropping out, with their lungs shot through, with their faces torn away, with their limbs blown into space, are the men who know what war is. Is this an ideal? The question answers itself. Yet so long as words take the place of things in men's thinking and feeling, so long as secondhand emotions, and remembrances of remembrances of books, are substituted for experience, so long will it be possible to write such words as I have quoted above, and so long will such words have a certain weight. It is only possible to idealize war because those who idealize it are dealing with a word, not with the thing.

My first reply, then, to the idealizers of war is that modern war does not really contain the things they hold to be good, or contains them only as one element in such a mass of others as makes them cease to count in the balance. I do not believe this statement can be seriously questioned. But those who have been through the war, and they only, can judge. And to their judgment I appeal.

Let us turn now to the ideal of peace. On what preferences does this rest? The advocates of war are apt to pretend that it rests on a mere love of security. But this is to take a view of pacifism as ungenerous and as false as that which supposes the love of war to arise from a sadistic lust for murder. Pacifists who have a positive and passionate attitude to life (and they are the only ones we need consider) have also at bottom a love for certain feelings and activities. What they like and desire is free friendship, where men cooperate or compete as independent individuals, not as passive creatures of a mass movement. The activity they prize is that of reasonable will, not that of irrational instinct. And they find their conception of the highest life in voluntary creation, in political and social work, in science, in speculation, and in art. To be swept away on a torrent of corporate passion is to them not an ideal at all. On the contrary, it is the negation of all they value. They are neither more egotistic nor more materialistic than the others. But all their social activity they desire to be constantly accompanied by a full sense of personal choice. Further, while the "war-men" overlook the act of killing as trifling and negligible, in view of the tremendous flood of vigorous life which they imagine to accompany it, to the "peace men" that act, like all violence and coercion, destroys the value of any life they could prize. That the others among whom they labor should be also laboring, equally, freely, and in the same spirit as themselves, is what they want, and that in these concurrent or competitive labors there should be the least possible antagonism.

Now, it is true that such "peace" as we have actually achieved is almost as remote from the ideal of the pacifist as real war is from that of the war-man.

The pacifist, therefore, needs and intends to transform peace as well as to abolish war. But does any war-man mean, or intend, or think it in any way possible, to transform war from its present form of mass-murder? I have never heard of anyone who thought that either possible or desirable. Whereas the pacifist's vision of a society of passionate and creative lovers is in the heart of every man and woman who has a peace-ideal at all. That is the pacifist's strength as against his antagonist. War as an ideal lies behind. Peace as an ideal lies in front. The one can spur to action, the other only to regret, or to sentimental or dishonest fancies. The organized butchery that war is, and henceforth increasingly must be, can inspire no man who has seen and known and felt what it is. The harmony of contrasted effort that peace might be may fail to inspire because it may be thought chimerical. But it needs must inspire everyone who has the faith to believe it possible.

At this point, very likely, I shall be met by a protest from the war-man. He will say "You misrepresent me when you suppose me blind to the horror of modern war, when you suppose that my respect for it is based on illusion about its nature. I admit all that you say. The reason that I stand for war is, not that I admire the activity of killing and being killed in the modern way, but that I admire the power to face and endure that. War to my mind is tragic, not a picnic, or a sport (as the superficial Englishman is apt to think), but an assertion of that element in life which gives it all its nobility. War can only be faced if it is faced in the spirit of religion. And there is a religion of war."

What is this religion? I will quote in illustration the follow passage:—

In war and in the right of war man has a possession which he values above religion, above industry, and above social comfort, in war man values the power which it affords to life of rising above life, the power which the spirit of man possesses to pursue the ideal.

Let us consider this. We have, first, the belief on which I have already dwelt, that the tensest, most "worth while" moments of life can only be had in war. But here that belief has associated itself with a reflective, philosophic, and religious temperament. The author has realized the tragedy involved in his standard of values. He has realized that the feelings he desires can only be attained at the cost of infinite suffering and infinite evil. That has not led him (as it might have led simpler and less intellectual men) to revise his feeling of what is valuable. It has led him to construct a mysticism. Unwilling to say simply "We live in an intolerable and futile world, a world not only of tragedy, but of tragedy unredeemable," he affirms that, in some incomprehensible way, some purpose must be served by all this suffering, without which men like him could not have the feelings and activities they desire. He assumes that some "ideal" end is being achieved, though we cannot see what it is (for he is not shallow enough, if I understand his spirit, to suggest that any of the objects that may be attained by war constitute its justification). His religion is thus one form of the religion of suffering—the pagan, not the Christian form; a form which is perhaps best set forth by Nietzsche in the words "Be hard." Accept suffering, injustice, cruelty, all uttermost evil and conflict, for the sake of being hard, and believe that somehow there is some sense in it all, though it does not appear how.

When a war-man is both philosophic and intelligent, that is the kind of religion he is driven to. But if in such matters he is a simple, unreflective soul, he will adopt an easier course, and dispose of the question by assuming another world where we shall all be happy and harmonious, a world in which, if he reflected, he would see that he personally would be very miserable, since he would not be able to fight. Thus, for instance, Bismarck said that if he had not been a Christian he would have been a republican. By which I suppose him to mean that if he had not believed that there was another world, he would have abstained from making hell of this one.

Turning now to the pacifist, he too may have his religion. And his religion, too, may include a belief in some "other world" of harmony. But in that harmony he really would find satisfaction, for it is really his ideal. The bottom of his belief is that the impulse in him to love and to create is the divine impulse, that that is the core and meaning of the world. And whatever he may believe or not believe about a world beyond, that spirit working in this one is the spring of his religion. That is why Christians and Atheists may, and often do, have the same religion. For the essential thing is the common spirit, not the theology.

On the other hand, between the "War-Christian" and the "Peace-Christian" there is a profound gulf, just as there is between the "War-Atheist" and the "Peace-Atheist." The theological distinctions are not the important ones in this matter of religion. If they were, we should not see, as we do at this moment, one set of Christians persecuting another, while the persecuted are sustained and defended by Atheists. The one important difference between men is the difference in what they hold valuable, and in the degree of passion and conviction with which they adhere to and pursue that. The rest is embroidery. To the man who has the religion of peace, the supreme value is love. To the man who has the religion of war, the supreme value is strife. There can be no reconciliation between these attitudes. Men have simply to discover which it is they stand for. And it is these ultimate antagonisms that constitute the tragedy of life.

These ultimate ideals may seem somewhat remote to the reader. Let me then show him, by an illustration, how they affect very important decisions. As I write, the main road from Warsaw into Russia is lined with bones. At intervals all along are baskets, full of the dust of bones. The dust in the baskets is that of little children, whom their mothers were carrying in the enforced flight of the whole civilian population. The rest is that of the mothers and the fathers and the elder children. To both war-man and peace-man we may assume this is a tragic spectacle. The difference is that the peace-man says "See! War is the crown and consummation of Evil. Down with war!" The war-man says "No! War is tragic, but it is great. Long live war!" I know not what difference more profound could divide men. I know not in what sharper intensity ideas of Good and Evil could confront one another. I have merely tried to formulate in general terms the spiritual antagonism that issues in these opposite verdicts.

Now, these opposite religions naturally connect with opposite political and social ideals. And these too it will be worth while to try to describe.

I will start with the familiar antithesis between "liberty" and "authority." The ideal of peace, I believe, goes along with that of liberty, and the ideal of

war with that of authority. This, of course, is quite compatible with the patent fact that men have often waged wars for liberty. Have they not also waged wars for peace? My point is that liberty, in the sense in which I am here conceiving it, requires peace for its fulfillment, while authority, if it does not require war, requires a kind of organization best favored by the preparation for war.

Advocates of liberty take a friendly and hopeful view of human nature. They conceive it as continually pushing and straining—in all men, not only in some—towards a full and noble life, such as trees may be thought to aim at a perfect and symmetrical growth, and only to fail to attain it by overcrowding or by inclemencies and accidents of climate or position. Nothing has to be put into the tree. Everything is there, if it has its chance. So with Man. It all lies there in him. But natural and social obstacles continually hinder its realization. Thus, to the advocate of liberty, the important thing is the preparation of the ground. That is why liberty is sometimes accused of being an empty or negative ideal. What is to come out, the libertarian trusts and feels, it would be presumptuous to define. It is a something “ever on before.” But some suggestions of it, to confirm his faith, he finds in every great manifestation of the human spirit. Thus his main aim is always to remove obstacles. The positive content life, set free, will reveal.

And that is why I say that there is a deep connection between liberty, so conceived, and peace. For the unfolding process is to proceed from an inner need. All coercion is opposed to it; and the profoundest objection of the pacifist to war is that war means coercion. In peace he does not honor a mere absence of contention. He desires no flat and tedious unison of identities, but rather that contest of free spirits in which each stimulates the other by the very difference of his aim, and in which a man would no more kill his opponent than his ally, for his opponent is his benefactor. The object of war is to eliminate the foe, the object of peace is to grow strong by him. And this all the great men of peace know—the rivals in science, in art, in moral passion, in individual and social ideals. “Freedom for you,” they say, “that I may be free; and freedom for me, that you may be.” And all freedoms, they believe, can dwell together and multiply in the same world, the same country, the same parish. The word of war is “I or You.” The word of peace is “You *and* I.” War and coercion; but peace and liberty.

It will be replied, “But wars are fought for liberty.” They are. But a lover of liberty will never wage them save to remove a coercion by a coercion. And war he will always hold to be a desperate remedy, likely to destroy the very thing it is waged to secure, as we see but too clearly at this moment in England, and are likely to see and feel for years to come. It is only in a true peace—one in which coercion (social and economic as well as political) should have disappeared—that the soul could unfold to perfection. Thus peace, though it is not the ideal, is the condition of it. It can be misrepresented as a negative state. But it is not that. It is the condition of all that is positive. For it is the space that gives room to the soul to grow.

To this ideal of “liberty” is opposed that of what I have called “authority.” The difference is radical. The “authoritarian” does not believe in “human nature.” He believes in select individuals. The confusion, violence, anarchy which

to the libertarian are the result of ignorance and oppression, to him are the spontaneous and inevitable products of the human soul. Man is a quarrelsome, ignoble, incapable brute. So he always has been, and so he always will be. There is no hope for him, save to be drilled into order. And, fortunately, there do appear on the earth select men, capable of doing this. That these men should govern the others, not by their choice, but in their despite, is the proper, the "divine" arrangement. All else is anarchy. This view, of course, is aristocratic, but it is not necessarily oligarchic. The arrangement aimed at may be aimed at for the sake not of the rulers, but of the ruled. And in fact, it is commonly so represented by those who adopt this attitude. The "Many" will be as good as they can be, and as happy as they can be, under such rule. Happier, indeed, than the "Few" who are the rulers. For these have reluctantly assumed a duty, not for their pleasure or profit, but for the Good of the whole. Once more the tragic element emerges, as in the religion of war. The great man may be noble, but cannot be happy. The masses may be happy, because they cannot be noble.

Now this attitude does not imply necessarily a love of war. But it does imply a love of military discipline, because military discipline is the most rigorous and uncompromising, and the danger of war is an element without which it cannot flourish. It was not really with reluctance that Plato put his *Republic* on a military basis, though he plays a little, at first, with the idea of peace. He required an army for his type of discipline, and the discipline was the purpose of the community. Like all men with this kind of idealistic bent, he stood outside his creation, and contemplated what appeared to him to be its esthetic beauty. He knew well that there would be little happiness within it. Authoritarians may deprecate war, because war has a side which is anarchy. But they must welcome military organization, because it is the type of order. And they would be as reluctant to inhabit a world without war as the libertarian is to inhabit one with it.

It will readily be seen that to these opposed political ideals correspond opposed interpretations of history. The libertarian thinks of history in terms of progress. He sees in it a continuous removal of hindrances to free life. At the beginning he sees man caught in a fate inherited from his animal ancestors. He sees him emerging in small groups, opposed to other groups by conflicting interests, by lack of comprehension, by contacts that are all of strife and war. He sees the process of history as a constant enlargement of the area of cooperation, and when he looks at the contemporary world, the antagonism of national groups appears to him as an atavism, surviving into a condition in which universal cooperation already largely prevails in spite of political anarchy. To remove that anarchy he believes to be as possible as it is desirable. And its removal he sees as another great step forward in the progressive transformation of human life from the form of coercion to that of cooperation.

The authoritarian reads history differently. He emphasizes the coercion throughout, and he believes that this changes its form rather than its essence. History to him is oscillation, not progress. It is the oscillation of a pendulum about that point of rest which is the perfect static order that the "philosopher" or the "hero" or the "dictator" would impose.

In setting out this opposition between libertarian and authoritarian, I am of course simplifying the real attitudes of men and omitting those intermediary

and compromising positions which in fact most of us adopt. But I wish to bring the reader back to what I believe to be ultimate antagonisms of temperament and outlook, explaining much of the antagonism of practice revealed confusedly in our contemporary life. He will see, I think, what I am aiming at if he will consider, on the one hand, the life-work of Voltaire, Shelley, Mazzini, Walt Whitman, Jaurès, and on the other that of de Maistre, Carlyle, Treitschke, Bismarck, Pobidonostseff. Somewhere deep at the roots of modern life, with more or less sharpness of definition, these ultimate principles are contending. And the difference of orientation given by the difference of the soul affects not only the action of men, but their whole interpretation of the facts of history and society.

Well, the one side is drawn to peace, the other to war, or at least to organization for war. And the pacifist has to fight not only (what are his easier antagonists) routine, stupidity, greed, lack of vision. He has to fight an opposite ideal, claiming its own nobility.

Now, in this contest, it is the contrary of the truth that the pacifist takes the negative and his opponent the positive side. A pacifism which is merely an objection to strife has no force in it. And a cult of war which is strenuous and determined, and has faith in itself, is strong. But the pacifism I am defending has been and is a positive impulse. It is one with that whole movement of social transformation which is vaguely called democracy and which is essentially pacific, even when it believes that it is only by violence that it can attain its ends. It has a conception of the meaning of history and of life as inspiring as that of its opponents is depressing. It sees the centuries marching with it to its goal and it sees that goal as a free and delighted life.

Compare—that I may make it clearer by an example—the picture of the world presented by Carlyle with that held up by the long and noble line of French idealists, from Turgot, and earlier still, all the way to Jaurès. To Carlyle history represents little but nemesis. It is one long, dreary tale of crime and retribution. A jealous god lies forever in wait to punish men who stray forever from his way. That way they are unable to find or to keep. Therefore he sends them from time to time a "hero" to beat them into submission. And the way of the hero is sword and fire. Odin in Scandinavia, the Teutonic Knights on the eastern marches, Cromwell in Ireland, Frederick in Silesia, these are the figures he is forced to admire. For the mass of men, sheer contempt. For Jesus, or for Socrates, little better. All victory interpreted as Right. All defeat, interpreted as Wrong. Everywhere sin and punishment, punishment and sin. All this is but too congenial to the British and German soul. But how other is the vision of the French! As far back as the sixteenth century it was a Frenchman, Bodin, who half saw human life in progress. It was Frenchmen—Turgot, Condorcet, Rousseau—who mixed that fiery wine that set streaming over the world the divinest madness it has ever known. It was Frenchmen who, awakening sobered, saw the social behind the political revolution, and laid down the great lines of a socialism that was truly an ideal, a socialism for all, a socialism where science should cooperate not only with industry but with art, and all of these with love. That, throughout, has been the French note, as distinguished from the German. And the last testimony of Jaurès vibrates with a synthetic passion whereby it

stands out, beside Marx's monument to class-war, as the soul of a man beside the corpse of a mammoth. Against this passion of faith, fusing all history and life in its crucible, what can avail the unfaith of authoritarians? Their victory is never anything but that of guns and bayonets. And against these ever will arise resilient the soul of man. In all the philosophy of war there is nothing that could appeal to youth, and youth has the mastery of the world. No! Pacifism is not an obstruction, a refusal. It is the fire at the heart of the world.

And that fire English pacifists would do well to seek in France. We English see and feel too exclusively from the moral point of view, and our notion of morals is too narrow. The obstinacy of simple conviction that, as I write, is defying all the powers of society to force a few poor men to fight when their conscience forbids, is indeed a great English quality. Again and again it has saved for us our liberties and our soul. But it is private, personal, uninformed, unimaginative, better to resist than to create. It has not been married to intellect. It has not been sown as a seed in the matrix of the world, to grow up as the tree of science and art. The stream of total idealism flows full and strong, where it has always flowed, in France. And it is thence that we may best draw the inspiration that will make of pacifism not a mere protest against militarism but a taking of the field to establish the true peace which is the rivalry of generous souls. The cause of war is the cause of the established order, of capitalist against wage workers, of social discord and antagonism, of tyranny, of hypocrisy, of stupidity, of cant. The cause of peace is the cause of justice, charity, and love, of immense corporate efforts to control nature by science and art, of an individualism the tenser and fuller in its personal life that it is participating consciously in a collective work. For it is only the collectivism of war that destroys the individual. The collectivism of peace might fulfill him.

What kind of a man, then, does the pacifist look forward to? A tame man, as war-men pretend? No. But neither the war man's fierce man, nor yet the noble, nor the king, nor the "philosophic ruler," nor any of those types that presuppose a passive subject class, a "twenty millions mostly fools," an orgy of destruction in the midst of which the "hero" shall shine supreme, or an ordered State over which he shall brood like Providence. Not these. But active centers everywhere of passionate life, freely combining for their joint ends. One poet only has had a concrete vision of the pacifist's ideal. From him I take the prophecy of it —

I dream'd in a dream I saw a city invincible to the attacks of the whole of the rest of the earth

I dream'd that was the new city of friends
Nothing was greater there than the quality of robust love, it led the rest,
It was seen every hour, in the actions of the men of that city,
And in all their looks and words

What that city breeds is not soldiers. It is—
The noble character of mechanics and farmers, especially the young men,
Their manners, speech, dress, friendships, the gait they have of persons who never
knew how it felt to stand in the presence of superiors,
The freshness and candor of their physiognomy, the copiousness and decision of
their phrenology,
The picturesque looseness of their carriage, their fierceness when wronged,

The fluency of their speech, their delight in music, their curiosity, their good temper
and open-handedness, the whole composite make,

The prevailing ardor and enterprise, the large amativeness,

The perfect equality of the female with the male, the fluid movment of the population,

The superior marine, free commerce, fisheries, whaling, gold digging,

Wharf-hemmed cities, railroad and steamboat lines intersecting at all points,

Factories, mercantile life, labor-saving machinery, the Northeast, Northwest, Southwest,

Manhattan fireman, the Yankee swap, Southern plantation life

This is the liberty, these the contests, these the heroes of peace

And if we could achieve such a peace, should we be driven to make an ideal
of war?

THE ALLEGED FAILURE OF DEMOCRACY¹

by Ralph Barton Perry

Ralph Barton Perry (b 1876) is a distinguished professor of philosophy in Harvard University. Author of many philosophical works, he is probably best known to the general reader through his 1935 Pulitzer prize biography, *The Thought and Character of William James*.

THE REJECTION of democracy is nowadays regarded as evidence of superior wisdom. Although it is still customary, for political purposes, to pay it lip service, "between friends," or in the judgment of the hard-boiled fact-finder, it is often supposed to be an exploded myth—a practical failure as well as a theoretical fallacy. Opinion has been veering so swiftly in this direction that while a few years ago the defense of democracy would have been condemned as hackneyed and banal, one who undertakes it now is suspected of seeking notoriety.

The beginning of wisdom in this matter is to state the question. What does it mean to say or to believe that democracy is a failure? There are two judgments of this sort that clearly beg the question. They need to be disposed of first lest they become sources of confusion. There is the judgment which condemns democracy because it is too democratic, and there is the judgment which condemns it because it is not democratic enough.

What does it mean to condemn democracy as too democratic? People do not as a rule beg a question explicitly: they do not say in so many words that democracy is a bad thing because democracy is a bad thing. But there are those who argue against democracy in theory from their dislike of it in practice. Since the practice is precisely what the theory means, these critics are really not arguing at all, but are only expressing a prejudice.

It sometimes happens that those who express a dislike for democracy in proximity were once loud in their praise of it, or hot in its pursuit. Such a

¹ From *The Yale Review*, Autumn, 1934, copyright, Yale University Press. By permission of the author and *The Yale Review*.

reversal is not at all unusual, for goals which exert an attractive force at a distance often exert a repulsive force when they are approached more closely. When I was a boy I had a dog whose favorite pastime was chasing cats. Ordinarily this furnished agreeable and harmless exhilaration both to the dog and to the cats. But every once in a while, owing to some unnatural burst of speed or accident of topography, the dog would overtake a cat. Then he promptly sat down and scratched a flea, or suddenly thought of some other engagement. Cats were good to chase, but catching them was a very different matter, for which he had neither the appetite nor the technique. You could see, too, that he was somewhat disgusted with the cat because it refused to go on escaping. Now, one of the dangers of pursuing ideals is that some day, owing to prodigious exertions, you may, the first thing you know, overtake one. Or you may, at any rate, gain on it. And then, as you come to close quarters, it is possible that you will experience a sudden revulsion of feeling. If we look about us, I think we shall find here and there ardent pursuers of democracy who have assumed the posture of that dog—trying to appeal as irrelevant as possible.

For a long time, feebly and intermittently since the beginning of the Christian era, vigorously and continuously since the beginning of our own national existence, we have been trying to improve the condition of the masses. It is a great end to pursue, and it has given us a great run. But recently we have been gaining on it, and, instead of celebrating the victory, the fastidious withdraw their skirts, anxious housewives deplore the passing of "the good, old-fashioned servant," and uneasy employers complain of the increase of wages and the standard of living. American reformers, beginning with Thomas Jefferson, have eloquently preached the gospel of universal salvation by education. Now that their eloquence has borne fruit, and the youth of the land are thronging to the colleges, many leaders of education are barricading their doors and posting sentries to keep back the crowd. They are remarking with an air of perfect innocence, as though they had never said anything on the subject before, that, after all, the value of formal education has been much exaggerated—and that for most men there is nothing so good as that great public school of *experience*, which was opened some time ago by the Creator in the Garden of Eden, and which it costs nothing to operate.

The second kind of question-begging critic objects to democracy because it is not democratic enough. While critics of the first kind profess the theory but shrink from its execution, these complain that it has in fact never been executed. They beg the question because although they seem to be advancing arguments against democratic institutions, they are really assuming democracy as their standard of criticism. They are in their hearts its most radical and dogmatic partisans. When such a critic argues that public education does not really emancipate the mind, or that the people do not really rule, or that genuine equality is inconsistent with a capitalistic system, or that the American democracy does not in fact permit those liberties of speech and press which it is pledged to secure, the very bitterness of his lament reveals the depth of his passion for emancipation, popular government, equality, and liberty. An analogy is afforded by the case of Christianity. There are those who, like the first opponent of democracy, do not like Christianity at close range, or prefer the

profession to the practice. They feel, like Nietzsche, that there is already too much Christianity in the world. Radical Christians, on the other hand, condemn Christendom for being too little Christian, and by this condemnation affirm the rigorous and uncompromising quality of their adherence to Christian principles.

These two sets of critics, then, we may ignore, neither has fairly examined the fundamental question. But today they are being joined by critics of a more thorough-going sort, who profess to have considered democracy on its merits and to have rejected it deliberately. They would have us reopen a question that was supposed to have been settled. They would have us reverse the main current of political change during the last two centuries. They would have America, instead of moving forward in the direction of her original impulse and towards her supposed historic destiny, go back and begin over again, modelling her institutions on those very forms which were once denounced as tyrannical abuses.

Those who thus reject democracy advisedly and explicitly may also be divided into two groups, namely, those who reject it for practical reasons and those who reject it for reasons of theory. Critics of the first sort claim that democracy does not work, while critics of the second sort contend that, being based on false assumptions and bad logic, it should never have been tried.

We are here concerned primarily with the charge that democracy has broken down—that, owing to human nature and the complexities of life, it has proved a failure. In replying to this form of attack I would not for a moment argue, or seem to argue, that democracy has been an unqualified success. That it has in some measure failed is indisputable, and this partial failure has been, no doubt, in some measure due to the complacent assumption of success. Sound criticism, however, will know how to pass beyond complacency or rhetorical eulogy without leaping to the other and equally futile extreme of reckless despair.

The adverse judgment which the present age is disposed to pronounce on the success of democracy has, in the first place, to be qualified by the reflection that all human institutions are failures as judged by standards of perfection. They all leave room for improvement. There is what may be called a constant of failure in all great enterprises, arising out of the complexity of the problem, the weaknesses of mankind, and the weight of the obstacles to be overcome. Marriage is a failure, agriculture and industry are failures, religion is a failure, education is a failure. Government, being peculiarly difficult, is perhaps the greatest failure of all. But it would be equally true to say that government is a remarkable achievement. It all depends upon the height of your expectation, and if it be legitimate to remark how badly it is done, it is equally legitimate and sometimes more wholesome to wonder that it should be done at all. From time to time some particular institution becomes the symbol of human failure in general, and has to bear the brunt of human discontent. There are signs that economic institutions are taking their turn as such a symbol and that the sins of government may soon be deemed less scandalous.

In fairness, then, we should admit this constant of human failure, and at the same time eliminate it from the specific bill of indictment brought against

democracy Besides this ordinary failure, to be seen in every phase of human development, there is also an extraordinary failure peculiar to the times in which we live It seems safe to predict that when the curve of human fortunes is charted by the historians of the future, it will show a pronounced dip between 1914 and some year later than 1934 Here again, we are likely to charge the whole account against some single factor such as democracy on which attention happens at the moment to be focussed But nobody, so far as I know, has proved that democracy was responsible for the Great War, or for the economic prostration and lowered morale which have followed it, for the price of raw materials, or technological unemployment, or economic nationalism, or bank failures, or the increase of divorce, or the decline of religion and the arts The fact is that with few exceptions everything has worked badly since 1914, and it is just as unnatural and unreasonable to hold a particular political institution wholly responsible for this as it is to charge every evil against the political party that happens to be in power Thus so much of the failure of democracy as is shared by other institutions, whether it be the normal failure which attends all human affairs or the abnormal failure of this particular historic crisis, should be discounted Let us now examine the evidence

First, precisely what is it that is supposed to have failed? The answer is that it is *political democracy* Social democracy has not failed, for the good and sufficient reason that it has never had the chance The point is this Political democracy is a form of government designed to produce a desirable social result According to Aristotle the state exists for the sake of "the good life," and all parties to the discussion would doubtless agree upon the truth of that saying Most proponents of political democracy believe that the good life, or desirable social result, which the state should promote, is an individualistic, free, and, in some sense, equalitarian society The name we usually give to this standard is social democracy It is not this which has failed, for social democracy is itself the ideal By what shall it be judged a failure? To say that it has failed would be like saying that justice, goodness, or happiness has failed The fact is that critics of democracy have not, as a rule, distinguished between democracy as a political means and democracy as a social end Making the charitable assumption that they know what they mean, they probably mean that political democracy has failed to provide that minimum of security and order which conditions *any* form of the good life, including social democracy Is this charge well-founded? Or, if it be conceded that mankind has recently suffered from insecurity and disorder, is this the fault of political democracy?

There is here, I think, at least that degree of reasonable doubt which is supposed to justify acquittal Writing about the Great War in 1929, Professor G. G. Benjamin put the question, "What, then, do the source materials, the memoirs and monographs produced since the armistice, prove?" The third of the five summary conclusions with which he answers his question is, that "the failure of Germany was the failure of absolute power" I do not see how anybody who reads the history of Europe during the years immediately preceding the war can fail to be impressed by the stupidity and feebleness of the three great military monarchies, Germany, Russia, Austria It is to be observed, furthermore, that these three governments were swept away by the war, and that the

three nations which emerged victorious and are now the most powerful, England, France, and the United States, are all political democracies.

If we examine the charge more closely, we find that what is supposed to have failed is not political democracy in general, but only parliamentary government of a specific kind. Political democracy has a good many more tricks in its bag. There is, for example, representative government in the old-fashioned sense intended by the framers of the Federal Constitution. There are alternative electoral and party methods, alternative forms of the legislative body, and of its relation to the executive. I am not qualified to propose a remedy, but I do not for a moment believe that therapeutic invention is exhausted or that institutional development is at a standstill. The failures of political democracy, even if they be granted, would suggest not that democracy in general be abandoned but that in respect of certain specific mechanisms it be varied and improved.

It is true that outside of England, France, and the United States there has been a very general abandonment or rejection of democratic institutions. The general trend towards political democracy that was so clearly marked in the last century has lately been checked or diverted. The most notable governments that have arisen since the war, Communistic Russia, Fascist Italy, and Nazist Germany, are blatant dictatorships. Turkey, Yugoslavia, Poland, Hungary, and Austria are dictatorships in substance, if not in form. Japan is in the throes of political reaction. The facts are indisputable. How shall they be interpreted? I submit that they are the effects of emergency rather than of constructive development.

In times of stress or national calamity, when heroic measures are necessary, when swift, remedial action is important at all costs—in times of civil war, actual or threatening, and in times of panic or desperation—in such times political procedure must be temporarily altered. A demand arises for unified and authoritative control. Liberty of action must give way for the term of the emergency to discipline, and discussion to obedience. There is nothing new in this. It happens in every country in event of war, in every community in case of flood or earthquake, in every family in case of accident or illness, in every individual in moments of crisis. There is then a temporary stripping for action and a massing of energies where the danger threatens, with sacrifice, abridgment, paralysis elsewhere. There are, in other words, peculiar modes of organization and control which are required for emergencies. But it would be a grave mistake to define our norms and ideals by such requirements. An emergency is by definition something out of the ordinary, requiring extraordinary measures. Their use is to keep one alive until the better life can be resumed. When one's leg is broken one puts it in a plaster cast, but one does not therefore conclude that freely moving limbs are a failure and should be permanently abolished. The ultimate purpose of the rigid cast is to restore the usual freedom of movement.

Temporary or urgent measures may be very different from the desired eventuality. Suppose a party to be trekking West in a covered wagon to settle in a new part of the country. Although they have a definite goal, they are compelled, on their way, to meet emergencies. They are overtaken by storms,

attacked by Indians, threatened by hunger and drought, impeded by rivers, mountains, heat, and cold. Each emergency has to be met on its own terms. It dictates the weapons which shall be used, and forces the travellers to do things which are not in the direct line of their project. They may be compelled to halt, to make a wide detour, or even to retrace their steps. They may be compelled to burn their supplies for heat, or slaughter their draft animals for food, or abandon their tools to lighten their load. For the moment they are not behaving in a manner that at all suggests the settlement of a new country in the West. But that is their destination, none the less, and if they are wise they will cling to their map, their instruments of observation, and the directions for their route, in order that their journey may be resumed when the emergency is over.

What a political society does in time of emergency is not, therefore, a safe indication of its destination. What it is compelled to do in this or that crisis may be very different from what it means to do, or what is best for it to do in the long run. Granting this to be the case, there remain two alternatives. It may be necessary during a time of great emergency that the processes of political democracy should be abandoned altogether, as a sailing vessel in heavy weather may proceed under power or be towed to port. I do not deny, in other words, that democracy may sometimes be unworkable, and that some other political device may then be necessary in order to obtain that minimum of security and order which must be had at any price. In that case, I should still reserve the judgment that such a substitution would be a misfortune, at best a lesser of two evils, and a remedy to be discontinued with the return of more favorable weather. There is, however, an alternative. As ships may reef their sails or heave to and ride out the storm, so a political democracy may in emergencies find the necessary readjustments within its own constitution.

Recent political changes in America are interesting because they are not revolutionary. Two experiments are being carried on simultaneously. One of these is the attempt to modify the capitalistic economy so that it may save *itself* from shipwreck. The other is the attempt to introduce into democracy such flexibility as will enable it to meet the most severe tests without rejecting its own essential principle. The first is, I venture to say, a more constructive economic experiment than communism, and the second a more constructive experiment than dictatorship.

What, then, is the essential principle of political democracy? Defined in general terms, political democracy is government by consent. Government is conceived as an expression of popular judgment. To understand the operation of this principle it is necessary to consider two subordinate questions: how popular judgment is to be formed, and how the government is to express it.

As to the first of these questions, democracy requires that popular judgment shall be formed freely, thoughtfully, and intelligently, or as freely, thoughtfully, and intelligently as possible. By freedom of judgment I mean the opportunity of reaching a conclusion for oneself on the merits of the question. By thoughtfulness I mean the use of those methods of observation, inference, and generalization by which knowledge is distinguished from mere opinion. By intelligence I mean appeal to the evidence which is relevant to the issue. In other words,

it is not enough that there should be an agreement between the government and public opinion, even if there should be something approaching unanimity of opinion. Democracy is concerned with the processes by which opinion is formed. An ignorant, apathetic, or sullen acquiescence will not do. A manufactured public opinion is only a technique by which arbitrary authority is stabilized, and opinion is manufactured by preventing or destroying those qualities of judgment on which democracy depends. Freedom is destroyed by intimidation and bribery; thoughtfulness, by hysteria, intelligence, by censorship.

If the state thus manufactures the obedience on which it rests, or the agreement or unanimity of its support, there is no democracy. In order to be democratic the state must rest not upon a political will which expresses merely its own interest but upon a non-political will which expresses the cultural, moral, economic, religious, and other special interests of its members. For it is a part of the democratic idea that the state instead of being an end in itself, worshipped either abjectly or enthusiastically by its members, shall be an instrument which they support and control for the sake of the human goods and satisfactions that it promotes. The condemnation of Hitler is sometimes qualified by the observation that, after all, he has "unified" Germany. But there is no virtue in unity as such. A lynching party is unified. There is unity in death, and in silence—in the sameness of mind achieved by suppression or intoxication. The only kind of unity that is consistent with the democratic principle is a unity that harbors differences and renders them benign. The supreme test of democratic society is its power to thrive on spontaneity and dissent.

There remains the question of the manner in which government shall express the popular will. In proportion as a democracy is complex it is necessary that its official agents, whether legislative, executive, or judicial, shall be authorized to use their own discretion. It is unthinkable that government should at all times express the desire and opinion of all the people, unthinkable because all the people never desire and think the same things at the same time, and because it is impossible that all the people should concern themselves with every act of government. Government involves, then, the submission of dissenting minorities, and the delegation of authority. The submission of dissenting minorities is reconciled with democratic principles by the fact that he who is in the minority on one issue may be in the majority on another. His submission may be described as provisional, and is part of a system in which in the long run he has his chance or takes his turn. The delegation of authority is reconciled with democratic principles by the fact that the persons to whom authority is delegated are chosen for what they are, and are given a mandate which is both limited in time and defined by broad principles of polity. And it is to such a system as a whole, involving its disagreements as well as its agreements with their momentary and individual wills, that the people as a whole consent.

A certain amount of confusion arises from the use of the expression "self-government." If this were taken to mean that any given individual submitted only to his own decisions, there would, of course, be no government at all, but rather anarchy. There can be self-government only in so far as there are in each citizen two selves—the self that exercises the ultimate sovereignty, and the self that is called upon for some immediate act of obedience. What I in a more

general sense approve, I am called upon in a more particular sense to obey. And when the moment for obedience arises, there may be not only a duality but a conflict between these two selves.

But this is a conflict only in the most superficial sense. One may not only need to be protected against oneself, one may actually desire to be protected against oneself. I may say to my friend, "If ever you are trying to rescue me from drowning, and I struggle, knock me on the head", then if my friend, upon occasion, carries out this commission, he is obeying my will in a true sense despite his momentary obligation to coerce me. It is the appeal from Philip drunk to Philip sober. There is my long-range judgment, and my narrower view, there is the judgment which expresses the fundamental needs, perhaps for order and economy, which I share with the larger group to which I belong, and there is the greed or impulse of the moment. A government which protects the first against the second is not only expressing my will but is doing so in precisely that manner for which the function of government is instituted.

We can now understand how a democracy may adjust itself to emergencies without ceasing to be democratic. At such times there is a prior demand for promptness of action and for attention to fundamental, common needs. Popular judgment always gives some rope to the government of its choice. It is only a question of how long the rope shall be. It is desirable that government shall be flexible enough so that the rope may be lengthened or shortened as the situation changes. Sometimes it is desirable for popular opinion to drive with taut reins and sometimes with loose. In a crisis it may be well to give the official horse his head. Provided there is no concealment of facts, suppression of opposition, or deliberate confusion of the public mind, this does not imply that the driver has abandoned either his control or his guidance, he is merely adopting the method most likely to bring him to his destination.

It is a mistake to describe such a method as dictatorship—as if it amounted to an abandonment of democracy. I admit that a real dictatorship is sometimes excused on precisely the same grounds, and there may be situations in which it affords the only line of escape from political chaos. But a dictatorship—founded on intimidation, censorship, hysteria, or ignorance—and a temporary increase of the discretionary powers of government based on free discussion and general consent, are poles asunder. The latter is not an abandonment of democracy, but its skilful adaptation to special conditions. It is consistent with the political ideal of government which shall express, on the whole and in the long run, the interested and more or less intelligent judgment of those who live under it and are its supposed beneficiaries.

The rejection of democracy as a practical failure implies a willingness to accept some alternative. What are the alternatives to democracy? There should be a law compelling every destructive critic to provide an alternative. The alternatives to political democracy have been tried, and it was because they had been tried unsuccessfully that political evolution up to 1914 moved in the direction of democracy. Jefferson remarked in his First Inaugural Address: "Sometimes it is said that man cannot be trusted with the government of himself. Can he, then, be trusted with the government of others? Or have we found angels in the forms of kings to govern him? Let history answer this question." I, for one,

if I should withdraw my support from democracy, should not know where to find any other political investment that I would not distrust more, unless, as seems unlikely, an Almighty, All-wise, and All-benevolent God could be induced to assume the government himself

It is a curious thing that those who turn in their thoughts from democracy to dictatorship forget that dictatorship consists to a large extent in the evils of a democracy without its merits. If anyone who is weary of democracy were asked to name its most intolerable abuse, he would no doubt name the demagogue. But, as Plato pointed out a good many years ago, the tyrant is essentially a great demagogue, who is so artful and unscrupulous in his demagoguery that he drives out all the little demagogues and monopolizes the business for himself.

An editorial writer in "The Manchester Guardian" recently recalled Bismarck's saying that "any fool can govern by martial or semi-martial law . . ." "It is a mistake," the writer continued, "to suppose that a dictatorship brings the able men to the top. The exact opposite is true—it eliminates the courageous, the critical, the intelligent. . . . No premier in any European democracy has so many catch-phrases as Mussolini or Pilsudski [and he might have added, Hitler] to call forth popular applause so blind and hysterical."

There is no commoner form of sentimentalism than that with which we color those forms of government under which we are not obliged to live. The man who longs for a dictatorship usually imagines that *he* is the dictator, or at any rate that he is the dictator's best friend and most trusted counsellor. He thinks of the system as a means of getting done, promptly and thoroughly, what he himself believes ought to be done. But the fact is that for most people most of the time dictatorship consists not in dictating but in being dictated to; not in getting done what one thinks ought to be done, but in being compelled to submit helplessly to what one thinks ought not to be done. It is true that we are living in an age when non-democratic forms of government are being revived and modernized. But instead of weakening our allegiance to democratic institutions this should rather confirm our faith by presenting the odious alternatives in their stark reality.

Any government has in the last analysis to be justified by the quality of the life which it promotes. A political democracy claims to secure more than that bare minimum of security and order which may be rightly demanded of any social system. Those who adhere to it as a political creed commonly do so because of an equalitarian social ideal.

This ideal means that a man should have his chance to rise as high in attainment as his energy and natural capacity will carry him. It is not implied that attainment shall be equal. There is only one way by which this could be brought about—by penalizing superiority and so reducing life to the level of the least competent. The ideal of social democracy implies a spirit that is rarer and more generous—a magnanimity which will respect genuine superiority wherever it appears, and prefer a pyramid of excellence to a plane of mediocrity. It will recognize the unalterable inequalities of endowment, and the inevitable inequalities of attainment; and will encourage eminence for the enrichment of the common life.

But the cult of social democracy is not satisfied with a vicarious equality, a

merely theoretical equality of rights, or an unattainable equality of aspiration. In the common human faculties and the common human lot it discovers actual equalities. It focusses attention on these equalities, and from them it proposes to form the essential bond between man and man, believing that a society founded on mutual respect is the fundamental condition of the best life. Political democracy is both a means to this social end and one of its chief embodiments.

NUMBERS, OR THE MAJORITY AND THE REMNANT¹

by Matthew Arnold

Matthew Arnold (1822-1888), son of the famous headmaster of Rugby, which is still one of the leading boys' schools in England, was in the top rank of critics and poets of the Victorian period. One of the many Englishmen who have visited the United States, he found in America the greatest hope for the successful functioning of democratic government. His essay should be studied in conjunction with the one that precedes and the one that follows.

THERE is a characteristic saying of Dr. Johnson: "Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel." The saying is cynical, many will even call it brutal, yet it has in it something of plain, robust sense and truth. We do often see men passing themselves off as patriots, who are in truth scoundrels, we meet with talk and proceedings laying claim to patriotism, which are these gentlemen's last refuge. We may all of us agree in praying to be delivered from patriots and patriotism of this sort. Short of such, there is undoubtedly, sheltering itself under the fine name of patriotism, a good deal of self-flattery and self-delusion which is mischievous. "Things are what they are, and the consequences of them will be what they will be, why, then, should we desire to be deceived?" In that uncompromising sentence of Bishop Butler's is surely the right and salutary maxim for both individuals and nations.

Yet there is an honourable patriotism which we should satisfy if we can, and should seek to have on our side. At home I have said so much of the characters of our society and the prospects of our civilisation, that I can hardly escape the like topic elsewhere. Speaking in America, I cannot well avoid saying something about the prospects of society in the United States. It is a topic where one is apt to touch people's patriotic feelings. No one will accuse me of having flattered the patriotism of that great country of English people on the other side of the Atlantic, amongst whom I was born. Here, so many miles from home, I begin to reflect with tender contrition, that perhaps I have not,—I will not say flattered the patriotism of my own countrymen enough, but regarded it enough. Perhaps that is one reason why I have produced so very little effect upon them. It was a fault of youth and inexperience. But it would be unpardonable to come in advanced life and repeat the same error here. You will not expect impossibilities of me. You will not expect me to say that things are not

¹ From *Discourses in America* (1885) *Lecture I*

what, in my judgment, they are, and that the consequences of them will not be what they will be I should make nothing of it, I should be a too palpable failure But I confess that I should be glad if in what I say here I could engage American patriotism on my side, instead of rousing it against me And it so happens that the paramount thoughts which your great country raises in my mind are really and truly of a kind to please, I think, any true American patriot, rather than to offend him

The vast scale of things here, the extent of your country, your numbers, the rapidity of your increase, strike the imagination, and are a common topic for admiring remark Our great orator, Mr Bright, is never weary of telling us how many acres of land you have at your disposal, how many bushels of grain you produce, how many millions you are, how many more millions you will be presently, and what a capital thing this is for you Now, though I do not always agree with Mr Bright, I find myself agreeing with him here I think your numbers afford a very real and important ground for satisfaction

Not that your great numbers, or indeed great numbers of men anywhere, are likely to be all good, or even to have the majority good "The majority are bad," said one of the wise men of Greece, but he was a pagan Much to the same effect, however, is the famous sentence of the New Testament "Many are called, few chosen" This appears a hard saying, frequent are the endeavours to elude it, to attenuate its severity But turn it how you will, manipulate it as you will, the few, as Cardinal Newman well says, can never mean the many Perhaps you will say that the majority *is*, sometimes, good, that its impulses are good generally, and its action is good occasionally Yes, but it lacks principle, it lacks persistence, if today its good impulses prevail, they succumb tomorrow; sometimes it goes right, but it is very apt to go wrong Even a popular orator, or a popular journalist, will hardly say that the multitude may be trusted to have its judgment generally just, and its action generally virtuous It may be better, it is better, that the body of the people, with all its faults, should act for itself, and control its own affairs, than that it should be set aside as ignorant and incapable, and have its affairs managed for it by a so-called superior class, possessing property and intelligence. Property and intelligence cannot be trusted to show a sound majority themselves; the exercise of power by the people tends to educate the people But still, the world being what it is, we must surely expect the aims and doings of the majority of men to be at present very faulty, and this in a numerous community no less than in a small one So much we must certainly, I think, concede to the sages and to the saints

Sages and saints are apt to be severe, it is true, apt to take a gloomy view of the society in which they live, and to prognosticate evil to it But then it must be added that their prognostications are very apt to turn out right Plato's account of the most gifted and brilliant community of the ancient world, of that Athens of his to which we all owe so much, is despondent enough "There is but a very small remnant," he says, "of honest followers of wisdom, and they who are of these few, and who have tasted how sweet and blessed a possession is wisdom, and who can fully see, moreover, the madness of the multitude, and that there is no one, we may say, whose action in public matters is sound, and no ally for whosoever would help the just, what," asks Plato, "are they to do?"

They may be compared," says Plato, "to a man who has fallen among wild beasts, he will not be one of them, but he is too unaided to make head against them, and before he can do any good to society or his friends, he will be overwhelmed and perish uselessly. When he considers this, he will resolve to keep still, and to mind his own business, as it were standing aside under a wall in a storm of dust and hurricane of driving wind, and he will endure to behold the rest filled with iniquity, if only he himself may live his life clear of injustice and of impiety, and depart, when his time comes, in mild and gracious mood, with fair hope."

Plato's picture here of democratic Athens is certainly gloomy enough. We may be sure the mass of his contemporaries would have pronounced it to be monstrously overcharged. We ourselves, if we had been living then, should most of us have by no means seen things as Plato saw them. No, if we had seen Athens even nearer its end than when Plato wrote the strong words which I have been quoting, Athens in the very last days of Plato's life, we should most of us probably have considered that things were not going badly with Athens. There is a long sixteen years' administration,—the administration of Eubulus,—which fills the last years of Plato's life, and the middle years of the fourth century before Christ. A temperate German historian thus describes Athens during this ministry of Eubulus: "The grandeur and loftiness of Attic democracy had vanished, while all the pernicious germs contained in it were fully developed. A life of comfort and a craving for amusement were encouraged in every way, and the interest of the citizens was withdrawn from serious things. Conversation became more and more superficial and frivolous. Famous courtesans formed the chief topic of talk, the new inventions of Thearion, the leading pastry cook in Athens, were hailed with loud applause, and the witty sayings which had been uttered in gay circles were repeated about town as matters of prime importance."

No doubt, if we had been living then to witness this, we should from time to time have shaken our heads gravely, and said how sad it all was. But most of us would not, I think, have been very seriously disquieted by it. On the other hand, we should have found many things in the Athens of Eubulus to gratify us. "The democrats," says the same historian whom I have just quoted, "saw in Eubulus one of their own set at the head of affairs", and I suppose no good democrat would see that without pleasure. Moreover, Eubulus was of popular character. He had "guileless ways," says our historian, "in which the citizens took pleasure." He was also a good speaker, a thorough man of business, and, above all, he was very skilful in matters of finance. His administration was both popular and prosperous. We should certainly have said, most of us, if we had encountered somebody announcing his resolve to stand aside under a wall during such an administration, that he was a goose for his pains, and if he had called it "a falling among wild beasts" to have to live with his fellow-citizens who had confidence in Eubulus, their country, and themselves, we should have esteemed him very impertinent.

Yes,—and yet at the close of that administration of Eubulus came the collapse, and the end of Athens as an independent State. And it was to the fault

of Athens herself that the collapse was owing Plato was right after all, the majority were bad, and the remnant were impotent

So fared it with that famous Athenian State, with the brilliant people of art and intellect Now let us turn to the people of religion We have heard Plato speaking of the very small remnant which honestly sought wisdom *The remnant*!—it is the word of the Hebrew prophets also, and especially is it the word of the greatest of them all, Isaiah Not used with the despondency of Plato, used with far other power informing it, and with a far other future awaiting it, filled with fire, filled with hope, filled with faith, filled with joy, this term itself, *the remnant*, is yet Isaiah's term as well as Plato's. The texts are familiar to all Christendom "Though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them shall return" Even this remnant, a tenth of the whole, if so it may be, shall have to come back into the purging fire, and be again cleared and further reduced there But nevertheless, "as a terebinth tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them, though they be cut down, so the stock of that burned tenth shall be a holy seed"

Yes, the small remnant should be a holy seed, but the great majority, as in democratic Athens, so in the kingdoms of the Hebrew nation, were unsound, and their State was doomed This was Isaiah's point The actual commonwealth of the "drunkards" and the "blind," as he calls them, in Israel and Judah, of the dissolute grandees and gross and foolish common people, of the great majority, must perish, its perishing was the necessary stage towards a happier future. And Isaiah was right, as Plato was right. No doubt to most of us, if we had been there to see it, the kingdom of Ephraim or of Judah, the society of Samaria and Jerusalem, would have seemed to contain a great deal else besides dissolute grandees and foolish common people No doubt we should have thought parts of their policy serious, and some of their alliances promising No doubt, when we read the Hebrew prophets now, with the larger and more patient temper of a different race and an augmented experience, we often feel the blame and invective to be too absolute Nevertheless, as to his grand point, Isaiah, I say, was right. The majority in the Jewish State, whatever they might think or say, whatever their guides and flatterers might think or say, the majority were unsound, and their unsoundness must be their ruin.

Isaiah, however, does not make his remnant confine itself, like Plato's, to standing aside under a wall during this life and then departing in mild temper and good hope when the time for departure comes, Isaiah's remnant saves the State Undoubtedly he means to represent it as doing so. Undoubtedly he imagines his Prince of the house of David who is to be born within a year's time, his royal and victorious Immanuel, he imagines him witnessing as a child the chastisement of Ephraim and the extirpation of the bad majority there; then witnessing as a youth the chastisement of Judah and the extirpation of the bad majority there also; but finally, in mature life, reigning over a State renewed, preserved, and enlarged, a greater and happier kingdom of the chosen people

Undoubtedly Isaiah conceives his remnant in this wise; undoubtedly he imagined for it a part which, in strict truth, it did not play, and could not play. So manifest was the nonfulfilment of his prophecy, taken strictly, that ardent

souls feeding upon his words had to wrest them from their natural meaning, and to say that Isaiah directly meant something which he did not directly mean. Isaiah, like Plato, with inspired insight foresaw that the world before his eyes, the world of actual life, the State and city of the unsound majority, could not stand. Unlike Plato, Isaiah announced with faith and joy a leader and a remnant certain to supersede them. But he put the leader's coming, and he put the success of the leader's and the remnant's work, far, far too soon, and his conception, in this respect, is fantastic. Plato betook himself for the bringing in of righteousness to a visionary republic in the clouds, Isaiah,—and it is the immortal glory of him and of his race to have done so,—brought it in upon earth. But Immanuel and his reign, for the eighth century before Christ, were fantastic. For the Kingdom of Judah they were fantastic. Immanuel and the remnant could not come to reign under the conditions there and then offered to them, the thing was impossible.

The reason of the impossibility is quite simple. The scale of things, in petty States like Judah and Athens, is too small, the numbers are too scanty. Admit that for the world, as we hitherto know it, what the philosophers and prophets say is true—that the majority are unsound. Even in communities with exceptional gifts, even in the Jewish State, the Athenian State, the majority are unsound. But there is "the remnant." Now the important thing, as regards States such as Judah and Athens, is not that the remnant bears but a small proportion to the majority, the remnant always bears a small proportion to the majority. The grave thing for States like Judah and Athens is, that the remnant must in positive bulk be so small, and therefore so powerless for reform. To be a voice outside the State, speaking to mankind or to the future, perhaps shaking the actual State to pieces in doing so, one man will suffice. But to reform the State in order to save it, to preserve it by changing it, a body of workers is needed as well as a leader,—a considerable body of workers, placed at many points, and operating in many directions. This considerable body of workers for good is what is wanting in petty States such as were Athens and Judah. It is said that the Athenian State had in all but 350,000 inhabitants. It is calculated that the population of the Kingdom of Judah did not exceed a million and a quarter. The scale of things, I say, is here too small, the numbers are too scanty, to give us a remnant capable of saving and perpetuating the community. The remnant, in these cases, may influence the world and the future, may transcend the State and survive it, but it cannot possibly transform the State and perpetuate the State for such a work it is numerically too feeble.

Plato saw the impossibility. Isaiah refused to accept it, but facts were too strong for him. The Jewish State could not be renewed and saved, and he was wrong in thinking that it could. And therefore I call his grand point this other, where he was altogether right—that the actual world of the unsound majority, though it fancied itself solid, and though most men might call it solid, could not stand. Let us read him again and again, until we fix in our minds this true conviction of his, to edify us whenever we see such a world existing—his indestructible conviction that such a world, with its prosperities, idolatries, oppression, luxury, pleasures, drunkards, careless women, governing classes, systems of policy, strong alliances, shall come to nought and pass away,

that nothing can save it Let us do homage, also, to his indestructible conviction that States are saved by their righteous remnant, however clearly we may at the same time recognise that his own building on this conviction was premature

That, however, matters to us little For how different is the scale of things in the modern States to which we belong, how far greater are the numbers! It is impossible to overrate the importance of the new element introduced into our calculations by increasing the size of the remnant And in our great modern States, where the scale of things is so large, it does seem as if the remnant might be so increased as to become an actual power, even though the majority be unsound Then the lover of wisdom may come out from under his wall, the lover of goodness will not be alone among the wild beasts To enable the remnant to succeed, a large strengthening of its numbers is everything

Here is good hope for us, not only, as for Plato's recluse, in departing this life, but while we live and work in it. Only, before we dwell too much on this hope, it is advisable to make sure that we have earned the right to entertain it We have earned the right to entertain it, only when we are at one with the philosophers and prophets in their conviction respecting the world which now is, the world of the unsound majority, when we feel what they mean, and when we go thoroughly along with them in it Most of us, as I have said already, would by no means have been with them when they were here in life, and most of us are not really with them now What is saving? Our institutions, says an American, the British Constitution, says an Englishman, the civilising mission of France, says a Frenchman But Plato and the sages, when they are asked what is saving, answer "To love righteousness, and to be convinced of the unprofitableness of iniquity" And Isaiah and the prophets, when they are asked the same question, answer to just the same effect that what is saving is to "order one's conversation right", to "cease to do evil"; to "delight in the law of the Eternal"; and to "make one's study in it all day long"

The worst of it is, that this loving of righteousness and this delighting in the law of the Eternal sound rather vague to us Not that they are vague really; indeed, they are less vague than American institutions, or the British Constitution, or the civilising mission of France But the phrases sound vague because of the quantity of matters they cover The thing is to have a brief but adequate enumeration of these matters The New Testament tells us how righteousness is composed. In England and America we have been brought up in familiarity with the New Testament. And so, before Mr Bradlaugh on our side of the water, and the Congress of American Freethinkers on yours, banish it from our education and memory, let us take from the New Testament a text showing what it is that both Plato and the prophets mean when they tell us that we ought to love righteousness and to make our study in the law of the Eternal, but that the unsound majority do nothing of the kind. A score of texts offer themselves in a moment Here is one which will serve very well "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are elevated, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are amiable, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, have these

in your mind, let your thoughts run upon these"² That is what both Plato and the prophets mean by loving righteousness, and making one's study in the law of the Eternal

Now the matters just enumerated do not come much into the heads of most of us, I suppose, when we are thinking of politics. But the philosophers and prophets maintain that these matters, and not those of which the heads of politicians are full, do really govern politics and save or destroy States. They save or destroy them by a silent, inexorable fatality, while the politicians are making believe, plausibly and noisily, with their American institutions, British Constitution, and civilising mission of France. And because these matters are what do really govern politics and save or destroy States, Socrates maintained that in his time he and a few philosophers, who alone kept insisting on the good of righteousness and the unprofitableness of iniquity, were the only real politicians then living.

I say, if we are to derive comfort from the doctrine of *the remnant* (and there is great comfort to be derived from it), we must also hold fast to the austere but true doctrine as to what really governs politics, overrides with an inexorable fatality the combinations of the so-called politicians, and saves or destroys States. Having in mind things true, things elevated, things just, things pure, things amiable, things of good report, having these in mind, studying and loving these, is what saves States.

There is nothing like positive instances to illustrate general propositions of this kind, and to make them believed. I hesitate to take an instance from America. Possibly there are some people who think that already, on a former occasion, I have said enough about America without duly seeing and knowing it. So I will take my instances from England, and from England's neighbour and old co-mate in history, France. The instance from England I will take first. I will take it from the grave topic of England's relations with Ireland. I am not going to reproach either England or Ireland. To reproach Ireland here would probably be indiscreet. As to England, anything I may have to say against my own countrymen I prefer to say at home, America is the last place where I should care to say it. However, I have no wish or intention now to reproach either the English or the Irish. But I want to show you from England's relations with Ireland how right the philosophers and prophets are. Everyone knows that there has been conquest and confiscation in Ireland. So there has elsewhere. Everyone knows that the conquest and the confiscation have been attended with cupidity, oppression, and ill-usage. So they have elsewhere. "Whatsoever things are just" are not exactly the study, so far as I know, of conquerors and confiscators anywhere, certainly they were not the study of the English conquerors of Ireland. A failure in justice is a source of danger to States. But it may be made up for and got over, it has been made up for and got over in many communities. England's confiscations in Ireland are a thing of the past, the penal laws against Catholics are a thing of the past, much has been done to make up for the old failure in justice, Englishmen generally think that it has been pretty well made up for, and that Irishmen ought to think so too. And politicians invent Land Acts for curing the last results of the old failure.

in justice, for insuring the contentment of the Irish with us, and for consolidating the Union and are surprised and plaintive if it is not consolidated. But now see how much more serious people are the philosophers and prophets than the politicians *Whatsoever things are amiable*!—the failure in amiability, too, is a source of danger and insecurity to States, as well as the failure in justice. And we English are not amiable, or at any rate, what in this case comes to the same thing, do not appear so. The politicians never thought of that! Quite outside their combinations lies this hindrance, tending to make their most elaborate combinations ineffectual. Thus the joint operation of two moral causes together,—the sort of causes which politicians do not seriously regard,—tells against the designs of the politicians with what seems to be an almost inexorable fatality. If there were not the failure in amiability, perhaps the original failure in justice might by this time have been got over, if there had not been the failure in justice, perhaps the failure in amiability might not have mattered much. The two failures together create a difficulty almost insurmountable. Public men in England keep saying that it will be got over. I hope that it will be got over, and that the union between England and Ireland may become as solid as that between England and Scotland. But it will not become solid by means of the contrivances of the mere politician, or without the intervention of moral causes of concord to heal the mischief wrought by moral causes of division. Everything, in this case, depends upon the “remnant,” its numbers and its powers of action.

My second instance is even more important. It is so important, and its reach is so wide, that I must go into it with some little fulness. The instance is taken from France. To France I have always felt myself powerfully drawn. People in England often accuse me of liking France and things French far too well. At all events I have paid special regard to them, and am always glad to confess how much I owe to them. M. Sainte-Beuve wrote to me in the last years of his life: “You have passed through our life and literature by a deep inner line, which confers initiation, and which you will never lose.” *Vous avez traversé notre vie et notre littérature par une ligne intérieure, profonde, qui fait les initiés, et que vous ne perdrez jamais*. I wish I could think that this friendly testimony of that accomplished and charming man, one of my chief benefactors, were fully deserved. But I have pride, and pleasure in quoting it; and I quote it to bear me out in saying, that whatever opinion I may express about France, I have at least been a not inattentive observer of that great country, and anything but a hostile one.

The question was once asked by the town clerk of Ephesus: “What man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana?” Now really, when one looks at the popular literature of the French at this moment,—their popular novels, popular stage-plays, popular newspapers,—and at the life of which this literature of theirs is the index, one is tempted to make a goddess out of a word of their own, and then, like the town clerk of Ephesus, to ask: “What man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the French is a worshipper of the great goddess Lubricity?” Or rather, as Greek is the classic and euphonious language for names of gods and goddesses, let us take her name from the Greek Testament, and call her

the goddess Aselgeia That goddess has always been a sufficient power amongst mankind, and her worship was generally supposed to need restraining rather than encouraging But here is now a whole popular literature, nay, and art too, in France at her service! stimulations and suggestions by her and to her meet one in it at every turn She is becoming the great recognised power there, never was anything like it M Renan himself seems half inclined to apologise for not having paid her more attention "Nature cares nothing for chastity," says he, *Les frivoles ont peut être raison*, "The gay people are perhaps in the right" Men even of this force salute her, but the allegiance now paid to her, in France, by the popular novel, the popular newspaper, the popular play, is, one may say, boundless

I have no wish at all to preach to the French, no intention whatever, in what I now say, to upbraid or wound them I simply lay my finger on a fact in their present condition, a fact insufficiently noticed, as it seems to me, and yet extremely potent for mischief It is well worth while to trace the manner of its growth and action

The French have always had a leaning to the goddess of whom we speak, and have been willing enough to let the world know of their leaning, to pride themselves on their Gaulish salt, their gallantry, and so on But these qualities left to work by themselves give us what we call the *homme sensuel moyen*, the average sensual man The highest art, the art which by its height, depth, and gravity possesses religiousness,—such as the Greeks had, the art of Pindar and Phidias, such as the Italians had, the art of Dante and Michael Angelo,—this art, with the training which it gives and the standard which it sets up, the French have never had On the other hand, they had a dose of German seriousness, a Germanic bent for ideas of moral duty, which neither the Greeks had, nor the Italians But if this dies out, what is left is the *homme sensuel moyen* This average sensual man has his very advantageous qualities He has his gaiety, quickness, sentiment, sociability, rationality He has his horror of sour strictness, false restraint, hypocrisy, obscurantism, cretinism, and the rest of it And this is very well, but on the serious, moral side he is almost ludicrously insufficient Fine sentiments about his dignity and his honour and his heart, about the dignity and the honour and the heart of France, and his adoration of her, do duty for him here, grandiose phrases about the spectacle offered in France and in the French Republic of the ideal for our race, of the *épanouissement de l'élite de l'humanité*, "the coming into blow of the choice flower of humanity" In M Victor Hugo we have (his worshippers must forgive me for saying so) the average sensual man impassioned and grandiloquent, in M Zola we have the average sensual man going near the ground "Happy the son," cries M Victor Hugo, "of whom one can say, 'He has consoled his mother!'" Happy the poet of whom one can say, 'He has consoled his country!'" The French themselves, even when they are severest, call this kind of thing by only the mild name of emphasis, "*emphasis*,"—other people call it fustian And a surly Johnson will growl out in answer, at one time, that "Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel", at another time, that fine sentiments about *ma mère* are the last refuge of a scoundrel But what they really are is the creed which in France the average sensual man rehearses, to do duty for serious moral ideas

And, as the result, we have a popular literature and a popular art serving, as has been already said, the goddess Aselgeia

Such an art and literature easily make their way everywhere In England and America the French literature of the seventeenth century is peculiarly fitted to do great good, and nothing but good, it can hardly be too much studied by us And it is studied by us very little The French literature of the eighteenth century, also, has qualities to do us much good, and we are not likely to take harm from its other qualities, we may study it to our great profit and advantage And it is studied by us very little The higher French literature of the present day has more knowledge and a wider range than its great predecessors, but less soundness and perfection, and it exerts much less influence than they did Action and influence are now with the lower literature of France, with the popular literature in the service of the goddess Aselgeia And this popular modern French literature, and the art which corresponds to it, bid fair to make their way in England and America far better than their predecessors. They appeal to instincts so universal and accessible, they appeal, people are beginning boldly to say, to Nature herself Few things have lately struck me more than M Renan's dictum, which I have already quoted, about what used to be called the virtue of chastity The dictum occurs in his very interesting autobiography, published but the other day. M Renan, whose genius I unfeignedly admire, is, I need hardly say, a man of the most perfect propriety of life; he has told us so himself He was brought up for a priest, and he thinks it would not have been in good taste for him to become a free liver But this abstinence is a mere matter of personal delicacy, a display of good and correct taste on his own part in his own very special circumstances "Nature," he cries, "cares nothing about chastity" What a slap in the face to the sticklers for "Whatsoever things are pure"

I have had to take a long sweep to arrive at the point which I wished to reach If we are to enjoy the benefit, I said, of the comfortable doctrine of the remnant, we must be capable of receiving also, and of holding fast, the hard doctrine of the unsoundness of the majority, and of the certainty that the unsoundness of the majority, if it is not withstood and remedied, must be their ruin And therefore, even though a gifted man like M Renan may be so carried away by the tide of opinion in France where he lives, as to say that Nature cares nothing about chastity, and to see with amused indulgence the worship of the great goddess Lubricity, let us stand fast, and say that her worship is against nature, human nature, and that it is ruin For this is the test of its being against human nature, that for human societies it is ruin And the test is one from which there is no escape, as from the old tests in such matters there may be For if you allege that it is the will of God that we should be pure, the sceptical Gallo-Latins will tell you that they do not know any such person And in like manner, if it is said that those who serve the goddess Aselgeia shall not inherit the kingdom of God, the Gallo-Latin may tell you that he does not believe in any such place But that the sure tendency and upshot of things establishes that the service of the goddess Aselgeia is ruin, that her followers are marred and stunted by it and disqualified for the ideal society of the future, is an infallible test to employ

The saints admonish us to let our thoughts run upon whatsoever things are

pure, if we would inherit the kingdom of God, and the divine Plato tells us that we have within us a many headed beast and a man, and that by dissoluteness we feed and strengthen the beast in us, and starve the man, and finally, following the divine Plato among the sages at a humble distance, comes the prosaic and unfashionable Paley, and says in his precise way that "this vice has a tendency, which other species of vice have not so directly, to unsettle and weaken the powers of the understanding, as well as, I think, in a greater degree than other vices, to render the heart thoroughly corrupt" True, and once admitted and fostered, it eats like a canker, and with difficulty can ever be brought to let go its hold again, but for ever tightens it Hardness and insolence come in its train, an insolence which grows until it ends by exasperating and alienating everybody, a hardness which grows until the man can at last scarcely take pleasure in anything, outside the service of his goddess, except cupidity and greed, and cannot be touched with emotion by any language except fustian Such are the fruits of the worship of the great goddess Aselger!

So, instead of saying that Nature cares nothing about chastity, let us say that human nature, *our* nature, cares about it a great deal Let us say that, by her present popular literature, France gives proof that she is suffering from a dangerous and perhaps fatal disease, and that it is not clericalism which is the real enemy to the French so much as their goddess, and if they can none of them see this themselves, it is only a sign of how far the disease has gone, and the case is so much the worse The case is so much the worse, and for men in such case to be so vehemently busy about clerical and dynastic intrigues at home, and about alliances and colonial acquisitions and purifications of the flag abroad, might well make one borrow of the prophets and exclaim, "Surely ye are perverse!" perverse to neglect your really pressing matters for those secondary ones And when the ingenious and inexhaustible M Blowitz, of our great London *Times*, who sees everybody and knows everything, when he expounds the springs of politics and the causes of the fall and success of ministries, and the combinations which have not been tried but should be, and takes upon him the mystery of things in the way with which we are so familiar,—to this wise man himself one is often tempted, again, to say with the prophets "Yet the Eternal also is wise, and will not call back his words" M Blowitz is not the only wise one, the Eternal has his wisdom also, and somehow or other it is always the Eternal's wisdom which at last carries the day The Eternal has attached to certain moral causes the safety or the ruin of States, and the present popular literature of France is a sign that she has a most dangerous moral disease

Now if the disease goes on and increases, then, whatever sagacious advice M Blowitz may give, and whatever political combinations may be tried, and whether France gets colonies or not, and whether she allies herself with this nation or with that, things will only go from bad to worse with her, she will more and more lose her powers of soul and spirit, her intellectual productiveness, her skill in counsel, her might for war, her formidableness as a foe, her value as an ally, and the life of that famous State will be more and more impaired, until it perish And this is that hard but true doctrine of the sages and prophets, of the inexorable fatality of operation, in moral failure of the unsound

majority, to impair and destroy States But we will not talk or think of destruction for a State with such gifts and graces as France, and which has had such a place in history, and to which we, many of us, owe so much delight and so much good And yet if France had no greater numbers than the Athens of Plato or the Judah of Isaiah, I do not see how she could well escape out of the throttling arms of her goddess and recover. She must recover through a powerful and profound renewal, a great inward change, brought about by "the remnant" amongst her people; and, for this, a remnant small in numbers would not suffice But in a France of thirty-five millions, who shall set bounds to the numbers of the remnant, or to its effectualness and power of victory?

In these United States (for I come round to the United States at last) you are fifty millions and more I suppose that, as in England, as in France, as everywhere, so likewise here, the majority of people doubt very much whether the majority is unsound, or, rather, they have no doubt at all about the matter, they are sure that it is not unsound But let us consent tonight to remain to the end in the ideas of the sages and prophets whom we have been following all along; and let us suppose that in the present actual stage of the world, as in all the stages through which the world has passed hitherto, the majority is and must be in general unsound everywhere,—even in the United States, even here in New York itself Where is the failure? I have already, in the past, speculated in the abstract about you, perhaps, too much. But I suppose that in a democratic community like this, with its newness, its magnitude, its strength, its life of business, its sheer freedom and equality, the danger is in the absence of the discipline of respect; in hardness and materialism, exaggeration and boastfulness; in a false smartness, a false audacity, a want of soul and delicacy. "Whatsoever things are *elevated*," whatsoever things are nobly serious, have true elevation,—that perhaps, in our catalogue of maxims which are to possess the mind, is the maxim which points to where the failure of the unsound majority, in a great democracy like yours, will probably lie At any rate let us for the moment agree to suppose so. And the philosophers and the prophets, whom I at any rate am disposed to believe, and who say that moral causes govern the standing and the falling of States, will tell us that the failure to mind whatsoever things are elevated must impair with an inexorable fatality the life of a nation, just as the failure to mind whatsoever things are just, or whatsoever things are amiable, or whatsoever things are pure, will impair it; and that if the failure to mind whatsoever things are elevated should be real in your American democracy, and should grow into a disease, and take firm hold on you, then the life of even these great United States must inevitably suffer and be impaired more and more, until it perish.

Then from this hard doctrine we will betake ourselves to the more comfortable doctrine of the *remnant* "The remnant shall return"; shall "convert and be healed" itself first, and shall then recover the unsound majority. And you are fifty millions and growing apace. What a remnant yours may be, surely! A remnant of how great numbers, how mighty strength, how irresistible efficacy! Yet we must not go too fast, either nor make too sure of our efficacious remnant Mere multitude will not give us a saving remnant with certainty. The Assyrian Empire had multitude, the Roman Empire had multitude, yet neither the one

nor the other could produce a sufficing remnant any more than Athens or Judah could produce it, and both Assyria and Rome perished like Athens and Judah

But you are something more than a people of fifty millions. You are fifty millions mainly sprung, as we in England are mainly sprung, from that German stock which has faults indeed, faults which have diminished the extent of its influence, diminished its power of attraction and the interest of its history, and which seems moreover just now, from all I can see and hear, to be passing through a not very happy moment, morally, in Germany proper. Yet of the German stock it is, I think, true, as my father said more than fifty years ago, that it has been a stock "of the most moral races of men that the world has yet seen, with the soundest laws, the least violent passions, the purest domestic and civil virtues." You come, therefore, of about the best parentage which a modern nation can have. Then you have had, as we in England have also had, but more entirely than we and more exclusively, the Puritan discipline. Certainly I am not blind to the faults of that discipline. Certainly I do not wish it to remain in possession of the field for ever, or too long. But as a stage and a discipline, and as means for enabling that poor inattentive and immoral creature, man, to love and appropriate and make part of his being divine ideas, on which he could not otherwise have laid or kept hold, the discipline of Puritanism has been invaluable, and the more I read history, the more I see of mankind, the more I recognise its value. Well, then, you are not merely a multitude of fifty millions, you are fifty millions sprung from this excellent Germanic stock, having passed through this excellent Puritan discipline, and set in this enviable and unbounded country. Even supposing, therefore, that by the necessity of things your majority must in the present stage of the world probably be unsound, what a remnant, I say,—what an incomparable, all transforming remnant,—you may fairly hope with your numbers, if things go happily, to have!

POLITICAL IDEALS¹

by Bertrand Russell

Bertrand Arthur William Russell (b. 1872), third Earl Russell, is one of the most distinguished mathematicians and philosophers of our day. An able thinker, who puts his thoughts on paper with unusual brilliance, Russell is yet another English man who has visited the United States. He has taught in a number of American universities and, through his habit of candid and fearless expression, has been a valuable leaven in our midst.

IN DARK days, men need a clear faith and a well-grounded hope, and as the outcome of these, the calm courage which takes no account of hardships by the way. The times through which we are passing have afforded to many of us a confirmation of our faith. We see that the things we had thought evil are really evil, and we know more definitely than we ever did before the

¹ From *Political Ideals* by Bertrand Russell. New York: The Century Company, 1917.

directions in which men must move if a better world is to arise on the ruins of the one which is now hurling itself into destruction. We see that men's political dealings with one another are based on wholly wrong ideals, and can only be saved by quite different ideals from continuing to be a source of suffering, devastation, and sin.

Political ideals must be based upon ideals for the individual life. The aim of politics should be to make the lives of individuals as good as possible. There is nothing for the politician to consider outside or above the various men, women, and children who compose the world. The problem of politics is to adjust the relations of human beings in such a way that each severally may have as much of good in his existence as possible. And this problem requires that we should first consider what it is that we think good in the individual life.

To begin with, we do not want all men to be alike. We do not want to lay down a pattern or type to which men of all sorts are to be made by some means or another to approximate. This is the ideal of the impatient administrator. A bad teacher will aim at imposing his opinion, and turning out a set of pupils all of whom will give the same definite answer on a doubtful point. Mr. Bernard Shaw is said to hold that *Troilus and Cressida* is the best of Shakespeare's plays. Although I disagree with his opinion, I should welcome it in a pupil as a sign of individuality, but most teachers would not tolerate such a heterodox view. Not only teachers, but all commonplace persons in authority, desire in their subordinates that kind of uniformity which makes their actions easily predictable and never inconvenient. The result is that they crush initiative and individuality when they can, and when they cannot, they quarrel with it.

It is not one ideal for all men, but a separate ideal for each separate man, that has to be realized if possible. Every man has it in his being to develop into something good or bad; there is a best possible for him, and a worst possible. His circumstances will determine whether his capacities for good are developed or crushed, and whether his bad impulses are strengthened or gradually diverted into better channels.

But although we cannot set up in any detail an ideal of character which is to be universally applicable—although we cannot say, for instance, that all men ought to be industrious, or self-sacrificing, or fond of music—there are some broad principles which can be used to guide our estimates as to what is possible or desirable.

We may distinguish two sorts of goods, and two corresponding sorts of impulses. There are goods in regard to which individual possession is possible, and there are goods in which all can share alike. The food and clothing of one man is not the food and clothing of another; if the supply is insufficient, what one man has is obtained at the expense of some other man. This applies to material goods generally, and therefore to the greater part of the present economic life of the world. On the other hand, mental and spiritual goods do not belong to one man to the exclusion of another. If one man knows a science, that does not prevent others from knowing it; on the contrary, it helps them to acquire the knowledge. If one man is a great artist or poet, that does not prevent others from painting pictures or writing poems, but helps to create the atmosphere in which such things are possible. If one man is full of good-will

toward others, that does not mean that there is less good-will to be shared among the rest, the more good will one man has, the more he is likely to create among others. In such matters there is no *possession*, because there is not a definite amount to be shared, any increase anywhere tends to produce an increase everywhere.

There are two kinds of impulses, corresponding to the two kinds of goods. There are *possessive* impulses, which aim at acquiring or retaining private goods that cannot be shared, these center in the impulse of property. And there are *creative* or constructive impulses, which aim at bringing into the world or making available for use the kind of goods in which there is no privacy and no possession.

The best life is the one in which the creative impulses play the largest part and the possessive impulses the smallest. This is no new discovery. The Gospel says "Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" The thought we give to these things is taken away from matters of more importance. And what is worse, the habit of mind engendered by thinking of these things is a bad one, it leads to competition, envy, domination, cruelty, and almost all the moral evils that infest the world. In particular, it leads to the predatory use of force. Material possessions can be taken by force and enjoyed by the robber. Spiritual possessions cannot be taken in this way. You may kill an artist or a thinker, but you cannot acquire his art or his thought. You may put a man to death because he loves his fellowmen, but you will not by so doing acquire the love which made his happiness. Force is impotent in such matters, it is only in regards material goods that it is effective. For this reason the men who believe in force are the men whose thoughts and desires are preoccupied with material goods.

The possessive impulses, when they are strong, infect activities which ought to be purely creative. A man who has made some valuable discovery may be filled with jealousy of a rival discoverer. If one man has found a cure for cancer and another has found a cure for consumption, one of them may be delighted if the other man's discovery turns out a mistake, instead of regretting the suffering of patients which would otherwise have been avoided. In such cases, instead of desiring knowledge for its own sake, or for the sake of its usefulness, a man is desiring it as a means to reputation. Every creative impulse is shadowed by a possessive impulse, even the aspirant to saintliness may be jealous of the more successful saint. More affection is accompanied by some tinge of jealousy, which is a possessive impulse intruding into the creative region. Worst of all, in this direction, is the sheer envy of those who have missed everything worth having in life, and who are instinctively bent on preventing others from enjoying what they have not had. There is often much of this in the attitude of the old toward the young.

There is in human beings, as in plants and animals, a certain natural impulse of growth, and this is just as true of mental as of physical development. Physical development is helped by air and nourishment and exercise, and may be hindered by the sort of treatment which made Chinese women's feet small. In just the same way mental development may be helped or hindered by outside influences. The outside influences that help are those that merely provide encour-

agement or mental food or opportunities for exercising mental faculties. The influences that hinder are those that interfere with growth by applying any kind of force, whether discipline or authority or fear or the tyranny of public opinion or the necessity of engaging in some totally incongenial occupation. Worst of all influences are those that thwart or twist a man's fundamental impulse, which is what shows itself as conscience in the moral sphere, such influences are likely to do a man an inward danger from which he will never recover.

Those who realize the harm that can be done to others by any use of force against them, and the worthlessness of the goods that can be acquired by force, will be very full of respect for the liberty of others, they will not try to bind them or fetter them; they will be slow to judge and swift to sympathize, they will treat every human being with a kind of tenderness, because the principle of good in him is at once fragile and infinitely precious. They will not condemn those who are unlike themselves; they will know and feel that individuality brings differences and uniformity means death. They will wish each human being to be as much a living thing and as little a mechanical product as it is possible to be; they will cherish in each one just those things which the harsh usage of a ruthless world would destroy. In one word, all their dealings with others will be inspired by a deep impulse of *reverence*.

What we shall desire for individuals is now clear: strong creative impulses, overpowering and absorbing the instinct of possession; reverence for others; respect for the fundamental creative impulse in ourselves. A certain kind of self-respect or native pride is necessary to a good life; a man must not have a sense of utter inward defeat if he is to remain whole, but must feel the courage and the hope and the will to live by the best that is in him, whatever outward or inward obstacles it may encounter. So far as it lies in a man's own power, his life will realize its best possibilities if it has three things: creative rather than possessive impulses, reverence for others, and respect for the fundamental impulse in himself.

Political and social institutions are to be judged by the good or harm that they do to individuals. Do they encourage creativeness rather than possessiveness? Do they embody or promote a spirit of reverence between human beings? Do they preserve self-respect?

In all these ways the institutions under which we live are very far indeed from what they ought to be.

Institutions, and especially economic systems, have a profound influence in molding the characters of men and women. They may encourage adventure and hope, or timidity and the pursuit of safety. They may open men's minds to great possibilities, or close them against everything but the risk of obscure misfortune. They may make a man's happiness depend upon what he adds to the general possessions of the world, or upon what he can secure for himself of the private goods in which others cannot share. Modern capitalism forces the wrong decision of these alternatives upon all who are not heroic or exceptionally fortunate.

Men's impulses are molded, partly by their native disposition, partly by opportunity and environment, especially early environment. Direct preaching

can do very little to change impulses, though it can lead people to restrain the direct expression of them, often with the result that the impulses go underground and come to the surface again in some contorted form. When we have discovered what kinds of impulse we desire, we must not rest content with preaching, or with trying to produce the outward manifestation without the inner spring, we must try rather to alter institutions in the way that will, of itself, modify the life of impulse in the desired direction.

At present our institutions rest upon two things: property and power. Both of these are very unjustly distributed, both, in the actual world, are of great importance to the happiness of the individual. Both are possessive goods, yet without them many of the goods in which all might share are hard to acquire as things are now.

Without property, as things are, a man has no freedom, and no security for the necessities of a tolerable life; without power, he has no opportunity for initiative. If men are to have free play for their creative impulses, they must be liberated from sordid cares by a certain measure of security, and they must have a sufficient share of power to be able to exercise initiative as regards the course and conditions of their lives.

Few men can succeed in being creative rather than possessive in a world which is wholly built on competition, where the great majority would fall into utter destitution if they became careless as to the acquisition of material goods, where honor and power and respect are given to wealth rather than to wisdom, where the law embodies and consecrates the injustice of those who have toward those who have not. In such an environment even those whom nature has endowed with great creative gifts become infected with the poison of competition. Men combine in groups to attain more strength in the scramble for material goods, and loyalty to the group spreads a halo of quasi-idealism round the central impulse of greed. Trade-unions and the Labor party are no more exempt from this vice than other parties and other sections of society, though they are largely inspired by the hope of a radically better world. They are too often led astray by the immediate object of securing for themselves a large share of material goods. That this desire is in accordance with justice, it is impossible to deny, but something larger and more constructive is needed as a political ideal, if the victors of tomorrow are not to become the oppressors of the day after. The inspiration and outcome of a reforming movement ought to be freedom and a generous spirit, not niggling restrictions and regulations.

The present economic system concentrates initiative in the hands of a small number of very rich men. Those who are not capitalists have, almost always, very little choice as to their activities when once they have selected a trade or profession, they are not part of the power that moves the mechanism, but only a passive portion of the machinery. Despite political democracy, there is still an extraordinary degree of difference in the power of self-direction belonging to a capitalist and to a man who has to earn his living. Economic affairs touch men's lives, at most times, much more intimately than political questions. At present the man who has no capital usually has to sell himself to some large organization, such as a railway company, for example. He has no voice in its management, and no liberty in politics except what his trade-union can secure for him.

If he happens to desire a form of liberty which is not thought important by his trade-union, he is powerless, he must submit or starve.

Exactly the same thing happens to professional men. Probably a majority of journalists are engaged in writing for newspapers whose politics they disagree with, only a man of wealth can own a large newspaper, and only an accident can enable the point of view or the interests of those who are not wealthy to find expression in a newspaper. A large part of the best brains of the country are in the civil service, where the condition of their employment is silence about the evils which cannot be concealed from them. A Nonconformist minister loses his livelihood if his views displease his congregation, a member of Parliament loses his seat if he is not sufficiently supple or sufficiently stupid to follow or share all the turns and twists of public opinion. In every walk of life, independence of mind is punished by failure, more and more as economic organizations grow larger and more rigid. Is it surprising that men become increasingly docile, increasingly ready to submit to dictation and to forego the right of thinking for themselves? Yet along such lines civilization can only sink into a Byzantine immobility.

Fear of destitution is not a motive out of which a free creative life can grow, yet it is the chief motive which inspires the daily work of most wage-earners. The hope of possessing more wealth and power than any man ought to have, which is the corresponding motive of the rich, is quite as bad in its effects; it compels men to close their minds against justice, and to prevent themselves from thinking honestly on social questions, while in the depths of their hearts they uneasily feel that their pleasures are bought by the miseries of others. The injustices of destitution and wealth alike ought to be rendered impossible. Then a great fear would be removed from the lives of the many, and hope would have to take on a better form in the lives of the few.

But security and liberty are only the negative conditions for good political institutions. When they have been won, we need also the positive condition: encouragement of creative energy. Security alone might produce a smug and stationary society, it demands creativeness as its counterpart, in order to keep alive the adventure and interest of life, and the movement toward perpetually new and better things. There can be no final goal for human institutions, the best are those that most encourage progress toward others still better. Without effort and change, human life cannot remain good. It is not a finished Utopia that we ought to desire, but a world where imagination and hope are alive and active.

It is a sad evidence of the weariness mankind has suffered from excessive toil that his heavens have usually been places where nothing ever happened or changed. Fatigue produces the illusion that only rest is needed for happiness, but when men have rested for a time, boredom drives them to renewed activity. For this reason, a happy life must be one in which there is activity. If it is also to be a useful life, the activity ought to be as far as possible creative, not merely predatory or defensive. But activity requires imagination and originality, which are apt to be subversive of the *status quo*. At present, those who have power dread a disturbance of the *status quo*, lest their unjust privileges should be taken away. In combination with the instinct for conventionality, which man

shares with the other gregarious animals, those who profit by the existing order have established a system which punishes originality and starves imagination from the moment of first going to school down to the time of death and burial. The whole spirit in which education is conducted needs to be changed, in order that children may be encouraged to think and feel for themselves, not to acquiesce passively in the thoughts and feelings of others. It is not rewards after the event that will produce initiative, but a certain mental atmosphere. There have been times when such an atmosphere existed, the great days of Greece, and Elizabethan England, may serve as examples. But in our own day the tyranny of vast machine-like organizations, governed from above by men who know and care little for the lives of those whom they control, is killing individuality and freedom of mind, and forcing men more and more to conform to a uniform pattern.

Vast organizations are an inevitable element in modern life, and it is useless to aim at their abolition, as has been done by some reformers, for instance, William Morris. It is true that they make the preservation of individuality more difficult, but what is needed is a way of combining them with the greatest possible scope for individual initiative.

One very important step toward this end would be to render democratic the government of every organization. At present, our legislative institutions are more or less democratic, except for the important fact that women are excluded. But our administration is still purely bureaucratic, and our economic organizations are monarchical or oligarchic. Every limited liability company is run by a small number of self-appointed or co-opted directors. There can be no real freedom or democracy until the men who do the work in a business also control its management.

Another measure which would do much to increase liberty would be an increase of self-government for subordinate groups, whether geographical or economic or defined by some common belief, like religious sects. A modern state is so vast and its machinery is so little understood that even when a man has a vote he does not feel himself any effective part of the force which determines its policy. Except in matters where he can act in conjunction with an exceptionally powerful group, he feels himself almost impotent, and the government remains a remote impersonal circumstance, which must be simply endured, like the weather. By a share in the control of smaller bodies, a man might regain some of that sense of personal opportunity and responsibility which belonged to the citizen of a city-state in ancient Greece or medieval Italy.

When any group of men has a strong corporate consciousness—such as belongs, for example, to a nation or a trade or a religious body—liberty demands that it should be free to decide for itself all matters which are of great importance to the outside world. This is the basis of the universal claim for national independence. But nations are by no means the only groups which ought to have self-government for their internal concerns. And nations, like other groups, ought not to have complete liberty of action in matters which are of equal concern to foreign nations. Liberty demands self-government, but not the right to interfere with others. The greatest degree of liberty is not secured by anarchy.

The reconciliation of liberty with government is a difficult problem, but it is one which any political theory must face

The essence of government is the use of force in accordance with law to secure certain ends which the holders of power consider desirable. The coercion of an individual or a group by force is always in itself more or less harmful. But if there were no government, the result would not be an absence of force in men's relations to each other, it would merely be the exercise of force by those who had strong predatory instincts, necessitating either slavery or a perpetual readiness to repel force with force on the part of those whose instincts were less violent. This is the state of affairs at present in international relations, owing to the fact that no international government exists. The results of anarchy between states should suffice to persuade us that anarchism has no solution to offer for the evils of the world.

There is probably one purpose, and only one, for which the use of force by a government is beneficent, and that is to diminish the total amount of force used in the world. It is clear, for example, that the legal prohibition of murder diminishes the total amount of violence in the world. And no one would maintain that parents should have unlimited freedom to ill-treat their children. So long as some men wish to do violence to others, there cannot be complete liberty, for either the wish to do violence must be restrained, or the victims must be left to suffer. For this reason, although individuals and societies should have the utmost freedom as regards their own affairs, they ought not to have complete freedom as regards their dealings with others. To give freedom to the strong to oppress the weak is not the way to secure the greatest possible amount of freedom in the world. This is the basis of the socialist revolt against the kind of freedom which used to be advocated by *laissez-faire* economists.

Democracy is a device—the best so far invented—for diminishing as much as possible the interference of governments with liberty. If a nation is divided into two sections which cannot both have their way, democracy theoretically insures that the majority shall have their way. But democracy is not at all an adequate device unless it is accompanied by a very great amount of devolution. Love of uniformity, or the mere pleasure of interfering, or dislike of differing tastes and temperaments, may often lead a majority to control a minority in matters which do not really concern the majority. We should none of us like to have the internal affairs of Great Britain settled by a parliament of the world, if ever such a body came into existence. Nevertheless, there are matters which such a body could settle much better than any existing instrument of government.

The theory of the legitimate use of force in human affairs, where a government exists, seems clear. Force should only be used against those who attempt to use force against others, or against those who will not respect the law in cases where a common decision is necessary and a minority are opposed to the action of the majority. These seem legitimate occasions for the use of force, and they should be legitimate occasions in international affairs, if an international government existed. The problem of the legitimate occasions for the use of force in the absence of a government is a different one, with which we are not at present concerned.

Although a government must have the power to use force, and may on

occasion use it legitimately, the aim of the reformers to have such institutions as will diminish the need for actual coercion will be found to have this effect. Most of us abstain, for instance, from theft, not because it is illegal, but because we feel no desire to steal. The more men learn to live creatively rather than possessively, the less their wishes will lead them to thwart others or to attempt violent interference with their liberty. Most of the conflicts of interests, which lead individuals or organizations into disputes, are purely imaginary, and would be seen to be so if men aimed more at the good in which all can share, and less at those private possessions that are the source of strife. In proportion as men live creatively, they cease to wish to interfere with others by force. Very many matters in which, at present, common action is thought indispensable, might well be left to individual decision. It used to be thought absolutely necessary that all the inhabitants of a country should have the same religion, but we now know that there is no such necessity. In like manner it will be found, as men grow more tolerant in their instincts, that many uniformities now insisted upon are useless and even harmful.

Good political institutions would weaken the impulse toward force and domination in two ways: first, by increasing the opportunities for the creative impulses, and by shaping education so as to strengthen these impulses, secondly, by diminishing the outlets for the possessive instincts. The diffusion of power, both in the political and the economic sphere, instead of its concentration in the hands of officials and captains of industry, would greatly diminish the opportunities for acquiring the habit of command, out of which the desire for exercising tyranny is apt to spring. Autonomy, both for districts and for organizations, would leave fewer occasions when governments were called upon to make decisions as to other people's concerns. And the abolition of capitalism and the wage system would remove the chief incentive to fear and greed, those correlative passions by which all free life is choked and gagged.

Few men seem to realize how many of the evils from which we suffer are wholly unnecessary, and that they could be abolished by a united effort within a few years. If a majority in every civilized country so desired, we could, within twenty years, abolish all abject poverty, quite half the illness in the world, the whole economic slavery which binds down nine tenths of our population, we could fill the world with beauty and joy, and secure the reign of universal peace. It is only because men are apathetic that this is not achieved, only because imagination is sluggish, and what always has been is regarded as what always must be. With good-will, generosity, intelligence, these things could be brought about.

LIFE WITHOUT PRINCIPLE¹

by Henry David Thoreau

Henry David Thoreau was born at Concord, Massachusetts, on July 12, 1817, and died there, when not quite 45 years of age, on May 6, 1862. A contemporary and fellow-townsmen of Hawthorne and Emerson, he speaks to us today with a freshness and a clarity unmatched by any other nineteenth-century American. His greatest work is *Walden*, the testament of a man who lived alone with nature and had complete faith in her wisdom. Like Aldous Huxley, Thoreau was a critic of contemporary civilization—at which he shot his most devastating bolt when he said “Our inventions are wont to be pretty toys, which distract our attention from serious things. They are but improved means to an unimproved end. . .”

AT a lyceum, not long since, I felt that the lecturer had chosen a theme too foreign to himself, and so failed to interest me as much as he might have done. He described things not in or near to his heart, but toward his extremities and superficialities. There was, in this sense, no truly central or centralizing thought in the lecture. I would have had him deal with his privatest experience, as the poet does. The greatest compliment that was ever paid me was when one asked me what *I thought*, and attended to my answer. I am surprised, as well as delighted, when this happens, it is such a rare use he would make of me, as if he were acquainted with the tool. Commonly, if men want anything of me, it is only to know how many acres I make of their land,—since I am a surveyor,—or, at most, what trivial news I have burdened myself with. They never will go to law for my meat, they prefer the shell. A man once came a considerable distance to ask me to lecture on Slavery; but on conversing with him, I found that he and his clique expected seven eighths of the lecture to be theirs, and only one eighth mine, so I declined. I take it for granted, when I am invited to lecture anywhere,—for I have had a little experience in that business,—that there is a desire to hear what *I think* on some subject, though I may be the greatest fool in the country,—and not that I should say pleasant things merely, or such as the audience will assent to, and I resolve, accordingly, that I will give them a strong dose of myself. They have sent for me, and engaged to pay for me, and I am determined that they shall have me, though I bore them beyond all precedent.

So now I would say something similar to you, my readers. Since *you* are my readers, and I have not been much of a traveler, I will not talk about people a thousand miles off but come as near home as I can. As the time is short, I will leave out all the flattery, and retain all the criticism.

Let us consider the way in which we spend our lives.

This world is a place of business. What an infinite bustle! I am awakened almost every night by the panting of the locomotive. It interrupts my dreams. There is no sabbath. It would be glorious to see mankind at leisure for once. It is nothing but work, work, work. I cannot easily buy a blank-book to write

¹ “Life Without Principle” was first published posthumously in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1863.

thoughts in, they are commonly ruled for dollars and cents. An Irishman, seeing me making a minute in the fields, took it for granted that I was calculating my wages. If a man was tossed out of a window when an infant, and so made a cripple for life, or scared out of his wits by the Indians, it is regretted chiefly because he was thus incapacitated for—business! I think that there is nothing, not even crime, more opposed to poetry, to philosophy, ay, to life itself, than this incessant business.

There is a coarse and boisterous money-making fellow in the outskirts of our town, who is going to build a bank-wall under the hill along the edge of his meadow. The powers have put this into his head to keep him out of mischief, and he wishes me to spend three weeks digging there with him. The result will be that he will perhaps get some more money to hoard, and leave for his heirs to spend foolishly. If I do this, most will commend me as an industrious and hard working man, but if I choose to devote myself to certain labors which yield more real profit, though but little money, they may be inclined to look on me as an idler. Nevertheless, as I do not need the police of meaningless labor to regulate me, and do not see anything absolutely praiseworthy in this fellow's undertaking any more than in many an enterprise of our own or foreign governments, however amusing it may be to him or them, I prefer to finish my education at a different school.

If a man walk in the woods for love of them half of each day, he is in danger of being regarded as a loafer, but if he spends his whole day as a speculator, shearing off those woods and making earth bald before her time, he is esteemed an industrious and enterprising citizen. As if a town had no interest in its forests but to cut them down!

Most men would feel insulted if it were proposed to employ them in throwing stones over a wall, and then in throwing them back, merely that they might earn their wages. But many are no more worthily employed now. For instance, just after sunrise, one summer morning, I noticed one of my neighbors walking beside his team, which was slowly drawing a heavy hewn stone swung under the axle, surrounded by an atmosphere of industry,—his day's work begun,—his brow commenced to sweat,—a reproach to all sluggards and idlers,—pausing abreast the shoulders of his oxen, and half turning round with a flourish of his merciful whip, while they gained their length on him. And I thought, Such is the labor which the American Congress exists to protect,—honest, manly toil,—honest as the day is long,—that makes his bread taste sweet, and keeps society sweet,—which all men respect and have consecrated, one of the sacred band, doing the needful but irksome drudgery. Indeed, I felt a slight reproach, because I observed this from a window, and was not abroad and stirring about a similar business. The day went by, and at evening I passed the yard of another neighbor, who keeps many servants, and spends much money foolishly, while he adds nothing to the common stock, and there I saw the stone of the morning lying beside a whimsical structure intended to adorn this Lord Timothy Dexter's premises, and the dignity forthwith departed from the teamster's labor, in my eyes. In my opinion, the sun was made to light worthier toil than this. I may add that his employer has since run off, in debt to a good part of the town, and,

after passing through Chancery, has settled somewhere else, there to become once more a patron of the arts.

The ways by which you may get money almost without exception lead downward. To have done anything by which you earned money *merely* is to have been truly idle or worse. If the laborer gets no more than the wages which his employer pays him, he is cheated, he cheats himself. If you would get money as a writer or lecturer, you must be popular, which is to go down perpendicularly. Those services which the community will most readily pay for, it is most disagreeable to render. You are paid for being something less than a man. The state does not commonly reward a genius any more wisely. Even the poet laureate would rather not have to celebrate the accidents of royalty. He must be bribed with a pipe of wine; and perhaps another poet is called away from his muse to gauge that very pipe. As for my own business, even that kind of surveying which I could do with most satisfaction my employers do not want. They would prefer that I should do my work coarsely and not too well, ay, not well enough. When I observe that there are different ways of surveying, my employer commonly asks which will give him the most land, not which is most correct. I once invented a rule for measuring cord-wood, and tried to introduce it in Boston, but the measurer there told me that the sellers did not wish to have their wood measured correctly,—that he was already too accurate for them, and therefore they commonly got their wood measured in Charlestown before crossing the bridge.

The aim of the laborer should be, not to get his living, to get “a good job,” but to perform well a certain work, and, even in a pecuniary sense, it would be economy for a town to pay its laborers so well that they would not feel that they were working for low ends, as for a livelihood merely, but for scientific, or even moral ends. Do not hire a man who does your work for money, but him who does it for love of it.

It is remarkable that there are few men so well employed, so much to their minds, but that a little money or fame would commonly buy them off from their present pursuit. I see advertisements for *active* young men, as if activity were the whole of a young man’s capital. Yet I have been surprised when one has with confidence proposed to me, a grown man, to embark in some enterprise of his, as if I had absolutely nothing to do, my life having been a complete failure hitherto. What a doubtful compliment this to pay me! As if he had met me half-way across the ocean beating up against the wind, but bound nowhere, and proposed to me to go along with him! If I did, what do you think the underwriters would say? No, no! I am not without employment at this stage of the voyage. To tell the truth, I saw an advertisement for able-bodied seamen, when I was a boy, sauntering in my native port, and as soon as I came of age I embarked.

The community has no bribe that will tempt a wise man. You may raise money enough to tunnel a mountain, but you cannot raise money enough to hire a man who is minding *his own* business. An efficient and valuable man does what he can, whether the community pay him for it or not. The inefficient offer their inefficiency to the highest bidder, and are forever expecting to be put into office. One would suppose that they were rarely disappointed.

Perhaps I am more than usually jealous with respect to my freedom. I feel that my connection with and obligation to society are still very slight and transient. Those slight labors which afford me a livelihood, and by which it is allowed that I am to some extent serviceable to my contemporaries, are as yet commonly a pleasure to me, and I am not often reminded that they are a necessity. So far I am successful. But I foresee that if my wants should be much increased, the labor required to supply them would become a drudgery. If I should sell both my forenoons and afternoons to society, as most appear to do, I am sure that for me there would be nothing left worth living for. I trust that I shall never thus sell my birthright for a mess of pottage. I wish to suggest that a man may be very industrious, and yet not spend his time well. There is no more fatal blunderer than he who consumes the greater part of his life getting his living. All great enterprises are self-supporting. The poet, for instance, must sustain his body by his poetry, as a steam-planing-mill feeds its boilers with the shavings it makes. You must get your living by loving. But as it is said of the merchants that ninety seven in a hundred fail, so the life of men generally, tried by this standard, is a failure, and bankruptcy may be surely prophesied.

Merely to come into the world the heir of a fortune is not to be born, but to be still-born, rather. To be supported by the charity of friends, or a government-pension,—provided you continue to breathe,—by whatever fine synonyms you describe these relations, is to go into the almshouse. On Sundays the poor debtor goes to church to take an account of stock, and finds, of course, that his outgoes have been greater than his income. In the Catholic Church, especially, they go into chancery, make a clean confession, give up all, and think to start again. Thus men will lie on their backs, talking about the fall of man, and never make an effort to get up.

As for the comparative demand which men make on life, it is an important difference between two, that the one is satisfied with a level success, that his marks can all be hit by point-blank shots, but the other, however low and unsuccessful his life may be, constantly elevates his aim, though at a very slight angle to the horizon. I should much rather be the last man,—though, as the Orientals say, "Greatness doth not approach him who is forever looking down, and all those who are looking high are growing poor."

It is remarkable that there is little or nothing to be remembered written on the subject of getting a living, how to make getting a living not merely honest and honorable, but altogether inviting and glorious, for if *getting* a living is not so, then living is not. One would think, from looking at literature, that this question had never disturbed a solitary individual's musings. Is it that men are too much disgusted with their experience to speak of it? The lesson of value which money teaches, which the Author of the Universe has taken so much pains to teach us, we are inclined to skip altogether. As for the means of living, it is wonderful how indifferent men of all classes are about it, even reformers, so called,—whether they inherit, or earn, or steal it. I think that Society has done nothing for us in this respect, or at least has undone what she has done. Cold and hunger seem more friendly to my nature than those methods which men have adopted and advise to ward them off.

The title *wise* is, for the most part, falsely applied. How can one be a wise

man, if he does not know any better how to live than other men?—if he is only more cunning and intellectually subtle? Does Wisdom work in a treadmill? or does she teach how to succeed *by her example*? Is there any such thing as wisdom not applied to life? Is she merely the miller who grinds the finest logic? It is pertinent to ask if Plato got his *living* in a better way or more successfully than his contemporaries,—or did he succumb to the difficulties of life like other men? Did he seem to prevail over some of them merely by indifference, or by assuming grand airs? or find it easier to live, because his aunt remembered him in her will? The ways in which most men get their living, that is, live, are mere makeshifts, and a shirking of the real business of life,—chiefly because they do not know, but partly because they do not mean, any better

The rush to California,² for instance, and the attitude, not merely of merchants, but of philosophers and prophets, so called, in relation to it, reflect the greatest disgrace on mankind. That so many are ready to live by luck, and so get the means of commanding the labor of others less lucky, without contributing any value to society! And that is called enterprise! I know of no more startling development of the immorality of trade, and all the common modes of getting a living. The philosophy and poetry and religion of such a mankind are not worth the dust of a puff-ball. The hog that gets his living by rooting, stirring up the soil so, would be ashamed of such company. If I could command the wealth of all the worlds by lifting my finger, I would not pay *such* a price for it. Even Mahomet knew that God did not make this world in jest. It makes God to be a moneyed gentleman who scatters a handful of pennies in order to see mankind scramble for them. The world's raffle! A subsistence in the domains of Nature a thing to be raffled for! What a comment, what a satire, on our institutions! The conclusion will be, that mankind will hang itself upon a tree. And have all the precepts in all the Bibles taught men only this? and is the last and most admirable invention of the human race only an improved muck-rake? Is this the ground on which Orientals and Occidentals meet? Did God direct us so to get our living, digging where we never planted,—and He would, perchance, reward us with lumps of gold?

God gave the righteous man a certificate entitling him to food and raiment, but the unrighteous man found a facsimile of the same in God's coffers, and appropriated it, and obtained food and raiment like the former. It is one of the most extensive systems of counterfeiting that the world has seen. I did not know that mankind was suffering for want of gold. I have seen a little of it. I know that it is very malleable, but not so malleable as wit. A grain of gold will gild a great surface, but not so much as a grain of wisdom.

The gold-digger in the ravines of the mountains is as much a gambler as his fellow in the saloons of San Francisco. What difference does it make whether you shake dirt or shake dice? If you win, society is the loser. The gold-digger is the enemy of the honest laborer, whatever checks and compensations there may be. It is not enough to tell me that you worked hard to get your gold. So does the Devil work hard. The way of transgressors may be hard in many respects. The humblest observer who goes to the mines sees and says that gold-

² Thoreau refers to the gold rush of 1849

digging is of the character of a lottery, the gold thus obtained is not the same thing with the wages of honest toil. But, practically, he forgets what he has seen, for he has seen only the fact, not the principle, and goes into trade there, that is, buys a ticket in what commonly proves another lottery, where the fact is not so obvious.

After reading Howitt's account of the Australian gold-diggings one evening, I had in my mind's eye, all night, the numerous valleys, with their streams, all cut up with foul pits, from ten to one hundred feet deep, and half a dozen feet across, as close as they can be dug, and partly filled with water,—the locality to which men furiously rush to probe for their fortunes,—uncertain where they shall break ground,—not knowing but the gold is under their camp itself,—sometimes digging one hundred and sixty feet before they strike the vein, or then missing it by a foot,—turned into demons, and regardless of each other's rights, in their thirst for riches,—whole valleys, for thirty miles, suddenly honeycombed by the pits of the miners, so that even hundreds are drowned in them,—standing in water, and covered with mud and clay, they work night and day, dying of exposure and disease. Having read this, and partly forgotten it, I was thinking, accidentally, of my own unsatisfactory life, doing as others do, and with that vision of the diggings still before me, I asked myself why *I* might not be washing some gold daily, though it were only the finest particles,—why *I* might not sink a shaft down to the gold within me, and work that mine. *There is a Ballarat, a Bendigo*³ for you,—what though it were a sulky-gully? At any rate, I might pursue some path, however solitary and narrow and crooked, in which I could walk with love and reverence. Wherever a man separates from the multitude, and goes his own way in this mood, there indeed is a fork in the road, though ordinary travellers may see only a gap in the paling. His solitary path across lots will turn out the *higher way* of the two.

Men rush to California and Australia as if the true gold were to be found in that direction, but that is to go to the very opposite extreme to where it lies. They go prospecting farther and farther away from the true lead, and are most unfortunate when they think themselves most successful. Is not our *native* soil auriferous? Does not a stream from the golden mountains flow through our native valley? and has not this for more than geologic ages been bringing down the shining particles and forming the nuggets for us? Yet, strange to tell, if a digger steal away, prospecting for this true gold, into the unexplored solitudes around us, there is no danger that any will dog his steps, and endeavor to supplant him. He may claim and undermine the whole valley even, both the cultivated and the uncultivated portions, his whole life long in peace, for no one will ever dispute his claim. They will not mind his cradles or his toms. He is not confined to a claim twelve feet square, as at Ballarat, but may mine anywhere, and wash the whole wide world in his tom.

Howitt says of the man who found the great nugget which weighed twenty-eight pounds, at the Bendigo diggings in Australia: "He soon began to drink, got a horse, and rode all about, generally at full gallop, and, when he met people, called out to inquire if they knew who he was, and then kindly in-

³ Australian cities in the vicinity of the gold fields where gold was discovered in 1851. [Editor]

formed them that he was 'the bloody wretch that had found the nugget.' At last he rode full speed against a tree, and nearly knocked his brains out." I think, however, there was no danger of that, for he had already knocked his brains out against the nugget. Howitt adds, "He is a hopelessly ruined man." But he is a type of the class. They are all fast men. Hear some of the names of the places where they dig: "Jackass Flat,"—"Sheep's-Head Gully,"—"Murderer's Bar," etc. Is there no satire in these names? Let them carry their ill-gotten wealth where they will, I am thinking it will still be "Jackass Flat," if not "Murderer's Bar," where they live.

The last resource of our energy has been the robbing of graveyards on the Isthmus of Darien, an enterprise which appears to be but in its infancy, for, according to late accounts, an act has passed its second reading in the legislature of New Granada, regulating this kind of mining, and a correspondent of the "Tribune" writes: "In the dry season, when the weather will permit of the country being properly prospected, no doubt other rich *guacas* [that is, graveyards] will be found." To emigrants he says "Do not come before December; take the Isthmus route in preference to the Boca del Toro one; bring no useless baggage, and do not cumber yourself with a tent, but a good pair of blankets will be necessary, a pick, shovel, and axe of good material will be almost all that is required." advice which might have been taken from the "Burker's Guide." And he concludes with this line in italics and small capitals "*If you are doing well at home, STAY THERE,*" which may fairly be interpreted to mean, "If you are getting a good living by robbing graveyards at home, stay there."

But why go to California for a text? She is the child of New England, bred at her own school and church.

It is remarkable that among all the preachers there are so few moral teachers. The prophets are employed in excusing the ways of men. Most reverend seniors, the *illuminati* of the age, tell me, with a gracious, reminiscent smile, betwixt an aspiration and a shudder, not to be too tender about these things,—to lump all that, that is, make a lump of gold of it. The highest advice I have heard on these subjects was groveling. The burden of it was,—It is not worth your while to undertake to reform the world in this particular. Do not ask how your bread is buttered; it will make you sick, if you do,—and the like. A man had better starve at once than lose his innocence in the process of getting his bread. If within the sophisticated man there is not an unsophisticated one, then he is but one of the devil's angels. As we grow old, we live more coarsely, we relax a little in our disciplines, and, to some extent, cease to obey our finest instincts. But we should be fastidious to the extreme of sanity, disregarding the gibes of those who are more unfortunate than ourselves.

In our science and philosophy, even, there is commonly no true and absolute account of things. The spirit of sect and bigotry has planted its hoof amid the stars. You have only to discuss the problem, whether the stars are inhabited or not, in order to discover it. Why must we daub the heavens as well as the earth? It was an unfortunate discovery that Dr. Kane was a Mason, and that Sir John Franklin was another. But it was a more cruel suggestion that possibly that was the reason why the former went in search of the latter. There is not a popular magazine in this country that would dare to print a child's thought on

important subjects without comment. It must be submitted to the DD's. I would it were the chickadee dees.

You come from attending the funeral of mankind to attend to a natural phenomenon. A little thought is sexton to all the world.

I hardly know an *intellectual* man, even, who is so broad and truly liberal that you can think aloud in his society. Most with whom you endeavor to talk soon come to a stand against some institution in which they appear to hold stock,—that is, some particular, not universal, way of viewing things. They will continually thrust their own low roof, with its narrow skylight, between you and the sky, when it is the unobstructed heavens you would view. Get out of the way with your cobwebs, wash your windows, I say! In some lyceums they tell me that they have voted to exclude the subject of religion. But how do I know what their religion is, and when I am near to or far from it? I have walked into such an arena and done my best to make a clean breast of what religion I have experienced, and the audience never suspected what I was about. The lecture was as harmless as moonshine to them. Whereas, if I had read to them the biography of the greatest scamps in history, they might have thought that I had written the lives of the deacons of their church. Ordinarily, the inquiry is, Where did you come from? or, Where are you going? That was a more pertinent question which I overheard one of my auditors put to another once,—“What does he lecture for?” It made me quake in my shoes.

To speak impartially, the best men that I know are not serene, a world in themselves. For the most part, they dwell in forms, and flutter and study effect only more finely than the rest. We select granite for the underpinning of our houses and barns, we build fences of stone, but we do not ourselves rest on an underpinning of granitic truth, the lowest primitive rock. Our sills are rotten. What stuff is the man made of who is not coexistent in our thought with the purest and subtlest truth? I often accuse my finest acquaintances of an immense frivolity, for, while there are manners and compliments we do not meet, we do not teach one another the lessons of honesty and sincerity that the brutes do, or of steadiness and solidity that the rocks do. The fault is commonly mutual, however, for we do not habitually demand any more of each other.

That excitement about Kossuth, consider how characteristic, but superficial, it was!—only another kind of politics or dancing. Men were making speeches to him all over the country, but each expressed only the thought, or the want of thought, of the multitude. No man stood on truth. They were merely banded together, as usual one leaning on another, and all together on nothing, as the Hindoos made the world rest on an elephant, the elephant on a tortoise, and the tortoise on a serpent, and had nothing to put under the serpent. For all fruit of that stir we have the Kossuth hat.

Just so hollow and ineffectual, for the most part, is our ordinary conversation. Surface meets surface. When our life ceases to be inward and private, conversation degenerates into mere gossip. We rarely meet a man who can tell us any news which he has not read in a newspaper, or been told by his neighbor, and, for the most part, the only difference between us and our fellow is that he has seen the newspaper, or been out to tea, and we have not. In proportion as our inward life fails, we go more constantly and desperately to the post-office. You

may depend on it, that the poor fellow who walks away with the greatest number of letters, proud of his extensive correspondence, has not heard from himself this long while

I do not know but it is too much to read one newspaper a week I have tried it recently, and for so long it seems to me that I have not dwelt in my native region. The sun, the clouds, the snow, the trees say not so much to me You cannot serve two masters It requires more than a day's devotion to know and to possess the wealth of a day

We may well be ashamed to tell what things we have read or heard in our day. I do not know why my news should be so trivial,—considering what one's dreams and expectations are, why the developments should be so paltry The news we hear, for the most part, is not news to our genius. It is the stalest repetition You are often tempted to ask why such stress is laid on a particular experience which you have had,—that, after twenty-five years, you should meet Hobbins, Registrar of Deeds, again on the sidewalk Have you not budged an inch, then? Such is the daily news Its facts appear to float in the atmosphere, insignificant as the sporules of fungi, and impinge on some neglected *thallus*, or surface of our minds, which affords a basis for them, and hence a parasitic growth. We should wash ourselves clean of such news. Of what consequence, though our planet explode, if there is no character involved in the explosion? In health we have not the least curiosity about such events We do not live for idle amusement. I would not run round a corner to see the world blow up

All summer, and far into the autumn, perchance, you unconsciously went by the newspapers and the news, and now you find it was because the morning and the evening were full of news to you Your walks were full of incidents You attended, not to the affairs of Europe, but to your own affairs in Massachusetts fields If you chance to live and move and have your being in that thin stratum in which the events that make the news transpire,—thinner than the paper on which it is printed,—then these things will fill the world for you, but if you soar above or dive below that plane, you cannot remember nor be reminded of them. Really to see the sun rise or go down every day, so to relate ourselves to a universal fact, would preserve us sane forever Nations! What are nations? Tartars, and Huns, and Chinamen! Like insects, they swarm. The historian strives in vain to make them memorable It is for want of a man that there are so many men It is individuals that populate the world. Any man thinking may say with the Spirit of Lodin,—

I looked down from my height on nations,
And they become ashes before me,—
Calm is my dwelling in the clouds,
Pleasant are the great fields of my rest

Pray, let us live without being drawn by dogs, Esquimaux-fashion, tearing over hill and dale, and biting each other's ears.

Not without a slight shudder at the danger, I often perceive how near I had come to admitting into my mind the details of some trivial affair,—the news of the street; and I am astonished to observe how willing men are to lumber their minds with such rubbish,—to permit idle rumors and incidents of the most

insignificant kind to intrude on ground which should be sacred to thought. Shall the mind be a public arena, where the affairs of the street and the gossip of the tea table chiefly are discussed? Or shall it be a quarter of heaven itself,—an hypaethral temple, consecrated to the service of the gods? I find it so difficult to dispose of the few facts which to me are significant, that I hesitate to burden my attention with those which are insignificant, which only a divine mind could illustrate. Such is, for the most part, the news in newspapers and conversation. It is important to preserve the mind's chastity in this respect. Think of admitting the details of a single case of the criminal court into our thoughts, to stalk profanely through their very *sanctum sanctorum* for an hour, ay, for many hours! to make a very barroom of the mind's inmost apartment, as if for so long the dust of the street had occupied us,—the very street itself, with all its travel, its bustle, and filth, had passed through our thoughts' shrine! Would it not be an intellectual and moral suicide? When I have been compelled to sit spectator and auditor in a court-room for some hours, and have seen my neighbors, who were not compelled, stealing in from time to time, and tiptoeing about with washed hands and faces, it has appeared to my mind's eye, that, when they took off their hats, their ears suddenly expanded into vast hoppers for sound, between which even their narrow heads were crowded. Like the vanes of windmills, they caught the broad but shallow stream of sound, which, after a few uttillating gyrations in their coggy brains, passed out the other side. I wondered if, when they got home, they were as careful to wash their ears as before their hands and faces. It has seemed to me, at such a time, that the auditors and witnesses, the jury and the counsel, the judge and the criminal at the bar,—if I may presume him guilty before he is convicted,—were all equally criminal, and a thunderbolt might be expected to descend and consume them all together.

By all kinds of traps and signboards, threatening the extreme penalty of the divine law, exclude such trespassers from the only ground which can be sacred to you. It is so hard to forget what it is worse than useless to remember! If I am to be a thoroughfare, I prefer that it be of the mountain-brooks, the Parnassian streams, and not the town sewers. There is inspiration, that gossip which comes to the ear of the attentive mind from the courts of heaven. There is the profane and stale revelation of the barroom and the police court. The same ear is fitted to receive both communications. Only the character of the hearer determines to which it shall be open, and to which closed I believe that the mind can be permanently profaned by the habit of attending to trivial things, so that all our thoughts shall be tinged with triviality. Our very intellect shall be macadamized, as it were,—its foundation broken into fragments for the wheels of travel to roll over, and if you would know what will make the most durable pavement, surpassing rolled stones, spruce blocks, and asphaltum, you have only to look into some of our minds which have been subjected to this treatment so long.

If we have thus desecrated ourselves,—as who has not?—the remedy will be by wariness and devotion to reconsecrate ourselves, and make once more a fane of the mind. We should treat our minds, that is, ourselves, as innocent and ingenuous children, whose guardians we are, and be careful what objects and

what subjects we thrust on their attention. Read not the Times Read the Eternities Conventionalities are at length as bad as impurities. Even the facts of science may dust the mind by their dryness, unless they are in a sense effaced each morning, or rather rendered fertile by the dews of fresh and living truth Knowledge does not come to us by details, but in flashes of light from heaven Yes, every thought that passes through the mind helps to wear and tear it, and to deepen the ruts, which, as in the streets of Pompeii, evince how much it has been used How many things there are concerning which we might well deliberate whether we had better know them,—had better let their peddling-carts be driven, even at the slowest trot or walk, over that bridge of glorious span by which we trust to pass at last from the farthest brink of time to the nearest shore of eternity! Have we no culture, no refinement,—but skill only to live coarsely and serve the Devil?—to acquire a little worldly wealth, or fame, or liberty, and make a false show with it, as if we were all husk and shell, with no tender and living kernel to us? Shall our institutions be like those chestnut burs which contain abortive nuts, perfect only to prick the fingers?

America is said to be the arena on which the battle of freedom is to be fought, but surely it cannot be freedom in a merely political sense that is meant Even if we grant that the American has freed himself from a political tyrant, he is still the slave of an economical and moral tyrant Now that the republic—the *res-publica*—has been settled, it is time to look after the *res-privata*,—the private state,—to see, as the Roman senate charged its consuls, "*ne quid res-PRIVATA detrimenti caperet*," that the *private* state receive no detriment

Do we call this the land of the free? What is it to be free from King George and continue the slaves of King Prejudice? What is it to be born free and not to live free? What is the value of any political freedom, but as a means to moral freedom? Is it a freedom to be slaves, or a freedom to be free, of which we boast? We are a nation of politicians, concerned about the outmost defenses only of freedom It is our children's children who may perchance be really free We tax ourselves unjustly There is a part of us which is not represented. It is taxation without representation. We quarter troops, we quarter fools and cattle of all sorts upon ourselves We quarter our gross bodies on our poor souls, till the former eat up all the latter's substance

With respect to a true culture and manhood, we are essentially provincial still, not metropolitan,—mere Jonathans. We are provincial, because we do not find at home our standards; because we do not worship truth, but the reflection of truth; because we are warped and narrowed by an exclusive devotion to trade and commerce and manufactures and agriculture and the like, which are but means, and not the end

So is the English Parliament provincial Mere country bumpkins, they betray themselves, when any more important question arises for them to settle, the Irish question, for instance,—the English question why did I not say? Their natures are subdued to what they work in Their "good breeding" respects only secondary objects. The finest manners in the world are awkwardness and fatuity when contrasted with a finer intelligence. They appear but as the fashions of past days,—mere courtliness, knee-buckles and small-clothes, out of date. It is the vice, but not the excellence of manners, that they are continually

being deserted by the character, they are cast-off clothes or shells, claiming the respect which belonged to the living creature. You are presented with the shells instead of the meat, and it is no excuse generally, that, in the case of some fishes, the shells are of more worth than the meat. The man who thrusts his manners upon me does as if he were to insist on introducing me to his cabinet of curiosities, when I wished to see himself. It was not in this sense that the poet Decker called Christ "the first true gentleman that ever breathed." I repeat that in this sense the most splendid court in Christendom is provincial, having authority to consult about Transalpine interests only, and not the affairs of Rome. A praetor or proconsul would suffice to settle the questions which absorb the attention of the English Parliament and the American Congress.

Government and legislation! these I thought were respectable professions. We have heard of heaven-born Numas, Lycurguses, and Solons, in the history of the world, whose *names* at least may stand for ideal legislators, but think of legislating to *regulate* the breeding of slaves, or the exportation of tobacco! What have divine legislators to do with the exportation or the importation of tobacco? what humane ones with the breeding of slaves? Suppose you were to submit the question to any son of God,—and has He no children in the Nineteenth century? is it a family which is extinct?—in what condition would you get it again? What shall a State like Virginia say for itself at the last day, in which these have been the principal, the staple productions? What ground is there for patriotism in such a State? I derive my facts from statistical tables which the States themselves have published.

A commerce that whitens every sea in quest of nuts and raisins, and makes slaves of its sailors for this purpose! I saw, the other day, a vessel which had been wrecked, and many lives lost, and her cargo of rags, juniper berries, and bitter almonds were strewn along the shore. It seemed hardly worth the while to tempt the dangers of the sea between Leghorn and New York for the sake of a cargo of juniper berries and bitter almonds. America sending to the Old World for her bitters! Is not the sea-brine, is not shipwreck, bitter enough to make the cup of life go down here? Yet such, to a great extent, is our boasted commerce, and there are those who style themselves statesmen and philosophers who are so blind as to think that progress and civilization depend on precisely this kind of interchange and activity,—the activity of flies about a molasses-hogshead. Very well, observes one, if men were oysters. And very well, answer I, if men were mosquitoes.

Lieutenant Herndon, whom our Government sent to explore the Amazon, and, it is said, to extend the area of slavery, observed that there was wanting there "an industrious and active population, who know what the comforts of life are, and who have artificial wants to draw out the great resources of the country." But what are the "artificial wants" to be encouraged? Not the love of luxuries, like the tobacco and slaves of, I believe, his native Virginia, nor the ice and granite and other material wealth of our native New England, nor are "the great resources of a country" that fertility or barrenness of soil which produces these. The chief want, in every State that I have been into, was a high and earnest purpose in its inhabitants. This alone draws out "the great resources" of Nature, and at last taxes her beyond her resources, for man naturally

dies out of her. When we want culture more than potatoes, and illumination more than sugar-plums, then the great resources of a world are taxed and drawn out, and the result, or staple production, is, not slaves, nor operatives, but men,—those rare fruits called heroes, saints, poets, philosophers, and redeemers

In short, as a snow-drift is formed where there is a lull in the wind, so, one would say, where there is a lull of truth, an institution springs up. But the truth blows right on over it, nevertheless, and at length blows it down

What is called politics is comparatively something so superficial and inhuman, that practically I have never fairly recognized that it concerns me at all. The newspapers, I perceive, devote some of their columns specially to politics or government without charge, and this, one would say, is all that saves it, but as I love literature and to some extent the truth also, I never read those columns at any rate. I do not wish to blunt my sense of right so much. I have not got to answer for having read a single President's Message. A strange age of the world this, when empires, kingdoms, and republics come a-begging to a private man's door, and utter their complaints at his elbow! I cannot take up a newspaper but I find that some wretched government or other, hard pushed, and on its last legs, is interceding with me, the reader, to vote for it,—more importunate than an Italian beggar; and if I have a mind to look at its certificate, made, perchance, by some benevolent merchant's clerk, or the skipper that brought it over, for it cannot speak a word of English itself, I shall probably read of the eruption of some Vesuvius, or the overflowing of some Po, true or forged, which brought it into this condition. I do not hesitate, in such a case, to suggest work, or the almshouse; or why not keep its castle in silence, as I do commonly? The poor President, what with preserving his popularity and doing his duty, is completely bewildered. The newspapers are the ruling power. Any other government is reduced to a few marines at Fort Independence. If a man neglects to read the *Daily Times*, government will go down on its knees to him, for this is the only treason in these days.

Those things which now most engage the attention of men, as politics and the daily routine, are, it is true, vital functions of human society, but should be unconsciously performed, like the corresponding functions of the physical body. They are *infra-human*, a kind of vegetation. I sometimes awake to a half-consciousness of them going on about me, as a man may become conscious of some of the processes of digestion in a morbid state, and so have the dyspepsia, as it is called. It is as if a thinker submitted himself to be rasped by the great gizzard of creation. Politics is, as it were, the gizzard of society, full of grit and gravel, and the two political parties are its two opposite halves,—sometimes split into quarters, it may be, which grind on each other. Not only individuals, but states, have thus a confirmed dyspepsia, which expresses itself, you can imagine by what sort of eloquence. Thus our life is not altogether a forgetting, but also, alas! to a great extent, a remembering, of that which we should never have been conscious of, certainly not in our waking hours. Why should we not meet, not always as dyspeptics, to tell our bad dreams, but sometimes as *eupetpics*, to congratulate each other on the ever-glorious morning? I do not make an exorbitant demand, surely.

CONTEMPORARY TOPICS

A COPERNICAN WORLD¹

by Emery Reves

Emery Reves was born in 1904 at Bacsfoldvar, Hungary (Yugoslavia since 1919). He was educated at the universities of Berlin, Paris, and Zurich and is today a citizen of Great Britain. In 1930 he founded the Cooperation Press Service and in 1941, upon coming to the United States, the Cooperation Publishing Company. He is president of both concerns. In addition to *The Anatomy of Peace* (1945), from which "A Copernican World" is taken, he is the author of *A Democratic Manifesto* (1942).

NOTHING can distort the true picture of conditions and events in this world more than to regard one's own country as the center of the universe, and to view all things solely in their relationship to this fixed point. It is inevitable that such a method of observation should create an entirely false perspective. Yet this is the only method admitted and used by the seventy or eighty national governments of our world, by our legislators and diplomats, by our press and radio. All the conclusions, principles and policies of the peoples are necessarily drawn from the warped picture of the world obtained by so primitive a method of observation.

Within such a contorted system of assumed fixed points, it is easy to demonstrate that the view taken from each point corresponds to reality. If we admit and apply this method, the viewpoint of every single nation appears indisputably correct and wholly justified. But we arrive at a hopelessly confused and grotesque over-all picture of the world.

Let us see how international events between the two world wars look from some of the major national vantage points.

The United States of America, faithful to the Monroe Doctrine and to its traditions of aloofness from Europe, did not want to enter the first World War. But the Germans were sinking American ships, violating American rights and threatening American interests. So in 1917, the United States was forced to go to war in defense of American rights. They went into battle determined to fight the war to end all war, and to "make the world safe for democracy." They fought bravely and spent lavishly. Their intervention decided the outcome of the struggle in favor of the Allies. But as soon as the shooting was over, the major Allied powers—Britain, France, Italy and Japan—betrayed the common cause. They were unwilling to base the peace on Wilson's ideals. They signed secret treaties between themselves. They did not want a just peace. They

¹ From *The Anatomy of Peace* by Emery Reves. Copyright, 1945, by Emery Reves. Reprinted by permission of Harper & Brothers.

wanted to annex territories, islands, bases; they wanted to impose high reparation payments on the defeated countries and other measures of vengeance. America, disgusted by the quarrels and selfishness of the other nations and disillusioned by the old game of power politics, retired from the European hornet's nest, after having been abused, outsmarted and double-crossed by her former associates. America wanted only to be allowed to mind her own business, to build up the wealth and happiness of her own citizens. The foreign nations—who would have been crushed without American intervention and who were saved by America—even defaulted on their war debts and refused to repay the loans America had made to them in their hour of danger. So even financial and economic relations with the European powers had to be reduced to a minimum and American capital had to be protected by prohibiting loans to defaulting foreigners. American policy was fully justified by the ensuing events. Clouds were again gathering in Europe. Military dictatorships were arising in many countries, a race of armaments had started, violence broke out and the whole continent was on the verge of another great war—more of the old European quarrels and power politics. Naturally, it was of primary interest to the United States to keep out of these senseless internecine old-world fights. The supreme duty of the American government to its people was to maintain strict neutrality toward the warring nations across the ocean. Thanks to the weakness of the appeasement policy and the blindness of Britain, France and Soviet Russia, the totalitarian powers succeeded in conquering the entire European continent. German troops occupied the whole Atlantic seacoast from Norway to Equatorial Africa. Simultaneously, the Japanese succeeded in conquering the entire Chinese coastline, menacing the American-controlled Philippine Islands. Incredible and unbelievable as it was, no one could fail to see that the European and Asiatic military powers, known as the Axis, were planning the conquest of North and South America. In sheer self-defense, America was obliged to transform herself into the arsenal of democracy, producing weapons for the British and Russians to fight the Germans. Then, on a day which will "live in infamy" the Japanese Empire launched an unprovoked aggression against peace-loving America and, together with Germany and Italy, declared war upon her. Once forced into the war, the nation arose as one man. In a short time, it became obvious that once again the United States was saving the civilized Western world. Events have demonstrated that disarmament and disinterestedness cannot protect America from foreign aggression. Therefore, peace in the world can be preserved only if the United States maintains a large army, the biggest navy and the biggest air force in the world, and secures bases at all strategic points commanding the approaches to the Western Hemisphere.

How do these same twenty years look from the fixed point of the *British Isles*?

In 1914, Britain went to the defense of Belgium, France and Russia. It was impossible for her to stand by while militarist Germany was marching to occupy and control the Channel coast. Britain could not permit Germany to obtain European hegemony and to become the dominating industrial and military power on the Continent, menacing the lifelines of the British Empire and threatening to reduce the British Isles to starvation and poverty. When, at

the cost of tremendous efforts and the lives of more than one million of her sons, Britain, together with her allies, won victory, she naturally wanted to see German military might eliminated once and for all from the path of the British Empire. It was only just that the German fleet be destroyed, that German colonies be annexed and that Germany be made to pay reparations. Unfortunately, the isolationists in America stabbed Wilson in the back and the United States deserted her allies. England remained alone to face the European problem. Without the United States and without the Dominions, she could not give the guarantees France demanded and had to be careful lest after victory over Germany, France should take the place of the defeated Reich and become an overwhelmingly dominating military power on the Continent. As the French went berserk, refusing to disarm and occupying the Ruhr, England had to become the mediator in Europe and to continue the traditional balance-of-power policy that had been successful for so many centuries. Bolshevik Russia, after the failure of military intervention supported by the Allies, succeeded in stabilizing a Communist regime, and through the Third Internationale and the various Communist parties in Europe, threatened the entire Continent with revolution. Germany, suffering under the consequences of defeat and French intransigence, with six million unemployed, was particularly susceptible to revolutionary turmoil. It was of paramount importance for European peace that German economy be restored and stabilized. Mussolini had succeeded in reestablishing order in Italy and the growing strength of the National Socialist movement in Germany seemed to stem the tide of Bolshevism. But Great Britain's economic problems were becoming aggravated. The Americans erected high tariff walls and refused to import British goods, thus making it impossible for Great Britain to repay her war debts. She was forced to give up her traditional free trade policy and to enter into a preference system with the Dominions. Italian and German intentions by this time began to alarm France and the smaller countries of Europe. Two camps began to crystallize, one trying to preserve the *status quo* of the Treaty of Versailles, the other seeking revisions favorable to them. Then as now peace was England's paramount interest and her natural role was to be the mediator between the two factions, to attempt as many revisions as possible by peaceful means so as to check the dynamism of the dictatorships, and to prevent an outbreak of hostilities at any cost. When Italy embarked upon her unfortunate military operation in Ethiopia, England championed the principles of the League. Sanctions were voted and imposed upon the aggressor by more than fifty nations under British leadership. It was a most alarming factor that France, frightened by growing German power and in the hope of obtaining Italian assistance against Germany in Europe, gave Italy a free hand in Ethiopia. So the League was sabotaged by France. Italy could not be stopped except by intervention of the British fleet, which would have meant risking a major war and had to be avoided. Shortly after the Italian conquest of Ethiopia, Germany reoccupied the Rhineland. France, in her first reaction, wanted to march, but England prevented a military clash between the two major continental powers. For the pacification of Europe, an agreement was made with Germany granting her a new fleet, thirty-five per cent of the British tonnage. Thereafter, Germany and Italy formed a military alliance and

provoked a civil war in Spain to try out new weapons and new methods of warfare, and to establish a regime friendly to them. This incident created a highly charged atmosphere all over Europe. Russians were actually fighting German and Italian forces on Spanish soil. Only by pursuing the strictest policy of nonintervention and exercising the utmost patience was England able to prevent France from intervening and spreading the fight all over the Continent. In the face of these threatening events, England succeeded in strengthening her ties with France. Unhappily, still further sacrifices had to be made to prevent a war, which England could not risk, as she was almost completely unprepared. Other adjustments of the territorial status of Europe had to be considered. At Munich, British diplomacy was taxed to the utmost to obtain the transfer of German-inhabited Czechoslovak territories to the Reich without a violent conflict. Once again England had saved the peace. But after Munich, it was apparent that Germany had made up her mind to conquer Europe. England had to begin rearming and to look around for allies. Belgium and Holland, jealous of their neutrality, did not admit military discussions, but the alliance with France was strengthened, alliances with Poland and Rumania were signed and every effort was made to reach an understanding with the Soviet Union. The Poles, however, stubbornly refused to permit Russian troops passage across Polish territory in case of war and in the middle of negotiations in Moscow, a diplomatic bomb exploded. Russia, betraying her Western democratic friends, had signed a nonaggression pact with Nazi Germany. That gave Germany the green light to attack Poland. All this happened within a few days and England, honoring her pledged word, declared war upon Germany. It was impossible for Britain to bring military help to the Poles in time and Poland was defeated in a few weeks. British troops, however, were sent to France, the best-equipped army ever to cross the Channel. They, along with French soldiers, took their posts at the Belgian and German frontiers and waited for the German attack, believing the defense system they and their allies held to be impregnable. But Hitler, instead of opening an offensive against the Allies, attacked the peaceful and undefended neutral countries of Denmark and Norway. Britain immediately sent an expeditionary force to Narvik, which fought gallantly but which had to withdraw before overwhelming enemy forces supported by land-based planes. Shortly thereafter, the Germans made a frontal attack against the west, occupying neutral Holland and Belgium in a few days. They turned the Maginot Line and cracked the French defenses. The King of Belgium surrendered. Only some of the British troops could be evacuated from Dunkirk and other ports of France. All the equipment of the British Expeditionary Force was lost. France, inadequately equipped and undermined by Nazi propaganda, betrayed her British ally by refusing to continue the fight on the side of the British Commonwealth in the Mediterranean and in Africa, and capitulated to Germany. The whole Continent was in German hands and England stood alone. The situation seemed hopeless. England was without defenses. The Luftwaffe began to bomb London and British industrial centers. Italy began to move against Egypt and Suez. Both the mother country and the lifeline of the empire in the Middle East were in mortal danger. Britain could have saved her empire had she accepted German hegemony in Europe, but she

preferred to fight all alone, even if she had to fight on her beaches, on her hills and in her villages. Along with the sacrifice of tens of thousands of civilians, she won the Battle of Britain, fought off the Luftwaffe with a few fighter planes, fought the German submarines singlehanded, mobilized her entire population and dispatched everything she could to the Near East to stem Mussolini's advancing armies. For more than a year, Britain alone defended the cause of democracy. Neither the Soviet Union nor the United States was prepared to enter the war on her side. Only when Germany actually attacked Russia and Japan bombed Pearl Harbor and invaded the Philippines did Russia and the United States join forces with the British Commonwealth to achieve final victory.

From the point of view of *France*, the picture looked like this:

In 1914, France suffered the second German invasion within half a century. The entire north and east of France were devastated and only by tremendous bloodshed and the sacrifice of a million and a half of her sons could France defend her soil. With the help of the Allies, Germany was finally defeated. The supreme thought in the mind of every Frenchman was to be secure against another German aggression. France felt strongly that as the bastion of Western democracy she was entitled to security, to prevent her soil becoming the permanent battlefield of Teutonic aggression. To obviate the constant threat of Germans on the west bank of the Rhine, France demanded the Rhine as the new Franco-German border. Further, she demanded that Germany be demilitarized and forced to make reparation for the damage caused to France. At the peace conferences, however, she was abandoned by the United States and even to some extent by England and was obliged to accept a compromise. After having yielded to Anglo-American pressure she asked the United States and Britain to guarantee her eastern frontiers against German revenge. They refused. With a population much smaller than Germany, with a stationary birth rate in the face of Germany's increasing population, France had to rely on her own armed strength and on what alliances she could make with the newly created, smaller states east and south of Germany. When the Reich began to sabotage reparation payments, France, standing on her rights, occupied the Ruhr, but was not supported by her allies. After America had withdrawn from Europe into isolation, France did her utmost to support the League of Nations and, with her smaller allies, suggested a mutual assistance pact within the League—the Geneva Protocol. Britain refused to commit herself. France found a substitute in the Locarno agreements which at least guaranteed security in the West. From the threat of reborn German militarism in the form of Nazism, she vainly sought protection from England and finally turned to Italy whose interest regarding the prevention of the Austrian Anschluss was identical with that of France. But Italy abused France's gesture and attacked Ethiopia, in violation of her obligations to the League. France was in a desperate position between the League and Mussolini, and in the end lost the friendship of Italy to uphold the League. When the Germans remilitarized the Rhineland, France was alarmed and called upon her partners in the Locarno Pact, but they turned a deaf ear and she had to accept the German *fait accompli*. Feeling abandoned and growing weaker in the face of rapidly increasing German military power,

France sought an alliance with Russia but was hindered by Poland who, although allied with France, would not give Russian troops permission to march through Polish territory. When Germany and Italy fomented and supported the Franco military revolution against the Spanish Republic, it was obviously a move to encircle France. This maneuver foreboded grave events. France wanted to intervene on the republican side and thus prevent Franco, supported by Hitler and Mussolini, from coming to power. But England opposed such a move. So the French Republic had to stand by and watch a hostile Fascist power being established by her enemies on her third land frontier. She had staked everything on her friendship with Britain. When it was obvious that Germany had become the dominating military and industrial power in Europe and that none of the other great powers, neither the United States nor Britain nor Russia, realized the imminence of danger, many Frenchmen felt that to oppose German might singlehanded was a suicidal policy, that the French must resign themselves to German supremacy in Europe and accept the position of a secondary power on the Continent. France's internal stability was greatly imperiled by a violent cleavage between capital and labor, and differences of opinion between those who advocated a French policy of collaboration with England and Russia and those who sought an arrangement with Germany. In spite of these difficulties, France kept faith with her British ally and continued to follow her lead. She accepted Munich, sacrificing Czechoslovakia, her most faithful friend on the Continent. Her armies were mobilized several times to be in readiness at critical moments. And when even Russia abandoned her, signing a treaty with Germany, and Hitler attacked Poland, France fulfilled her obligation toward her Polish ally, despite the difficulties and disappointments created by the pro-German Polish policy of the previous years. France declared war on Germany, mobilized six million men and exposed herself to the onrush of Nazi military might. She urged Britain to send strong forces across the Channel but England sent only two or three hundred thousand men and when the Germans attacked in the west, France had to carry the burden of fighting practically alone. The King of Belgium laid down arms. The entire British Expeditionary Force was encircled and pushed into the sea at Dunkirk. The German Panzer divisions swept across all the northern departments of France with overwhelming force. In this critical moment, Italy stabbed France in the back and declared war. The military situation was hopeless. France appealed to America for help which was refused. The British withdrew, betraying their alliance with France in her darkest hour. There was no alternative but to accept the bitter humiliation of defeat and surrender, hoping for a miracle of resurrection and trying to accommodate France to the new order in Europe, to ease the suffering of her people. For four years, the French endured German occupation and helplessly watched the Nazis looting the country. They organized a heroic resistance movement both inside and outside France and four years later, after America had been forced into the war by Germany and Japan, when the Anglo-American troops landed on French beaches, French resistance forces from outside came with them, and French resistance armies within the country arose, liberating their cities and villages, and contributing considerably to the Allied victory.

The image of these same events during the same period appeared to the *German* people as follows

For more than four years from 1914 to 1918 the German armies fought a coalition of almost the entire world, which had refused Germany the place under the sun her growing population required. In spite of their numerical superiority, the Allies never defeated the German armies in battle but they did succeed in blinding a section of the German people with promises of a just peace so that pacifists, socialists, democrats and Jews at home revolted and stabbed the German armies in the back. At Versailles, Germany was unjustly accused of having been responsible for the war. The Allies imposed upon her a treaty based on this lie which meant the dismemberment and enslavement of the German people. Nevertheless, Germany signed this shameful treaty and did her utmost to fulfill its terms and to reestablish a friendly relationship with her former enemies, believing in their promises to disarm. Germany herself was disarmed and her people toiled in utmost poverty and misery to fulfill their obligations toward the victors. On a pretext, France occupied the Ruhr, Germany's center of industrial production, establishing a regime of terror to enforce the unfulfillable clauses of the treaty. German economic life was disrupted and the country was plunged into an inflation which destroyed all the savings of the German population. Yet Germany accepted the Locarno treaties, guaranteeing once and for all her western frontiers, and entered the League. Germany signed the Kellogg Pact and outlawed war as an instrument of national policy. She insisted that the other parties keep their promises to disarm but they refused to do so. The chains of the Versailles Treaty became unbearable. The Allied powers refused to give Germany equality, a fair share in world trade, colonies and markets in central and southern Europe. Unemployment grew and misery reached unprecedented depths. Communism was spreading and it looked as if Germany would disintegrate, the German people be enslaved forever. During these desperate years, a savior arose who filled the German people with new hope, rallied them to his banner and promised work, bread, progress, strength for resurrection. The German people, by their own will power, liberated themselves from the chains of the Versailles Treaty, restored their own sovereignty by remilitarizing the German Rhineland. As the Allied powers refused to disarm and broke their own pledges, Germany regarded the military clauses of the treaty as null and void and began to assert her own dignity and to rearm. It was impossible for sixty-five million people to live in such a small and poor country. They needed living space if peace was to be preserved. The separation of German Austria from the Reich was ended and the German peoples were at last united. The new Germany gave work to everybody, spread wealth and happiness in the land and created a prosperity, a period of building and construction, unprecedented in German history. The German nation could not tolerate the spreading of Bolshevism in Europe and at great sacrifice helped the Spanish people to exterminate this Asiatic threat. As Germany arose from her defeat and was again a great, independent power, she could no longer admit the intolerable oppression and persecution of her blood brethren in Czechoslovakia. Relying on the righteousness of her cause, she claimed incorporation of the Sudeten German territories in the Reich which the former

enemies of Germany were made to accept without force. But the enemies of peace had learned nothing. The Poles refused to stop oppressing and torturing German minorities and to allow their return to the German Reich. So Germany, to protect and defend her peoples, was forced to act. To prove her pacific intentions, she signed a treaty of nonaggression with Soviet Russia and liberated the lost German territories in the East. England and France, who for a long time were jealously watching Germany's resurrection, took advantage of her pacification of the East and declared war on the Reich without any provocation and with the clear intention of once again destroying and enslaving the German people. Germany had no quarrel with her western neighbors. So, although the Western world was fully mobilized and menaced German soil, Germany did not undertake any action but waited in the hope of a reasonable settlement with England and France. A few months later, however, it was obvious that England was planning to violate Danish and Norwegian neutrality in order to outflank German defenses from the north. The Wehrmacht had to intervene and protect the neutrality of Denmark and Norway. Shortly thereafter, British invasion of Belgium and Holland and the outflanking of the West-wall was threatening. No more time could be wasted. Germany had to strike in self-defense. The Wehrmacht attacked and in a few days achieved the greatest military victory of all times. Belgium and Holland were occupied, the British pushed back into the sea and France was brought to capitulation. In Compiègne, the Fuehrer avenged once and for all the German humiliation of 1918. Again Germany appealed to England to save the peace of the world, guaranteeing the integrity of the British Empire in exchange for British recognition of German *Lebensraum* in Europe. Britain stubbornly refused and began to bomb German cities in violation of civilized warfare. Germany was forced to retaliate. She had to strike at British harbors and military targets and to stop deliveries of arms to England by torpedoing British convoys. The Anti Comintern Pact, which united the anti-Bolshevik forces of the new order, and the German-Russian nonaggression pact, kept peace in the East. But intelligence reports made it more and more obvious that Soviet Russia was using the Russo-German pact merely to gain time and was secretly arming to the utmost of her ability. Russia was making preparations for an attack on Germany at a moment most convenient for her. Naturally, Germany could not expose herself to such mortal danger. She had to forestall Bolshevik treachery. With a lightning decision—characteristic of the intuition of the Fuehrer—Germany, in self-defense, struck at her foe. Her armies marched against the Soviet Union in order to prevent Bolshevik aggression and to destroy the Red Army, the greatest threat to European civilization.

And from the vantage point of *Moscow*, the same quarter century appeared in this light.

In 1917, the Russian people succeeded in overthrowing the autocratic dynasty which had oppressed and enslaved them for centuries, and established a socialist people's republic. The capitalist powers, the allies of czarist Russia, intervened militarily. America, England, France, Poland, sent troops into Russia to destroy the new republic and to reestablish the old regime of exploitation. The rapidly organized Red Army fought heroically, defeated the invaders and liberated the

Russian soil. However, the young Soviet forces were not yet strong enough to push the armies of the capitalist imperialists back to the prewar frontier and so the Soviet government, in order to secure peace the quickest possible way, accepted a settlement which meant a loss of Russia's Baltic and western provinces. In spite of this settlement imposed on the Russian people, the hostility of the outside world toward the socialist experiment of the Soviet Union continued. Russia finally emerged from her involuntary isolation after five years by signing a treaty in Rapallo with the other prostrate power, Germany. Russia needed machinery, tools, engineers, to build up her industries and to raise the material conditions of her peoples, and Germany was prepared to do business with her. The Soviet Union bought everything for cash and paid in gold, so very soon England and America also began to sell their products in exchange for Russian gold. But the USSR did not succeed in breaking the political hostility of the capitalist world. It became more and more obvious that the success of the Communist economic system aroused great apprehensions abroad and that the capitalist, imperialist countries would attack and destroy the Soviet Union at the earliest opportunity. All the neighboring countries—Finland, the Baltic States, Poland, Rumania, Turkey, the British Empire, Japan—were openly defying the Soviet Union and following an anti-Soviet policy. So Russia had to postpone her great plan to produce consumer goods in mass quantities and was forced by circumstances to build up key industries in order to construct factories for armament production, and to organize a land army and an air force of huge proportions to defend the Union. The more powerful the USSR became, the more resentment and animosity grew in capitalist countries. The friends of the Soviet people, the Communists, were persecuted everywhere. A new type of military imperialism, Fascism, was seizing power in one country after the other, intent upon destroying socialist Russia. When Fascism came into power in Germany and mobilized the great German industrial potential for war against Russia, the Soviet government tried to come to an agreement with the Western democratic nations who were also threatened by the growing German militarism. The Soviet Union entered the League of Nations and worked with all her might for the establishment of a system of collective security, for a system of alliances of the peace-loving nations, to make peace indivisible and to check aggression collectively whenever and wherever it started. Soon a Fascist aggression occurred. Italy attacked Ethiopia. But all the powers hesitated, temporized and appeased the aggressor, leaving Russia isolated in her fight for collective security. For several years, the Soviet Union passionately continued trying to organize the world for peace, advocating co-operation of the democratic, socialist and Communist forces in all countries to keep Fascism from spreading and to prevent aggression. America was inaccessible. England and France clearly did not want to align themselves formally with Soviet Russia against the Fascist forces. It became increasingly apparent that they would welcome a Fascist attack on the Soviet Union, that they would like to see the German people and their satellites engaged with the Soviet people in a long and bloody struggle. The Soviet government, desiring peace and knowing how disastrous such a war would be for the Soviet people, watched these maneuvers and manifestations of ill will with growing apprehension.

They did their utmost to persuade the Western democracies of the suicidal shortsightedness of their policy. Finally, when Munich came and Britain and France, without even consulting the Soviet Union, sacrificed Czechoslovakia on the altar of appeasement, and permitted the destruction of the most valuable military link between Russia and the West, the situation became acute. A decision had to be made. Britain and France were invited to Moscow for conferences, but they sent only third-rate negotiators, affronting the Soviet government. Those negotiations left no doubt that even then, the Western powers did not desire wholehearted collaboration with Russia. They accepted the point of view of the Polish Fascists who refused to grant the Red Army permission to advance to the Polish-German border to organize common defenses. Then and there, it was clear that the arrangement suggested to the Soviet Union by the Western powers had no practical meaning and that it would inevitably result in a clash between the German and Russian armies with terrible bloodshed and serious consequences for the Soviet Union. To prevent such a catastrophe, the Soviet government had to make a decision. A radical change had to be made in past policy. They accepted a German proposal for a nonaggression pact which guaranteed the Soviet frontiers and peace, at least for a certain time, between the German Reich and the USSR. After signing the pact, the German armies attacked Poland. The Polish armies—on which the Western powers had wanted to base their entire Eastern defenses—collapsed in a few days. The Polish state ceased to exist. To prevent the Nazi militarists from reaching the Soviet borders, Red Army units reoccupied the lands inhabited by Ukrainians and White Russians which had been stolen from them by Poland during the revolution when the Soviet Union was weak. Through this act of foresight the German armies were stopped at a safe distance from the heart of Russia, and the Anti-Comintern Pact, the alliance between Germany, Japan and their satellites, against the Soviet Union was neutralized. Shortly after, Soviet diplomacy was justified when Germany attacked the West, defeating the French and British armies, and established Nazi hegemony over the entire European Continent, except the Soviet Union. One year later, the German Fascists unmasked their aggressive imperialism. Hitler violated his pact with Moscow and attacked the Soviet Union. By that time, however, the Russian armies were in readiness and defense industries were working to full capacity far behind the front lines. As a result of German aggression against the Soviet Union, the USSR became the ally of the British Empire and later, of the United States. All these tragic events prove how correct was Russia's foreign policy, how justified her admonitions to the democratic world in the prewar years. But they also show that the USSR must constantly be alert and prepared in the face of intrigues and aggressions of any of the foreign countries. In a world of hostile powers, the Soviet Union will have to maneuver between them and accept the alliances of those who will align themselves with her against the power or powers which represent the most imminent danger to the Soviet motherland.

The dramatic and strange events between the two world wars could be just as well described from the point of view of any other nation, large or small.

From Tokyo or Warsaw, from Riga or Rome, from Prague or Budapest, each picture will be entirely different and, from the fixed national point of observation, it will always be indisputably and unchallengeably correct. And the citizens of every country will be at all times convinced—and rightly so—of the infallibility of their views and the objectivity of their conclusions.

It is surely obvious that agreement, or common understanding, between different nations, basing their relations on such a primitive method of judgment, is an absolute impossibility. A picture of the world pieced together like a mosaic from its various national components is a picture that never and under no circumstances can have any relation to reality, unless we deny that such a thing as reality exists.

The world and history cannot be as they appear to the different nations, unless we disavow objectivity, reason and scientific methods of research.

But if we believe that man is, to a certain degree, different from the animal and that he is endowed with a capacity for phenomenological thinking, then the time has come to realize that our inherited method of observation in political and social matters is childishly primitive, hopelessly inadequate and thoroughly wrong. If we want to try to create at least the beginning of orderly relations between nations, we must try to arrive at a more scientific, more objective method of observation, without which we shall never be able to see social and political problems as they really are, nor to perceive their incidence. And without a correct diagnosis of the disease, there is no hope for a cure.

Our political and social thinking today is passing through a revolutionary era very much the same as were astronomy and abstract science during the Renaissance.

For more than fourteen centuries, the geocentric theory of the universe, formulated and laid down by Ptolemy in the second century A.D. in Alexandria, was paramount in the scientific world. According to this theory—as explained in Ptolemy's famous *Almagest*, the culmination of Greek astronomy—the earth was the center of the universe around which revolved the sun, the moon and all the stars.

No matter how primitive such a conception of the universe appears to us today, it remained unchallenged and unchallengeable for fourteen hundred years. All possible experimentation and observation before the sixteenth century A.D. confirmed the Ptolemaic system as a rock of indisputable scientific truth.

Strangely enough, Greek scientists several centuries before Ptolemy had a concept of the universe far more advanced and nearer to our modern knowledge. As far back as the sixth century B.C., Pythagoras visualized the earth and the universe as being spherical in shape. One of his later disciples, Aristarchus of Samos, in the third century B.C., in his hypothesis deposed the earth as the center of the universe, and declared it to be a "planet," like the many other celestial bodies. This system, called the Pythagorean system, plainly anticipated the Copernican hypothesis nineteen centuries later. It was probably not completely developed by Pythagoras himself, but it had been known several hundred years before Ptolemy.

Yet for almost two thousand years following the first insight into the real construction and functioning of the universe, people were convinced that all the celestial bodies revolved around the earth, which was the fixed center of the universe

The geocentric system worked perfectly as long as it could solve all the problems which presented themselves under the then existing methods of observation. Ptolemy himself appears to have sensed and suspected the transitory character of his system, as in his *Syntaxis* he laid down the general principle that in seeking to explain phenomena, we should adopt the simplest possible hypothesis, *provided it is not contradicted in any important respect by observation*

The geocentric theory of Ptolemy was perfectly in harmony with the religious dogma concerning the story of the creation of the universe as told in the Bible and it became the doctrine approved by the Church

But in fifteenth century Italy, under the light of new learning and observation and under the impetus of the revolt against the dictatorship of accepted philosophical and scientific doctrines, there came a radical change. Several thinkers, particularly one Dominico Maria Novara, denounced the Ptolemaic system and began spreading "Pythagorean opinions"—as they were called—about the universe. Around 1500, these old, yet revolutionary ideas, attracted and deeply interested young Copernicus while he was studying at the universities of Bologna and Padua.

So new circumstances, new methods of observation, new needs, led to the birth of the Copernican system, one of the most gigantic steps of scientific progress in human history.

Through the Copernican system, man's outlook on the universe changed fundamentally. In this new concept, the earth itself rotated. It was no longer a stable point. Our globe, just like the other planets, revolved in space around the sun and the new theory of planetary movement was founded on the principle of relativity of motion.

This heliocentric theory of Copernicus was by no means perfect. It solved many problems the Ptolemaic system could not solve, but certain outstanding anomalies compromised its harmonious working. It is also well known that for thirty-five years Copernicus did not dare publicly proclaim his discovery. When he finally decided to publish it (in the year of his death) he called his theory "Hypothesis" to forestall the wrath of the Church and public opinion.

The later experience of Galileo proved how justified were the fears of Copernicus. The heliocentric theory was not only condemned by the church authorities as heresy, it was rejected by the greatest astronomers and other scientists of the time. Indeed, it was impossible to prove Copernicus' hypothesis by the then existing methods of observation. Only later, through the work of Kepler and Galileo, was the heliocentric theory put on a solid scientific foundation.

At its inception, the Copernican system was nothing more than a daring speculation. But it opened a new world, pointed out the road to science and prompted new and more refined methods of observation which finally led to general acceptance of the revolutionary but correct outlook on the universe.

During the first half of the twentieth century, in so far as our political, social and economic thinking is concerned, we find ourselves in the same dead-end road as Copernicus during the Jubilee of 1500

We are living in a geocentric world of nation states. We look upon economic, social and political problems as "national" problems. No matter in which country we live, the center of our political universe is our own nation. In our outlook, the immovable point around which all the other nations, all the problems and events outside our nation, the rest of the world, supposedly rotate, is—our nation.

This is our basic and fundamental dogma.

According to this nation-centric conception of world affairs, we can solve political, economic and social problems within our nation, the fixed, immutable center, in one way—through law and government. And in the circumambient world around us, in our relations with the peoples of other nations, these same problems should be treated by other means—by "policy" and "diplomacy."

According to this nation-centric conception of world affairs, the political, social and economic relations between man and man living within a sovereign national unit, and these very same relationships between man and man living in separate sovereign national units are qualitatively different and require two qualitatively different methods of handling.

For many centuries such an approach was unchallenged and unchallengeable. It served to solve current problems in a satisfactory way and the existing methods of production, distribution, of communications and of interchange among the nations did not necessitate nor justify the formulation and acceptance of a different outlook. But the scientific and technological developments achieved by the industrial revolution in one century have brought about in our political outlook and in our approach to political and social phenomena a change as inevitable and imperative as the Renaissance brought about in our philosophical outlook.

The developments creating that need are revolutionary and without parallel in human history. In one century, the population of this earth has been more than trebled. Since the very beginning of recorded history, for ten thousand years, communication was based on animal power. During the American and French revolutions, transportation was scarcely faster than it had been under the Pharaohs, at the time of Buddha or of the Incas. And then, after a static aeon of ten thousand years, transportation changed within a single short century from animal power to the steam and electric railroad, the internal combustion automobile and the six-hundred mile-per-hour jet propulsion plane.

After thousands of years of primitive, rural existence in which all human beings, with few exceptions, were exhausted from producing with their own hands just enough food, clothing and shelter for sheer survival, in less than one century the population of the entire Western world has become consumers of mass-production commodities.

The change created by industrialism is so revolutionary, so profound, that it is without parallel in the history of any civilization. Despite Spengler, it is unique.

In this new and as yet unexplored era we find ourselves completely helpless,

equipped with the inadequate, primitive political and social notions inherited from the pre-industrialized world. Slowly we are coming to realize that none of our accepted theories is satisfactory to cope with the disturbing and complex problems of today.

We realize that although we can have all the machinery we need, we cannot solve the problems of production. We realize that in spite of the far flung and tremendous scope of transportation, we cannot prevent famine and starvation in many places, while there is abundance elsewhere on the earth. We realize that although hundreds of millions are desperately in need of food and industrial products, we cannot prevent mass unemployment. We realize that even though we have mined more gold than ever before, we cannot stabilize currency. We realize that while every modern country needs raw materials that other countries have, and produces goods which other countries need, we have been unable to organize a satisfactory method of exchange. We realize that although the overwhelming majority of all people hate violence and long to live in peace, we cannot prevent recurrent and increasingly devastating world wars. We knew that armaments must lead to wars between nations, but we have learned the bitter truth that disarmament also leads to war.

In this confusion and chaos in which civilized nations are struggling with utter helplessness, we are bound to arrive at the inevitable conclusion that the cause of this hopelessness and helplessness lies not in the outer world but in ourselves. Not in the problems we have to solve but in the hypotheses with which we approach their solutions.

Our political and social conceptions are Ptolemaic.

The world in which we live is Copernican.

Our Ptolemaic political conceptions in a Copernican industrial world are bankrupt. Latest observations on ever-changing conditions have made our Ptolemaic approach utterly ridiculous and out-of-date. We still believe, in each one of the seventy or eighty sovereign states, that our "nation" is the immovable center around which the whole world revolves.

There is not the slightest hope that we can possibly solve any of the vital problems of our generation until we rise above dogmatic nation-centric conceptions and realize that, in order to understand the political, economic and social problems of this highly integrated and industrialized world, we have to shift our standpoint and see all the nations and national matters in motion, in their interrelated functions, rotating according to the same laws without any fixed points created by our own imagination for our own convenience.

IF THE BOMB GETS OUT OF HAND¹*by Philip Morrison*

Philip Morrison, now professor of physics at Cornell University, was active on the atomic bomb project at Chicago and Los Alamos. At the request of the War Department, he went to Japan to investigate the effects of the Hiroshima bomb.

WE SAT in a small open wooden hut, like a booth at a church fair, listening to the Japanese General Staff major from Tokyo. Around us the ground was blackened. The trees were strangely bare for September beside the Inland Sea. The advance party of the American Army mission to study the effects of the atom bomb had come to Hiroshima. In the rubble of the castle grounds, the old headquarters of the Fifth Division, the local authorities had prepared for us a meeting with the men who had lived through the disaster of the first atomic bomb. The major was very young and very grave. He spoke slowly and carefully, like a man who wants to be properly translated and clearly understood. The story he told is worth hearing. It is the story of the first impact of the atomic bomb on the structure of a nation.

About a quarter-past seven on Monday morning, August 6, the Japanese early warning radar net had detected the approach of some enemy aircraft headed for the southern part of Honshu, and doubtless for the ports of the Inland Sea. The alert was given, and radio broadcasting stopped in many cities, among them Hiroshima. The raiders approached the coast at very high altitude. At nearly eight o'clock the radar operators determined that the number of planes coming in was very small—probably not more than three—and the air raid alert was lifted. The normal broadcast warning was given to the population that it might be advisable to go to shelter if B-29's were actually sighted, but that no raid was expected beyond some sort of reconnaissance. At 8:16 the Tokyo control operator of the Japan Broadcasting Corporation noticed that the Hiroshima station had gone off the air. He tried to use another telephone line to re-establish his program, but it too had failed. About twenty minutes later the Tokyo railroad telegraph center realized that the main line telegraph had stopped working just north of Hiroshima. And from some small railway stops within ten miles of that city there had come unofficial and rather confused reports of a terrible explosion in Hiroshima. All these events were then reported to the air-raid defense headquarters of the General Staff. The military called again and again the Army wireless station at the castle in Hiroshima. There was no answer. Something had happened in Hiroshima. The men at headquarters were puzzled. They knew that no large enemy raid could have occurred, they knew that no sizeable store of explosives was in Hiroshima at that time.

The young major of the General Staff was ordered in. He was instructed to

¹ From *One World or None*, edited by Dexter Masters and Katharine Way. Copyright, 1946, by McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

fly immediately by army plane to Hiroshima, to land, to survey the damage, and to return to Tokyo with reliable information for the staff. It was generally felt in the air-raid defense headquarters that nothing serious had taken place, that the nervous days of August, 1945, in Japan had fanned up a terrible rumor from a few sparks of truth. The major went to the airport and took off for the southwest. After flying for about three hours, still nearly one hundred miles from Hiroshima, he and his pilot saw a great cloud of smoke from the south. In the bright afternoon Hiroshima was burning. The major's plane reached the city. They circled in disbelief. A great scar, still burning, was all that was left of the center of a busy city. They flew over the military landing strip to land, but the installations below them were smashed. The field was deserted.

About thirty miles south of the wrecked city is the large naval base of Kure, already battered by carrier strikes from the American fleet. The major landed at the Kure airfield. He was welcomed by the naval officers there as the first official representative of aid from Tokyo. They had seen the explosion at Hiroshima. Truckloads of sailors had been sent up to help the city in this strange disaster, but terrible fires had blocked the roads, and the men had turned back. A few refugees had straggled out of the northern part of the town, their clothes and skin burned, to tell near-hysterical stories of incredible violence. Great winds blew in the streets, they said. Debris and the dead were everywhere. The great explosion had been for each survivor a bomb hitting directly on his house. The staff major, thrown into the grimmest of responsibilities, organized some two thousand sailors into parties, which reached the city about dusk. They were the first group of rescue workers to enter Hiroshima.

The major took charge for several days. The rail line was repaired, and trainloads of survivors were shipped north. The trains came first from Onomichi, where, about forty miles north, there was a large naval hospital. Soon the hospital was filled, and its movable supplies exhausted. Then the trains bore the injured still farther north, until there too the medical facilities were completely used up. Some sufferers were shipped twenty-four hours by train before they came to a place where they might be treated. Hospital units were mobilized by Tokyo to come from hundreds of miles to set up dressing stations in Hiroshima. One bomb and one plane had reduced a city of four hundred thousand inhabitants to a singular position in the war economy of Japan. Hiroshima consumed bandages and doctors, while it produced only trainloads of the burned and the broken. Its story brought terror to all the cities of the islands.

The experts in the science of the killing of cities have developed a concept which well describes the disaster of Hiroshima, the disaster which will come to any city which feels the atomic bomb. That is the idea of saturation. Its meaning is simple: if you strike at a man or a city, your victim defends himself. He hits you, he throws up flak, he fights the fires, he cares for the wounded, he rebuilds the houses, he throws tarpaulins over the shelterless machinery. The harder you strike, the greater his efforts to defend himself. But if you strike all at once with overwhelming force, he cannot defend himself. He is stunned. The city's flak batteries are all shooting as fast as they can, the firemen are all at work on the flames of their homes. Then your strike may grow larger with

impunity. He is doing his utmost, he can no longer respond to greater damage by greater effort in defense. The defenses are saturated.

The atomic bomb is pre-eminently the weapon of saturation. It destroys so large an area so completely and so suddenly that the defense is overwhelmed. In Hiroshima there were thirty-three modern fire stations, twenty-seven were made useless by the bombing. Three-quarters of the fire-fighting personnel were killed or severely injured. At the same instant, hundreds, perhaps thousands, of fires broke out in the wrecked area. How could these fires be brought under control? There were some quarter of a million people injured in a single minute. The medical officer in charge of the public health organization was buried under his house. His assistant was killed, and so was *his* assistant. The commanding officer of the military was killed, and his aide, and his aide's aide, and in fact every member of his staff. Of 298 registered physicians, only thirty were able to care for the survivors. Of nearly twenty-four hundred nurses and orderlies, only six hundred were ready for work after the blast. How could the injured be treated or evacuation properly organized? The power sub-station which served the center of the city was destroyed, the railroad was cut, and the rail station smashed and burned. The telephone and telegraph exchange was wrecked. Every hospital but one in the city was badly damaged, not one was able to shelter its patients from the rain—even if its shell of concrete still stood—without roof, partitions, or casements. There were whole sections of the outer city undamaged, but the people there were unable to give effective aid, lacking leadership, organization, supplies, and shelter. The Japanese defenses had already been proved inadequate under the terrible fire raids of the B-29's, which had desolated so many of Japan's cities. But under the atomic bomb their strained defenses came to complete saturation. At Nagasaki, the target of the second atomic bomb, the organization of relief was even poorer. The people had given up.

A Hiroshima official waved his hand over his wrecked city and said "All this from one bomb, it is unendurable." We knew what he meant. Week after week the great flights of B-29's from the Marianas had laid flame to the cities of all Japan. But at least there was a warning. You knew when the government announced a great raid in progress that, though Osaka people would face an infernal night, you in Nagoya could sleep. For the raids of a thousand bombers could not be hidden, and the fire raid had formed a pattern. But every day over any city of the chain there was a chance for a few American planes to come. These inquiring planes had been photographers or weather forecasters or even occasionally nuisance raiders, never before had a single plane destroyed a city. Now, all this was changed. From any plane casually flying almost beyond the range of flak there could come death and flame for an entire city. The alert would have to be sounded now night and day in every city. If the raiders were over Sapporo, the people of Shimonoseki, a thousand miles away, must still fear even one airplane. This is unendurable.

If war comes again, atomic war, there will not even be the chance for alerts. A single bomb can saturate a city the size of Indianapolis, or a whole district of a great city, like Lower Manhattan, or Telegraph Hill and the Marina, or Hyde Park and the South Shore. The bombs can come by plane or rocket in

thousands, and all at once. What measures of defense can there be? To destroy the bombs in flight many measures will be attempted, but they cannot be a hundred per cent effective. It is not easy to picture what even one single bomb will do. We saw the test shot in the New Mexico desert, and we pored over and calculated the damage that a city would suffer. But on the ground at Hiroshima and Nagasaki there lies the first convincing evidence of the damage done by the present atomic bomb.

The streets and the buildings of Hiroshima are unfamiliar to Americans. Even from pictures of the damage realization is abstract and remote. A clearer and truer understanding can be gained from thinking of the bomb as falling on a city, among buildings and people, which Americans know well. The diversity of awful experience which I saw at Hiroshima, and which I was told about by its citizens, I shall project on an American target. Please do not believe that there is exaggeration here, this story will be conservative, it will allow for no increase in the effectiveness of the bomb. It will tell of only one where, if there is atomic war, twenty will fall. Your city, too, is a good target.

The microwave early-warning radar towers on the Jersey coast and up past Riverside had recorded the approach of the missile. It was 12 07 when they noted the end of the signal, and the operators wondered what the thing had been. When the telephone circuits failed and the teletype stopped, they grew worried. When they listened to the shaky and disturbed news report from WABC a few minutes later, they knew what had made the mark on the screen. One of the men walked outside with his camera and looked north in the bright noon sun to see the great pillar of cloud he knew would come. The wind had been from the northwest all day, and it is interesting to note that the radioactive cloud passed over the same radar installation which had first remarked the missile. The recording radiation meter at the station showed a harmless quantity of gamma radiation, but the photographic film was badly fogged.

The device detonated about half a mile in the air, just above the corner of Third Avenue and East 20th Street, near Gramercy Park. Evidently there had been no special target chosen, just Manhattan and its people. The flash startled every New Yorker out of doors from Coney Island to Van Cortlandt Park, and in the minute it took the sound to travel over the whole great city, millions understood dimly what had happened.

The district near the center of the explosion was incredible. From the river west to Seventh Avenue, and from south of Union Square to the middle thirties, the streets were filled with the dead and dying. The old men sitting on the park benches in the square never knew what had happened. They were chiefly charred black on the side toward the bomb. Everywhere in this whole district were men with burning clothing, women with terrible red and blackened burns, and dead children caught while hurrying home to lunch. The thousands of brick and brownstone walk-ups, huddled closely to the elevated and packed thickly between the rivers, were badly shaken in a few seconds. The parapets and the porches tumbled into the streets, the glass of the windows blew sometimes out and sometimes in, depending on the complex geometry of the old buildings. The plaster fell on the heads of the tenants, old floors and stairs collapsed under the terrible wind of the blast, and only the heavy walls

stood to mark the homes. Closer to the center nothing much was left. Many of the narrow streets passing between the old five floor brick or stone tenements were choked with rubble, until it was difficult to walk down the street. Here and there collapsed buildings had piled a great heap of pitiful debris, all the wares and effects of living, into a useless and smoldering jumble. Everywhere there were fires, usually licking at already useless wreckage, but making heart-breakingly difficult the escape of the injured and the slow work of the half-stunned rescue parties.

The elevated structure stood up comparatively well. All the elevated stations from Fourteenth almost to midtown were wrecks. The steps were gone, the flimsy flooring and the old baroque railings lay in the street below. Only the clean steel frames were for the most part intact. In the blocks near Twenty-third even the main frame had gone, and the twisted vertical columns remained above the nightmare of steel below. The loss of life was very large from this alone. A train had been pushed off going at full speed north on Second Avenue near Twentieth, and the flames which burned the whole of the district seemed to begin from the wreckage. A few concrete garages and warehouses stood up over the gaunt frames of the elevated tracks, but the whirlwind which tore through them left the interiors wrecked. Fire usually finished the job.

The great buildings were not destroyed, none had been very close to the blast. But they were not unharmed. The high Metropolitan Tower was the worst damaged. The steelwork stood unharmed nearly to the top, though it was badly twisted where a whole ten-story wall section had come down into the street. The interior partitions from the sixteenth floor and up were completely gone, and even some floors had failed, leaving a kind of half-filled honeycomb of a building above the twentieth floor. More than fifty people were later said to have managed to clamber down from the wreck. It is known that eighteen of the radiation deaths recorded in the St. Louis hospitals later were of people who had been in the higher floors of this building when the bomb struck. The people below the tenth floor were not fatally injured for the most part. Fractures and lacerations from glass were the principal cause of injury. A good many hundreds of people from the south side of the building died two or three weeks after the blast from radiation. Among them was a well-known aeronautical engineer who had managed to remain uninjured by the flash burn or the blast, standing as he was behind a steel beam column on the south side of the first floor, near the windows. He bravely worked the whole day as one of the rescue party for the Tower. The bad nauseous symptoms which he underwent at six o'clock caused him to seek hospitalization at Philadelphia, where he died in twelve days, while working on a report for the Air Forces on the extent of the damage to steel structures.

The Empire State building nearly a mile away was strikingly little damaged. The radio structures and the external ornament of the high spire were swept clean. The windows of course were shattered and much damage was done to the light partitions and even to the glassy exterior walls on the higher floors. Elevator machinery was badly damaged by a freakish falling beam and many were trapped in immobile cars. The flash scorched papers and window screens

and set fires going in all the offices on the side facing the blast. These fires were brought under control in a day or so. For months after the blast the high tower seemed to stand defiantly at the upper edge of the vanished district, but the building was useless except in the very lowest floors. The tenants of the building had not fared so well as its steel and concrete frame, the great dressing station established in the corridors and rooms of the first five floors handled many of them, and sent many of them to the Police Department's common graves.

The underground world of the city had been relatively safe. When the power failed in the whole lower eastern Manhattan district because of the destruction of the transformer sub stations, the subway power alone was restorable. The Lexington gratings collapsed, and near the blast one or two large street cave ins had stopped traffic on the IRT and flooded part of the tubes from broken mains. But the greater number of subway passengers and crews escaped. A few hundred were trampled in a bad panic at the Thirty-fourth Street entrance, and one train piled into the wreckage below ground very near the aiming point. Some people walked north underground all the way to the Bronx, not believing it safe to come up any closer to the bomb. Men in the sub basements of the great buildings were horrified when they came up to see why the lights had failed, they had known nothing of the great blast but a ground tremor and the dust of falling plaster.

The nearness of Bellevue Hospital to the blast—about half a mile—was tragic. The long brick walls collapsed. Only a few patients here and there survived. The doctors and nurses had no time to salvage even the carefully prepared emergency supplies. Fire attacked the ruin, and the scenes which followed are indescribable. The knocking out of Bellevue was a hard blow to the rescue organization of the city and delayed for some time the proper organization of relief.

There were many stories of unbelievable good fortune and magnificent heroism. One man, a glassblower apprentice, was walking along Lexington south to Twenty-fourth. He described the great flash, but he was protected from a direct view by the corner of a building. The blast knocked him down along the broad street, but no heavy object hit him, and he escaped without serious injury. All day and night he worked, leading the badly injured north and pulling many people from the wreckage. Though he was only a few hundred yards from the point below the point of impact, he suffered no symptoms of radiation injury. He was the only person on the streets of the city within a ten-block radius who is known to have survived without serious injury, and not more than a thousand of the hospitalized but recovering victims were as close as he.

The most tragic of all the stories of the disaster is that of the radiation casualties. They included people from as far away as the Public Library or the neighborhood of Police Headquarters downtown, but most of them came from the streets between the river and Fifth Avenue, from Tenth or Twelfth to the early Thirties. They were all lucky people. Most of them had had remarkable escapes from fire, from flash burns, from falling buildings. The people around them had never gotten away, but they had crawled, injured but alive, from the

wreckage of homes or shops, from the elevated platforms, or from cellar stairways. Some had seen the great flash, felt the floor collapse, and picked themselves up ten minutes later from the rubble of their homes. Others had gotten free of the bus or auto they were in when it was thrown into a wall and had pulled out after them the dead and dying who had been their fellow passengers. They were all lucky, as they said. Some were dramatically uninjured, like the aeronautical engineer. But they all died. They died in the hospitals of Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Rochester, and St. Louis in the three weeks following the bombing. They died of unstoppable internal hemorrhages, of wildfire infections, of slow oozing of the blood into the flesh. Nothing seemed to help them much, and the end was neither slow nor very fast, but sure. They were relatively few in number—the doctors quarreled for months about their census, but it was certainly twenty thousand, and it may have been many more.

The people far away who lived through the days of the aftermath suffered too. Homes and offices were systematically and badly damaged as far away as Fifty-seventh Street and Fulton Market, and across both rivers. Every block had its collapsed brick structures and its many walls carried away, and its dozen dead. There were not many windows intact on Manhattan Island, and there were many thousands wearing the face dressings that marked the target of glass splinters. But their lives went on, the damage was slowly repaired, and those who had no job to do there stayed far away from the scar that had been the Twenties. The rerouting of traffic and the repair of the telephone and the electrical and the water systems had its effect on the economic life of the whole city. The damage was felt in many ways as a drain on the recuperative power of the whole of New York City, and the loss of one-tenth of the people and the property of the city was enough to lessen the work of the city by half. People moved away and tried to forget.

The statistics were never very accurate. About three hundred thousand were killed, all agreed. At least two hundred thousand had been buried and cremated by the crews of volunteer police and of the Army division sent in. The others were still in the ruins, or burned to vapor and ash. As many again were seriously injured. They clogged the hospitals of the East and turned many a Long Island and New Jersey resort that summer into a hospital town.

There was no one of the eight million who had not his story to tell. The man who saw the blast through the netting of the monkey cage in Central Park, and bore for days on the unnatural ruddy tan of his face the white imprint of the shadow of the netting, was famous. The amateurs who collected radioactive souvenirs from the strong patch of radioactivity which sickened Greenwich Villagers for weeks were matched by those who found scorched shadow patterns in the wallpaper and plasterboard of a thousand wrecked homes.

New York City had thus suffered under one bomb, and the story is unreal in only one way. The bombs will never again, as in Japan, come in ones or twos. They will come in hundreds, even in thousands. Even if, by means as yet unknown, we are able to stop as many as 90 per cent of these missiles, their number will still be large. If the bomb gets out of hand, if we do not learn to live together so that science will be our help and not our hurt, there is only one sure future. The cities of men on earth will perish.

THE REESTABLISHMENT OF PEACETIME SOCIETY¹

by *G B Chisholm*

During the War, General G B Chisholm, a distinguished psychiatrist, served as Director-General of Medical Services in the Canadian Army. Now the Deputy Minister of National Health for Canada, he is also representative to the United Nations Health Assembly. General Chisholm, whose reputation is world wide, delivered the William Alanson White Memorial Lectures—of which the following selection comprises the first—in October 1945. In the course of the Panel Discussion which followed, Henry A. Wallace stated, "The lecture of General Chisholm last night is one of the most thought provoking which has ever been given in Washington. It goes to the very roots of future peace. It recognizes the supremely important fact that security is not attained merely by radar, by V 2 rockets, by atom bombs."

General Chisholm recognizes that beyond all these devices of force, there is still something mightier."

MAN, again, and on a wider and more highly organized scale than ever before, has been indulging in one of his most consistent behavior patterns, war. Though it seems that, among the people of the world, relatively few want or enjoy wars, and very many suffer in many ways during wars, man persists in this senseless behavior century after century. Until recent years wars could take place locally without necessarily affecting or causing concern on the part of peoples in other parts of the world, but that time is past. Every war is now a threat to all the people in the world, either directly or through deprivation of materials or loss of trade.

This situation is widely recognized and no nation will ever again be able to formulate its policies on the basis of isolationism. The interdependence of all the people in this shrunken world is obvious. Fast air transport and the atomic bomb are only the latest steps in that process, which has been going on for a long time, of breaking down the geographical barriers between groups of peoples. We are all now, perforce, citizens of the world, whether we are sufficiently mature adequately to carry that responsibility or not. In the face of this new status as world citizens we must accept the uncomfortable fact that we are the kind of people who fight wars every fifteen or twenty years. We always have, for as far back as we know anything of the race, and if we go on being the same kinds of people it is to be supposed that we will continue to fight each other.

Now that the latest war has just finished we must take one of several possible courses. First we can return to the kind of life and society we had before the war, go back to our peaceful pursuit of a living, or local social betterment, or political importance, or psychotherapy as the case may be. We could probably count with luck on fifteen years, or even twenty, of peace if we do that, but

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those occupations would be completely futile as we would be taken over and enslaved, literally, and our comfortable social developments thrown into the discard by a "Master Race" to whom we would appear weak and unrealistic and not fit to run our own lives. Every present indication is that the next time any self-styled master race is allowed to prepare and make such an attempt it will succeed. If our future concern is just the reestablishment of the pre-war society, slavery is absolutely inevitable. We were before the war the kind of people who allowed the Germans, Italians and Japanese to prepare openly for war for years and to pick their own time and place to attack us. If we go on being that same kind of people we are indeed not fit to survive. We will have proven clearly our lack of ability to learn from even the most painful experience—a biologically intolerable condition.

The second possible course is to prepare earnestly for the next war, recognizing its inevitability, training our children from infancy to live dangerously, to be able to fight effectively with ever more efficient, ruthless and terrible weapons. They must be trained to strike first because there may be no second blow in the wars of the future. Constant alertness and ruthless killing of all potential enemies will be the price of survival if we go on as we always have.

The third possible course is to find and take sure steps to prevent wars in the future. While this possibility seems obviously preferable it is something that has never yet been undertaken successfully. Perhaps it can be said that such a course has never been undertaken at all. Perhaps there is no way of preventing wars, if so we must decide whether to be slaves or ruthless killers, but before accepting either of those uncomfortable alternatives let us at least explore possible ways of preventing war.

Before exploring such possibilities, however, we should first consider war in relation to the human race so that we may be assured that it would indeed be good for the race to prevent future wars. It would seem to be true that, whatever the destiny of the race, the killing off of large numbers of its physically fit, intelligent and socially minded younger men can hardly be advantageous. A case might be made for wars if they could be fought by the old men and the mental defectives but that does not seem to be even a remote possibility as wars become ever more technical and demanding of all the fittest men. While the atomic bomb has been a dramatic weapon in the closing phases of the recent war, other possible weapons may be still more terrible. What of the introduction into major water supplies of a chemical which will prevent pregnancy in all females? What of the infinite capacity for killing in the hands of biologists and chemists all over the world? Any country could be paralyzed and destroyed at leisure by a well-organized attack of any one of various new types—and without any development of heavy industries. In fact then the tendency is to involve not only fit young men, but every sign points to the killing in any future wars of large numbers of unselected whole populations, including women and children. This can hardly possibly be a useful procedure from a racial point of view unless conceivably it could serve to reduce population pressures in some parts of the world. This end could surely be attained, however, in less painful ways and with better selection, if such reduction of population should become necessary to the human race.

Some aspects of war are undoubtedly attractive to many people, but these

advantages are clearly so far outweighed by the sufferings of others that no case can be made for continuing to wage wars on that score. Wars affect the economic status of millions of people, many of them for the better. Business booms, money flows freely, prosperity is widespread, but only where the war is not actually being fought. In the future, war may well be fought everywhere throughout the world without immediately compensating prosperity for anybody. Furthermore it ought to be possible for us to produce the same prosperity without killing, starving or enslaving millions of people.

Look as we may we cannot find a sensible reason, from the point of view of the welfare of the human race, for continuing to fight wars or for not preventing them. Then why do we go on doing it? Let me repeat—we are the kind of people who fight wars every fifteen or twenty years. Why? Shall we only throw up our hands in resignation and reply “human nature”? Surely other expressions of human nature are subject to extensive changes. Why not this one? We may not change nature but surely its expression in behavior patterns can be modified very extensively.

The responsibility for charting the necessary changes in human behavior rests clearly on the sciences working in that field. Psychologists, psychiatrists, sociologists, economists and politicians must face this responsibility. It cannot be avoided. Even a decision not to interfere is still a decision and carries no less responsibility. We must earnestly consider what can be done to save the race from itself, from its insatiable desire for its own blood. Can this old habitual pattern of the race be eradicated by strong combinations of powerful nations, or by legislation, or by pretending that now everyone will love everyone else and there will be no more wars, or by prayer and fasting, or by control of enemy industries? These have all been tried repeatedly and uniformly unsuccessfully. There is nothing to suggest that any of them can be successful though they are all seriously being recommended again by many interested people. We are even being told we can prevent wars by controlling our potential enemies' heavy industries. I am reminded that when the Romans were concerned to keep the Britons from fighting them they cut down all the yew trees in England so the Britons could not make long bows. The Britons took to cross bows instead, which were much better weapons. Surely we have learned something in 2000 years! Or have we? We might as well forbid the Germans to make spears or breed horses for cavalry as control their heavy industries. Every lesson of history and of common sense would suggest the futility of these methods. It is clear that something new is needed—but what?

Can we identify the reasons why we fight wars or even enough of them to perceive a pattern? Many of them are easy to list—prejudice, isolationism, the ability emotionally and uncritically to believe unreasonable things, excessive desire for material or power, excessive fear of others, belief in a destiny to control others, vengeance, ability to avoid seeing and facing unpleasant facts and taking appropriate action. These are probably the main reasons we find ourselves involved in wars. They are all well known and recognized neurotic symptoms. The only normal motive is self-defence, to protect ourselves from aggression, but surely we should be able to see the aggression coming long before it breaks out in warfare and take appropriate action to satisfy or suppress it. Even self-defence may involve a neurotic reaction when it means defending

one's own excessive material wealth from others who are in great need. This type of defense is short-sighted, ineffective and inevitably leads to more wars.

When we see neurotic patients showing these same reactions in their private affairs we may also throw up our hands and say "human nature" or "psychopathic personality of this or that type" or we may go to work to try to help the person in trouble to grow up over again more successfully than his parents were able to do. This can be done frequently but it would have been still better if his parents had been able to help him to grow up successfully in the first place.

It would appear that at least three requirements are basic to any hope of permanent world peace.

First—security, elimination of the occasion for valid fear of aggression. This is attainable, at least temporarily and as a stopgap until something better can be arranged, by legislation backed by immediately available combined force prepared to suppress ruthlessly any appeal to force by any peoples in the world. The administration and command of such a force is a delicate problem but can be devised if and when the great powers really want it. A less effective substitute for this method but one which may work well enough for long enough is for the great powers to assume this function themselves. To work even well enough it will be necessary that all disputes between nations be submitted to arbitration by a world court of the highest integrity.

Second—opportunity to live reasonably comfortably for all the people in the world on economic levels which do not vary too widely either geographically or by groups within a population. This is a simple matter of redistribution of material, of which there is plenty in the world for everybody, or of which plenty can easily be made. This can easily be attained whenever enough people see its necessity for their own and their children's safety if for no more mature reason.

It is probable that these first two requirements would make wars unnecessary for mature normal people without neurotic necessities, but their attainment depends on the ability of enough people in the right places to want to implement them, and few people are mature and without neurotic necessities. So far in the history of the world there have never been enough mature people in the right places. We have never had enough people anywhere who have been able to see and accept these facts and who are sufficiently well developed and responsible to tackle these problems.

It follows inevitably then that the third requirement, on which the attainment and the effectiveness of the others depend, is that there should be enough people in the world, in all countries, who are not as we are and always have been, and will not show the neurotic necessities which we and every generation of our ancestors have shown. We have never had enough people anywhere who are sufficiently free of these neurotic symptoms which make wars inevitable.

All psychiatrists know where these symptoms come from. The burden of inferiority, guilt, and fear we have all carried lies at the root of this failure to mature successfully. Psychotherapy is predominantly, by any of a variety of methods, the reduction of the weight of this load. Therefore the question we must ask ourselves is why the human race is so loaded down with these incubi and what can be done about it.

Strecker and Appel have recently defined maturity in terms of abilities which, if attained by enough people, could ensure the continuity and continued develop-

ment of the race along the lines of its inherent destiny without wars To quote, "Maturity is a quality of personality that is made up of a number of elements It is stick-to-it-iveness, the ability to stick to a job, to work on it, and to struggle through until it is finished, or until one has given all one has in the endeavor It is the quality or capacity of giving more than is asked or required in a given situation It is this characteristic that enables others to count on one, thus it is reliability Persistence is an aspect of maturity persistence to carry out a goal in the face of difficulties Endurance of difficulties, unpleasantness, discomfort, frustration, hardship The ability to size things up, make one's own decision, is a characteristic of maturity This implies a considerable amount of independence A mature person is not dependent unless ill Maturity includes determination, a will to achieve and succeed, a will to life Of course, maturity represents the capacity to cooperate to work with others, to work in an organization and under authority The mature person is flexible, can defer to time, persons, circumstances He can show tolerance, he can be patient, and *above all he has the qualities of adaptability and compromise* Basically, maturity represents a wholesome amalgamation of two things 1—dissatisfaction with the status quo, which calls forth aggressive, constructive effort, and 2—social concern and devotion It is morale in the individual "

Let me repeat parts of this "The ability to size things up, make one's own decisions, is a characteristic of maturity," "A mature person above all he has the qualities of adaptability and compromise" Can anyone doubt that enough people reaching maturity in these terms would not want to start wars themselves and would prevent other people starting them It would appear that this quality of maturity, this growing up successfully, is what is lacking in the human race generally, in ourselves and in our legislators and governments, which can only represent the people

This fact puts the problem squarely up to psychiatry The necessity to fight wars, whether as aggressor or as a defender who could have, but has not, taken steps to prevent war occurring, is as much a pathological psychiatric symptom as is a phobia or the antisocial behavior of a criminal who has been dominated by a stern and unreasonable father They are alike irrational behavior patterns resulting from unsuccessful development and failure to reach emotional maturity It is evident that this failure is usual in the whole human race and has been so throughout historical time

For a cause we must seek some consistent thread running through the weave of all civilizations we have known and preventing the development of all or almost all the people to a state of true maturity What basic psychological distortion can be found in every civilization of which we know anything? It must be a force which discourages the ability to see and acknowledge patent facts, which prevents the rational use of intelligence, which teaches or encourages the ability to dissociate and to believe contrary to and in spite of clear evidence, which produces inferiority, guilt and fear, which makes controlling other people's personal behavior emotionally necessary, which encourages prejudice and the inability to see, understand and sympathize with other people's points of view Is there any force so potent and so pervasive that it can do all these things in all civilizations? There is—just one The only lowest common denominator of all civilizations and the only psychological force capable of pro-

ducing these perversions is morality, the concept of right and wrong, the poison long ago described and warned against as "the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil"

In the old Hebrew story God warns the first man and woman to have nothing to do with good and evil. It is interesting to note that as long ago as that, "good" is recognized as just as great a menace as "evil." They are the fruit of the one tree and are different aspects of the same thing.

We have been very slow to rediscover this truth and to recognize the unnecessary and artificially imposed inferiority, guilt and fear, commonly known as sin, under which we have almost all labored and which produces so much of the social maladjustment and unhappiness in the world. For many generations we have bowed our necks to the yoke of the conviction of sin. We have swallowed all manner of poisonous certainties fed us by our parents, our Sunday and day school teachers, our politicians, our priests, our newspapers and others with a vested interest in controlling us. "Thou shalt become as gods, knowing good and evil," good and evil with which to keep children under control, with which to prevent free thinking, with which to impose local and familial and national loyalties and with which to blind children to their glorious intellectual heritage. Misguided by authoritarian dogma, bound by exclusive faith, stunted by inculcated loyalty, torn by frantic heresy, bedevilled by insistent schism, drugged by ecstatic experience, confused by conflicting certainty, bewildered by invented mystery, and loaded down by the weight of guilt and fear engendered by its own original promises, the unfortunate human race, deprived by these incubi of its only defences and its only reasons for striving, its reasoning power and its natural capacity to enjoy the satisfaction of its natural urges, struggles along under its ghastly self-imposed burden. The results, the inevitable results, are frustration, inferiority, neurosis and inability to enjoy living, to reason clearly or to make a world fit to live in.

The crippling of intelligence by these bandages of belief, in the name of virtue and security for the soul, is as recognizable as that of the feet of the Chinese girl who was sacrificed to the local concept of beauty. The result is, in both cases, not beauty of character or of feet, but distortion and crippling and loss of natural function. Intelligence, ability to observe and to reason clearly and to reach and implement decisions appropriate to the real situation in which he finds himself, are man's only specific methods of survival. His unique equipment is entirely in the superior lobes of his brain. His destiny must lie in the direction indicated by his equipment. Whatever hampers or distorts man's clear true thinking works against man's manifest destiny and tends to destroy him.

Man's freedom to observe and to think freely is as essential to his survival as are the specific methods of survival of the other species to them. Birds must fly, fish must swim, herbivorous animals must eat grasses and cereals, and man must observe and think freely. That freedom, present in all children and known as innocence, has been destroyed or crippled by local certainties, by gods of local moralities, of local loyalty, of personal salvation, of prejudice and hate and intolerance—frequently masquerading as love—gods of everything that would destroy freedom to observe and to think and would keep each generation under the control of the old people, the elders, the shamans, and the priests.

Let us go back to Strecker and Appel's definition of maturity: "The ability to

size things up, make one's own decisions is a characteristic of maturity" "A mature person has the qualities of adaptability and compromise" Were you and I brought up in that direction? No, we were taught to be absolutely loyal and obedient to the local concept of virtue whatever that happened to be We were taught that Moslems or Hindus or Jews, or Democrats or Republicans (with us in Canada, Grits or Tories) or capitalists or trade unionists, or socialists or communists, or Roman Catholics or Methodists or any of all other human groups are wrong or even wicked It almost always happened that among all the people in the world only our own parents, and perhaps a few people they selected, were right about everything We could refuse to accept their rightness only at the price of a load of guilt and fear, and peril to our immortal souls This training has been practically universal in the human race Variations in content have had almost no importance The fruit is poisonous no matter how it is prepared or disguised

"The mature person is flexible, can defer to time, persons and circumstances He can show tolerance, he can be patient, and above all he has the qualities of adaptability and compromise" say Strecker and Appel Is family or school or church teaching in that direction? Almost never, and yet it is surely true that helping their children to reach this state of maturity successfully is the first responsibility of each generation Only when this has been done successfully can we hope to have enough people able to see and think clearly and freely enough to be able to prevent the race going on as we have gone, from slaughter to bigger and better slaughter

Psychiatrists everywhere have spent their lives trying, more and more successfully with a variety of methods, to help individuals who are in trouble to approach near enough to this state of maturity to be able to live comfortably for themselves and for the group, but surely it would be more advantageous to the world for psychiatrists to go into the preventive field where the big job needs to be done The training of children is making a thousand neurotics for every one that psychiatrists can hope to help with psychotherapy To produce a generation of mature citizens is the biggest and most necessary job any country could undertake, and the reward in saving of misery and suffering would be colossal

The re-interpretation and eventually eradication of the concept of right and wrong which has been the basis of child training, the substitution of intelligent and rational thinking for faith in the certainties of the old people, these are the belated objectives of practically all effective psychotherapy Would they not be legitimate objectives of original education? Would it not be sensible to stop imposing our local prejudices and faiths on children and give them all sides of every question so that in their own good time they may have the ability to size things up, and make their own decisions

The suggestion that we should stop teaching children moralities and rights and wrongs and instead protect their original intellectual integrity has of course to be met by an outcry of heretic or iconoclast, such as was raised against Galileo for finding another planet, and against those who claimed the world was round, and against the truths of evolution, and against Christ's re-interpretation of the Hebrew God, and against any attempt to change the mistaken old ways or ideas The pretense is made, as it has been made in relation to the

finding of any extension of truth, that to do away with right and wrong would produce uncivilized people, immorality, lawlessness and social chaos. The fact is that most psychiatrists and psychologists and many other respectable people have escaped from these moral chains and are able to observe and think freely. Most of the patients they have treated successfully have done the same and yet they show no signs of social or personal degeneration, no lack of social responsibility, no tendency toward social anarchy. This bugbear has no basis in fact whatever. We all recognize these reactions as those of the immature, the inferior, the guilty, which are not found in the mature, integrated personality. Freedom from moralities means freedom to observe, to think and behave sensibly, to the advantage of the person and of the group, free from outmoded types of loyalties and from the magic fears of our ancestors.

If the race is to be freed from its crippling burden of good and evil it must be psychiatrists who take the original responsibility. This is a challenge which must be met. If psychiatrists decide to do nothing about it but continue in the futility of psychotherapy only, that too is a decision and the responsibility for the results is still theirs. What the world needs from psychiatry is honest, simple and clear thinking, talking and writing. It needs the same from psychology, sociology, economics and politics. Clear and honest thinking can almost always be expressed in simple words which are understandable by the people who matter in a democracy. The people who matter are the teachers, the young mothers and fathers, the parent-teacher associations, youth groups, service clubs, schools and colleges, the churches and Sunday schools—everyone who can be reached and given help toward intellectual freedom and honesty for themselves and for the children whose future depends on them. Can we psychiatrists give up our protective device of hiding behind a specific, difficult and variable vocabulary to avoid our obvious responsibility?

The battle, if it is to be undertaken, will be long and difficult but truth will prevail—whenever enough people want it to. With luck we have perhaps fifteen or even twenty years before the outbreak of the next world war if we remain as we are, twenty years in which to change the dearest certainties of enough of the human race, twenty years in which to root out and destroy the oldest and most flourishing parasitical growth in the world, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, so that man may learn to preserve his most precious heritage, his innocence and intellectual freedom, twenty years in which to remove the necessity for the perverse satisfactions to be found in warfare, and to ensure that enough people everywhere do not close their eyes to the awful threats facing them as we did from 1910 to 1914 and 1917, and from 1933 to 1939 and 1941.

We are the horrible example. We are the people who fight wars every fifteen or twenty years. We must at whatever cost prevent our children and their children from being as we have been, but freedom from the tyranny of these faiths and fears is not to be gained in one generation.

It is therefore necessary that, for so long as it may take to change the bringing up of children in enough of the world, our close watch on each other and everyone in the world should not be relaxed for a moment. Let us all be prepared, not for another like the last war with navies and armies and airforces, but for the *next* war with rockets and atomic bombs and all the mobilized power of our laboratories. These are the weapons of the future and with them the whole

world can be reached from any place on the earth in some minutes. The people who definitely do not want to fight any more wars must promise annihilation to any nation which starts to fight and must be prepared immediately and ruthlessly to carry out that promise without parley or negotiation. This involves the continual upkeep of widely dispersed atomic rocket stations covering the whole world and a continual high pressure research program to discover ever more efficient methods of killing to keep ahead of any possible competition. This must go on until we, all the people, are re-educated to be able to live in peace together, until we are free to observe clearly and to think and behave sensibly.

The most important thing in the world today is the bringing up of children. It is not a job for economic or emotional misfits, for frightened, inferiority-ridden men and women seeking a safe, respectable and quickly attainable social and emotional status, nor for girls nilling in their time before marriage. Fortunately there are recent signs of intellectual stirrings amongst teachers which give some hope. To be allowed to teach children should be the sign of the final approval of society. The present scale of values is clearly illustrated by the disparity between teachers' salaries and those of movie actresses or football coaches. I am reminded of a group whose responsibility was the reclamation, training and rehabilitation of all the unmarried mothers in a certain community. The procedure was to have an "IQ" done and then to train the girl according to a simple chart. The upper levels rated various types of useful training. Those at the bottom, not fit for anything else, were trained as nursemaids, to bring up children. Thus, hundreds of defenceless children in that large community have been brought up by moronic unmarried mothers. Because these are psycho-pathological matters, psychiatrists simply have to take the responsibility of interpretation and initiative.

Can such a program of re-education or of a new kind of education be charted? I would not presume to go so far, except to suggest that psychology and sociology and simple psychopathology, the sciences of living, should be made available to all the people by being taught to all children in primary and secondary schools, while the study of such things as trigonometry, Latin, religions and others of specialist concern should be left to universities.

Only so, I think, can we help our children to carry their responsibilities as world citizens as we have not been able to do. Only so can we prevent their having to live in a world of fear and chaos and cruelty and death, far more horrible than we can know.

We have never had a really peaceful society in the world, but only short interludes of forgetting and then frantic preparation between wars. Can the world learn to live at peace? I think so, but only if individual psychiatrists and psychologists can live up to Strecker and Appel's definition,—“Basically maturity represents a wholesome amalgamation of two things, one, dissatisfaction with the status quo, which calls forth aggressive, constructive effort, and two, social concern and devotion.” If we cannot, the job will be left to what survivors there may be after the next war, or to intellectually more honest and braver people who may get a chance some generations later. With the other human sciences, psychiatry must now decide what is to be the immediate future of the human race. No one else can. And this is the prime responsibility of psychiatry.

THE RESEARCH PAPER

SHAKSPERE AND THE IRELAND FORGERIES¹

by Derk Bodde

The following research paper (Number 2 of the Harvard Honors Theses in English) is included as an excellent example of fact gathering, weighing of evidence, and composition by an undergraduate. While it is not to be supposed that most undergraduates could equal Mr Bodde's paper, his careful use of the best methods of documentation and interpretation may be successfully followed by all serious students. Moreover, this paper, besides illustrating the technique of research, is intrinsically interesting and worth while as an article on a popularly little known phase of Shakespearean history.

THE DESIRE to imitate what is fine and beautiful in life, as well as, unfortunately, what may be the very reverse of this, is one of the fundamental traits of human nature. It is a characteristic that appears, in some degree at least, in almost everything that has been done by mankind. Indeed, we could not escape from it, even if we wished.

But mere imitation, for certain men of a self-loving and egotistical nature, is not enough. For these men, the step from the direct imitation of the works of a great creator to the actual forgery of these works is a small one that is readily undertaken. And this statement is no less true of literature than of the other arts. It is not surprising, then, that many cases of forgery may be found in the annals of English literature, of which not the least prominent are forgeries of the works of William Shakspeare. But what is really astonishing is the nearly complete, if but temporary, success that has attached itself to well-nigh every such imitation of a man who, by all critics, has been deemed to be inimitable. It is a striking illustration of the truth of the old adage, *Populus vult decipi et discipitur* (The public wants to be deceived and is deceived).

Of all the Shakspeare forgeries, by far the most spectacular and daring were those which were poured forth upon the English public during the year 1795 and the first half of 1796, and which consisted of deeds, wills, letters, and other documents, all supposed to have come from the hands of Shakspeare and his contemporaries. These culminated in the appearance of a hitherto unknown historical play of Shakspeare's called *Vortigern*, which was actually produced at Drury Lane Theatre by Richard Sheridan, then owner and manager of the theatre. That the hero of these impostures, William-Henry Ireland, a boy only seventeen or eighteen years of age, who possessed merely a superficial knowledge of the literature of the Elizabethan period, should have succeeded for

¹ Reprinted by permission of the President and Fellows of Harvard College

almost a year and a half in keeping all England in a fever of excitement, and in duping many of the greatest literary critics of the day, seems almost incredible

Yet it is on record that James Boswell, after having swallowed a tumbler of warm brandy and water, knelt down with his customary extravagance before Ireland's collection of forgeries, saying, "I now kiss the invaluable relics of our bard, and thanks to God that I have lived to see them!"² And even critics of such prominence as Samuel Parr and Joseph Warton were so deceived by a pretended "Confession of Faith" of Shakspeare's (in which the Almighty is compared to a "sweete Chickenne," of all creatures!) that after inspecting it one of them exclaimed to the elder Ireland, "Sir, we have very fine passages in our church service, and our litany abounds with beauties, but here, sir, here is a man who has distanced us all!"³ From high to low, everyone was interested in the forgeries, and undoubtedly a large part of the English literary public was deceived by them

It seems almost unbelievable that Edmond Malone, one of the foremost Shaksperian commentators of his day, should feel it necessary to write a volume of four hundred pages to expose what any schoolboy today would detect in a few minutes. I fear few of us could refrain from laughing outright at such a line as⁴

Thatte thou haste perrepennedycularelye felle

And what would anyone today say about the following professed "Address to the Readers" of *King Lear*? This states that the play⁵

Isse fromme Masterre Hollinnshedde I have inne somme lyttle deparretedde fromme hymme butte thatte Libbertye will notte I trust be blamedde bye nyie gentle Readerres

Malone proved, what there should not have been a moment's need for proving, that the spelling of these lines, characterized as it is by redundant e's and consonants, belonged to no period of English literature whatsoever

Before condemning these men too harshly for their credulity, however, we should take into account the time in which they lived. It was an age of literary imposture and deceit. In 1760 James Macpherson had published poems which he pretended were translations of the Gaelic poems of Ossian, and in 1764 Thomas Chatterton, the "wonderful boy," imitated Chaucer's language in the Rowley Poems, which he said were copied from manuscripts discovered in Bristol. Shakspeare himself had not been neglected, for in 1728 Lewis Theobald had appeared with a supposed lost play of Shakspeare's, aptly entitled *The Double Falsehood*, and in 1770 George Steevens had forged a letter purporting to be written by George Peele to Christopher Marlowe.

The factors which brought about these forgeries are not far to seek. During the second half of the eighteenth century there had come a tremendous revival

² W. H. Ireland, *Confessions*, New York, 1874, pp. 95 ff.

³ *Ibid.* pp. 67 ff.

⁴ W. H. Ireland, *Miscellaneous Papers and Legal Instruments*, ed. Samuel Ireland, 1796, p. 116.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

of interest in Elizabethan, and above all in medieval, literature, as part of the eighteenth-century movement toward Romanticism. Innumerable ballads and Gothic romances sprang into being, while such forgeries as the Rowley and Ossian poems are merely further evidences of the popular demand then existing for this type of literature. At the same time there was but slight knowledge of the old literature, due to the intervening classical age of Pope and Dryden. Textual study as a science had only begun, and paleography was almost unknown, so that it was a comparatively simple matter to palm off a forgery as a genuine document.

Coincident with the medieval revival, there had come an enormous awakening of interest in Shakspeare, though he was still attacked for his violation of the unities, and for the "lowness" of such scenes as that of the porter in *Macbeth*, and of the grave-diggers in *Hamlet*. David Garrick, the actor, was the prime inciter of this enthusiasm, and in 1769 led a crowd of more or less intelligent worshipers in a somewhat ridiculous celebration of Shakspeare's birthday at Stratford-on-Avon, which would have been more successful had it not been dampened by a pouring rain. Shakspeare's famous mulberry tree had been cut down some years before, and fortunately for the souvenir hunters among the Garrick celebrators, this tree had been bought by a Stratford tradesman, and converted into candlesticks, goblets, and other useless things, sufficient to have outfitted a large army—and all made, of course, from the one mulberry tree.

During this period self-appointed critics sprang up on every side, who criticized Shakspeare and each other with equal warmth, while garrets, bookstores, and libraries were all ransacked for traces of the great poet. With the public in such a mood, perhaps it is not so surprising after all that the Ireland forgeries should have succeeded.

In the following pages I intend to give some account of the whole Ireland case, with particular attention to the two false plays, *Vortigern* and *Henry II*, because it seems to me that these plays have a definite place in the history of Shaksperian criticism. Their author, William-Henry Ireland, was born in London, probably in 1777. There is a certain doubt concerning his legitimacy,⁶ and he himself hints of a mystery concerning his birth in a letter of January, 1797, written to his father. In another letter of December 13, 1796, he signs himself as "W. H. Freeman," evidently believing that the Ireland housekeeper by that name was his mother. He was commonly called "Sam" by his father, after an elder brother who had died, and often signed himself as "S. W. H. Ireland."

The father, Samuel Ireland, had started life as a weaver in Spitalfields, London, but turned from this to the selling of old books and prints in a shop which he established on Norfolk Street, Strand. Before long he took to making prints himself. A collection of etchings after Hogarth which he published has considerable interest, because some of the prints are not by Hogarth at all, and may quite possibly be intentional forgeries. Samuel Ireland's hobby was the

⁶ In a copy of W. H. Ireland's *Authentic Account of the Shaksperian Manuscripts* 1796, there is a manuscript note (unsigned) stating that W. H. Ireland was baptized at St. Clement Dane's under the name of *William Henry Irwin* and that his mother was a married woman separated from her husband. But there is no such entry in the church register between 1772 and 1779 inclusive. The rumor is discredited by T. J. Arnold, *Fraser's Magazine*, August, 1860, p. 167.

collecting of old books, particularly any dealing with Shakspeare, and undoubtedly his admiration for Shakspeare did much to influence his son's career

William-Henry, after spending four years of his boyhood in France, returned to England, where he was articled to William Bingley, conveyancer in chancery at New Inn. His interest in old books now became equal to his father's, and Grose's *Ancient Armoury*, Percy's *Reliques*, and Herbert Croft's *Love and Madness* became his favorite reading. The latter book, which deals in part with the sad fate of Chatterton, had a profound effect on the young Ireland, and beyond doubt it was Chatterton's example, as well as the elder Ireland's admiration for anything Shaksperian, that inspired William-Henry in his first forgeries.

In 1794 Samuel Ireland spent a week with his son at Stratford-on-Avon while preparing his forthcoming *Picturesque Tour of the Warwickshire Avon*. During this visit the two were regaled with all sorts of untrue anecdotes about Shakspeare told them by John Jordan, a thoroughly unscrupulous carpenter with literary pretensions, who styled himself the "Stratford poet." After the return of the Irelands to London, we are told by William Henry,⁷ his father "would frequently assert, that such was his veneration for the bard [Shakspeare] that he would willingly give half his library to become possessed even of his signature alone."

With these words still in mind, and solely, as he claims, to give his father pleasure, William-Henry, who was apparently allowed considerable freedom by his employer, and who had access to many old wills and legal documents, in December, 1794, first conceived the idea of forging Shakspeare's signature. His first act was to trace the signature from a facsimile published in the Steevens edition of Shakspeare. Thus armed, he drew up a lease purporting to be between William Shakspeare, John Hemynge, and Michael Fraser, for this purpose cutting off a piece of parchment from an old rent roll, manufacturing special wax seals to which he gave an ancient appearance by rubbing them with soot and coal ashes, and using special ink that had been prepared for him by a journeyman bookbinder some time before. The presentation of this lease to the elder Ireland has been amusingly described by William-Henry himself.⁸

I drew it forth and presented it, saying, "There, sir! What do you think of that?" Mr Ireland, opening the parchment, regarded it for a length of time with the closest scrutiny; he then examined the seals, and afterwards proceeded to fold up the instrument, and on presenting it to me he replied, "I certainly believe it to be a genuine document of the time." Returning it immediately into Mr Ireland's hand, I then made answer, "If you think it so, I beg your acceptance of it." Mr Ireland, immediately taking the keys of his library from his pocket, presented them to me, saying, "It is impossible for me to express the pleasure you have given me by the presentation of this deed: there are the keys of my book case, go and take from it whatsoever you please, I shall refuse you nothing." I instantly returned the keys into Mr Ireland's hand, saying, "I thank you, sir, but I shall accept of nothing." Mr Ireland, rising from his chair, selected from his books a scarce tract, with engraved plates, called *Stokes the Vaulting Master*, which he peremptorily insisted I

⁷ *Confessions*, p. 45

⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 50 ff.

should accept And such was the precise manner of my presentation of the fictitious deed between Shakspeare and Fraser, that being the first document produced

Emboldened by this success, Ireland produced numerous other forgeries during the next months, all of which attracted wide attention Among these were Shakspeare's "Profession of Faith,"⁹ written with the purpose of proving Shakspeare a Protestant, and a letter of Shakspeare to Ann Hathaway containing a supposed lock of Shakspeare's hair!¹⁰ These papers were all characterized by the same ridiculous spelling (an imitation of Chatterton's archaisms) as seen in the examples given above, and contained numerous errors of fact as well as structure Yet they were gravely accepted as genuine by the greater part of the literary critics who inspected them

In February, 1795, the elder Ireland opened an exhibition of these manuscripts at his home on Norfolk Street, which was to last for more than a year It was during this month that Boswell, Parr, and others made the ridiculous statements that have already been alluded to, and on February 25, Parr, Boswell, Herbert Croft, Isaac Heard, Henry Pve, then poet laureate, and sixteen other prominent men, met at Ireland's home and signed a statement testifying to their belief in the following papers¹¹

- 1 Shakspeare's "Profession of Faith"
- 2 Shakspeare's copy of his letter to Lord Southampton, and Lord Southampton's answer
- 3 Shakspeare's letter to Richard Cowley, with a pen-and-ink sketch of himself
- 4 Shakspeare's letter to Ann Hathaway, with a lock of his hair
- 5 Stanzas to Ann Hathaway
- 6 Shakspeare's note of hand on John Hemyng, with J H's receipt
- 7 Lease Shakspeare to Michael Fraser and wife
- 8 Agreement between Shakspeare and Henry Condell
- 9 Agreement between Shakspeare and John Lowine
- 10 Drawings of Shakspeare and Shylock on reverse sides of one piece of paper
- 11 Letter from Queen Elizabeth to Shakspeare authenticated by himself

Naturally young Ireland was eagerly questioned as to where he had obtained all these papers Consequently he was forced to invent a story about a mysterious "Mr H," a rich gentleman of a very retiring disposition, whom he had met one day at a coffee-house, and at whose home he had later discovered the Shakspeare-Fraser lease, and all the following fabrications Of course it was wondered why any man in his right senses should give to Ireland papers of such value, but Ireland silenced this objection by producing a series of papers tending to show that there had been a close connection between Shakspeare

⁹ Suggested to William Henry by the Profession of Faith of John Shakspeare, father of William Shakspeare, which was fabricated by the untrustworthy Jordan, but taken as genuine by Ireland (See *Confessions*, pp 56 ff)

¹⁰ This aroused debate as to whether human hair could remain preserved over so long a period! (*Confessions* pp 84 ff)

¹¹ Samuel Ireland, *Vindication of His Conduct*, 1796, pp 20 ff

and a certain "Masterre William Henrye Irelande" of Elizabethan days. He climaxed these by bringing forward a "deed of gift" in which Shakspeare stated that while he was rowing on the Thames his boat had been upset by an intoxicated waterman, and he himself had been saved from drowning only through the efforts of "Masterre Irelande," on whom he bestowed his papers as a reward. Our young forger now had only to announce to a startled world that further research showed him to be the descendant of this heroic Elizabethan Ireland, and his claim to the forgeries was completely established.¹²

One of the most important forgeries that Ireland brought forward during this time was a completely emended transcript of *King Lear*. His statement on this is worth quoting as showing a typical eighteenth-century attitude toward Shakspeare. He says:¹³ "As I scrupulously avoided in copying the play of *Lear*, the insertion of that ribaldry which is so frequently found in the compositions of our bard, it was generally conceived that my manuscript proved beyond doubt that Shakspeare was a much more finished writer than had ever before been imagined." A few pages of *Hamlet* were made over in a similar manner, but this task became irksome to Ireland and was soon discontinued. The collected forgeries were published by Samuel Ireland in December, 1795,¹⁴ almost exactly a year after the appearance of the first hoax, under the title *Miscellaneous Papers and Legal Instruments under the hand and seal of William Shakspeare*.

Meanwhile young Ireland announced the discovery of an entirely new play of Shakspeare's, entitled *Vortigern*, which was excluded from the *Miscellaneous Papers* only because it was later to be played upon the stage. If, as Ireland claims, he was under eighteen when he wrote this drama,¹⁵ it must be looked upon as an extraordinary achievement, despite its many shortcomings. It was followed by another play, *Henry II*, written in the short space of ten weeks, only three pages of which Ireland bothered to transcribe into his simulated handwriting, owing to the fact that meanwhile the whole imposture had been discovered.¹⁶ Had there been no discovery, it was his intention to have written a series of dramas dating from the time of William the Conqueror to Queen Elizabeth, and dealing with every reign that Shakspeare had not touched.

It must not be supposed, however, that the forgeries had proved universally successful. There were some newspapers that had denounced the whole business from the very first.¹⁷ An early believer, James Boaden, later became a skeptic, and placed the *Oracle*, of which he was editor, at the disposal of the doubters. Early in 1796 he published a long *Letter to George Steevens*, which

¹² For a complete account, see *Confessions*, pp. 228 ff.

¹³ *Ibid.* p. 118.

¹⁴ The title page of the *Miscellaneous Papers* gives the date of publication as 1796. But Edmond Malone, on the title page of his *Inquiry into the Authenticity of Miscellaneous Papers and Legal Documents* 1796, states that Ireland's book was published December 24, 1795.

¹⁵ W. H. Ireland states this as a fact in his *Confessions*, pp. 135 ff. He also says that he wrote the play within a period of two months. Samuel Ireland, in the Preface to *Miscellaneous Papers*, p. vi, states that W. H. Ireland was under nineteen years of age when he first discovered the forgeries.

¹⁶ The British Museum has a manuscript copy entirely in the simulated hand, probably a later manuscript made by Ireland to be sold to the curious public, after his detection.

¹⁷ Cf. *Morning Herald*, February 17, 1795.

attacked Samuel Ireland, and which brought several defenses in return—viz., *A Comparative View of the Opinions of James Boaden*, by Ireland's friend, Matthew Wyatt, *Shakspeare Manuscripts in Possession of Mr Ireland*, by Francis Webb, and *Vortigern under Consideration*, by W C Oulton Ritson and Steevens were among the skeptics, but to Edmond Malone, with his lengthy *Inquiry into the Authenticity of Certain Miscellaneous Papers and Legal Instruments*, must go the lion's share of the credit for the exposure. Meanwhile, the peculiar orthography of the forgeries was mercilessly parodied by journalists, and in the autumn of 1795 the *Morning Herald* published a mock version of *Vortigern* by H B Dudley, which Samuel Ireland was forced to warn the public was not the true play.

Despite all this ridicule, the preparations for the presentation of *Vortigern* at Drury Lane Theatre went steadily forward. Sheridan readily accepted the drama, merely remarking that Shakspeare must have been very young when it was written.¹⁸ On April 2, 1796, came the great night of its performance, with Mrs Jordan in the part of Flavia, and the great John Kemble in the title rôle. But from the first the play seemed doomed to failure. Mrs Siddons had already refused the part of Edmunda on the obviously specious grounds that she had a cold, and Kemble, whom W H Ireland later blamed for the failure of the play, had vainly tried to have it presented on April 1, April Fools' Day.

The scene in front of the theatre on the evening of the performance has perhaps rarely been equaled. It is uncertain whether Malone's *Inquiry* was published before or after the performance of *Vortigern*,¹⁹ but in any case sandwich men with handbills paraded Drury Lane on his behalf, warning the vast crowd that had assembled that the play was a fraud. Other bills distributed by the Ireland faction asked the British public to lay aside prejudice and give the performance fair play. After the drama had started, its inanities soon became apparent. Early in the evening an unhappy incident occurred when Phillimore, in the part of Horsus, a Saxon general, is supposed to be killed in combat. Of this scene W H Ireland has given an amusing account.²⁰

That gentleman, on receiving the deadly wound (which proved, indeed, a *deadly blow* to my play), either from prior tuition or chance (I will not pretend to decide which) so placed his unfortunate carcass that on the falling of the drop curtain he was literally divided between the audience and his brethren of the sock and buskin, his legs, etc., being towards the spectators, and his head, etc., inside the curtain, which concealed them from observation. This, however, was not the only calamity for as the wooden roller at the bottom of the curtain was rather ponderous, Mr Phillimore groaned beneath the unwelcome burden, and finding his brethren somewhat dilatory in extricating him, he adopted the more natural expedient of extricating himself.

At the recital of the line²¹

¹⁸ *Confessions* pp 138 ff

¹⁹ Samuel Ireland, in his Preface to *Vortigern*, 1799, p 1v, states that Malone's *Inquiry* appeared on the day before the presentation of *Vortigern*. But W H Ireland states that it did not appear till afterward (*Confessions*, p 141).

²⁰ *Confessions* pp 153 ff

²¹ *Vortigern* 1799, V, 11, p 64

And when this solemn mockery is ended,

which Kemble pronounced in as guttural and funereal a tone as possible, there was a bedlam of jeers, howls, and catcalls lasting for ten minutes. No sooner was quiet restored than he again delivered the line, with the same result. Of course there was no doubt as to the failure of the play, and at its conclusion the *School for Scandal* was announced for the succeeding night.

Malone's *Inquiry* gave the deathblow to the whole imposture, and a few weeks after the damnation of *Vortigern*, W. H. Ireland was examined by a committee of the believers. He repeated his story about the mysterious "Mr. H.," but finding that this was useless, confessed everything to Albany Wallis, a lawyer who was the friend of the elder Ireland. On May 29, 1796, he suddenly and secretly left his father's house, and never saw him again, except for one meeting at Wallis's.

Meanwhile the distress of the elder Ireland at the outcome of the whole case was pitiable. Everyone felt firmly convinced that he had played the leading part in the production of the forgeries, and he was mercilessly lampooned in all the newspapers. At first he refused to listen to his son's confession, saying that William-Henry was incapable of producing the papers attributed to him. The publication of *An Authentic Account of the Shaksperian Manuscripts*, 1796, in which W. H. Ireland gave a brief account of the imposture and stated that his father had been in no way involved in it, only brought forth an unwarranted statement from George Steevens that this had been prearranged between father and son to "whitewash the senior culprit."²² Bewildered by these attacks, Samuel Ireland, in November, 1796, published a *Vindication of His Conduct*, in which he defended himself against charges of willful deception. After this came his *Investigation of Mr. Malone's Claim to the Character of Scholar and Critic*, a bitter attack on Malone. Other refutations, apologies, and vindications followed, the most important of which is George Chalmers's learned *Apology for the Believers in the Shakspeare Papers*, 1797. The shock of the whole business very probably hastened the elder Ireland's death, which occurred in July, 1800. He never became reconciled to his son, and the latter's appeals for money were unanswered.

The question as to whether W. H. Ireland was, or was not, the sole producer of the forgeries, is an interesting one.²³ It is certain that at least one other man, a Montague Talbot, then studying law in London, was inextricably involved in the affair. This man actually caught the young forger in the act of producing one of his hoaxes,²⁴ and thereafter was at least associated with Ireland in the forgeries, if he did not actually take a hand in them himself. But both he and W. H. Ireland absolutely deny his participation in *Vortigern* and *Henry II*.²⁵ Probably he had only a slight part in the whole affair, for shortly after his detection of Ireland he left London for Dublin, where he became an actor. It also seems probable that Albany Wallis, the lawyer to whom W. H.

²² John Bower Nichols, *Literary Illustrations*, 1848, vii, 8.

²³ For a good account of this aspect of the case, see C. M. Ingleby's *Shakspeare, the Man and the Book*, 1881, ii, 142 ff.

²⁴ *Confessions*, pp. 120 ff.

²⁵ See *Confessions*, pp. 131 ff., and Samuel Ireland's *Vindication*, pp. 32 ff.

Ireland made his first confession, had some prior knowledge of the imposture²⁶

As for Samuel Ireland, the case against him rests chiefly on his publication of the false Hogarth etchings, his association with John Jordan, the dishonest and unscrupulous Stratford poet, and the unlikelihood that anyone so closely associated as he was with his son could long have remained ignorant of the dishonest actions of the latter. An anonymous article in *Willis's Current Notes* for December, 1855,²⁷ written by one who claims to have known W. H. Ireland well, states that Samuel Ireland had charge of the whole conspiracy, that his eldest daughter wrote the imitations, and that William-Henry acted as a mere copier. Two replies to this article,²⁸ both acquitting Samuel Ireland of complicity, were published soon afterward. Their conclusions are based on the fact that Samuel Ireland, even on his deathbed,²⁹ asserted his complete innocence, and that William-Henry confirmed this assertion in three different publications: his *Authentic Account of the Shaksperian Manuscripts*, of 1796, his *Confessions* of 1805, and his Preface to the second edition of *Vortigern*, published in 1832, three years before his death. All these statements are made with an earnestness and apparent sincerity that it is difficult to disregard. On the whole it seems safe to absolve Samuel Ireland from complicity in the imposture, and to look on him as a trusting old man whose credulous nature and lack of critical discrimination involved him in a very unfortunate situation.

As for the redoubtable William-Henry, he spent the early summer of 1796, after leaving his father's house, in wandering through Wales and Gloucestershire. At Bristol he visited some of the scenes associated with the life of Chatterton. During this time his father refused all his appeals for money, and he was in a well-nigh penniless condition. For some years he eked out a precarious livelihood through selling imitations of the famous forgeries, and doing literary hack work of one kind or another. Finally, he succeeded in obtaining fairly regular employment from the London publishers. On April 17, 1835, he died, being then fifty-eight years old. He had been twice married, and was survived by a single daughter.³⁰

Ireland's copious literary works give abundant evidence that he was capable of writing the forgeries attributed to him. His verses show some literary facility, and his political squibs have some power of sarcasm. He wrote several lengthy novels, among them *Gondex, the Monk*, and *The Abbess*, as well as numerous narrative poems, such as the *Fisher Boy*, the *Sailor Boy*, etc. In his later years he produced a *Life of Napoleon* in four volumes, and wrote other works dealing with France. *Neglected Genius*, a book of poems in which he imitates the styles of Spenser, Milton, and especially Chatterton, holds interest as illustrating Ireland's imitative faculty. His *Confessions*, published in 1805 as an elabo-

²⁶ See Ingleby's *Shakspeare*, pp. 143 ff.

²⁷ Quoted by Ingleby, pp. 156 ff.

²⁸ These replies appear in *Fraser's Magazine* for August, 1860, and in the *London Review* for October, 1860.

²⁹ Dr. John Latham, who attended Samuel Ireland in his last illness, states in his book, *Diabetes* 1810, p. 176, that the latter told him on his deathbed that he was absolutely ignorant of the deceit of the Ireland forgeries.

³⁰ For a more complete account of W. H. Ireland's life, see Sidney Lee's article on Samuel Ireland in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

ration of the *Authentic Account* of 1796, gives an amusing, though perhaps not always trustworthy, account of the forgeries

Ireland certainly possessed a talent for writing in a rapid, facile, and pleasing manner. But, like most imitators, he saw little beyond externals, possessed only slight depth of thought or originality himself, and could merely mirror weakly the phrases and ideas of others. Yet one cannot but regret that his unfortunate proclivity for deception prevented him from attaining what might have been a respectable literary career. Worse plays than *Vortigern* have succeeded upon the stage, but in competing with one of the world's greatest poets there could, of course, be only one result. Possibly William-Henry's dishonest streak was an inherited one (as shown in the Hogarth forgeries of his father), but more probably it was due to his own egotism and love for fame and *éclat*. Till the end of his life he openly boasted of his forgeries, and expressed resentment toward the men who had exposed him.

Certainly Ireland's youth cannot excuse him, for in 1805, when he was twenty-eight years old, with the lesson of the earlier forgeries confronting him, he published another which few commentators appear to have noticed, entitled, *Effusions of Love from Chatelar to Mary Queen of Scotland*. This purports to be a series of outpourings written by the lovesick French youth Chatelar just before his execution. Ireland claims to have translated it from an ancient Gallic manuscript discovered in the Scotch College at Paris.

The whole history of the Ireland forgeries illustrates the ease with which literary imposture could be practiced during the late eighteenth century. An analytical study of the two Ireland-Shakspere plays, *Vortigern* and *Henry II*, brings out this point even more clearly. These plays, it seems to me, are something more than mere literary curiosities, because they show what the people of their time conceived Shakspere to be. In writing them Ireland certainly did not follow Sidney's dictum to "look in thy heart and write." On the contrary, he aimed to make the plays as much like Shakspere's as possible, and he succeeded in convincing enough people of their genuineness to give the dramas real interest for us today. As I shall endeavor to prove, Ireland not only frequently plagiarized Shakspere directly, showing that he possessed a good reading knowledge of Shakspere's plays, but he also succeeded in imitating certain of Shakspere's characteristic tricks and stylistic devices. He neglected other points of technique, however, and failed utterly to grasp Shakspere's inner spirit and meaning.

Both *Vortigern* and *Henry II* reflect many of the characteristic concepts of their era. It is a well-known fact that most young authors, before they have succeeded in individualizing themselves, are strongly influenced by popular thought and taste. The young Wordsworth writing his first poems in the manner of Pope, and the youthful Keats treading directly on the heels of Leigh Hunt, are sufficient examples. Ireland was no exception to this rule. His two plays contain certain ideas on God, liberty, and humanitarianism, quite in keeping with his own era of the French Revolution, but completely foreign to Shakspere's own dramas. It is this peculiar interlarding of Shakspereanisms with ideas that are utterly incongruous with Shakspere that makes *Vortigern* and *Henry II* such interesting documents of their time.

Ireland borrowed the plot of *Vortigern* from Holinshed's *Chronicle*. As the play opens, Constantius, King of Britain, has signed over half his kingdom to his favorite, Vortigern. Vortigern, fired by ambition, gains the entire kingdom by having Constantius murdered, but Aurelius and Uter, sons of Constantius, hearing of the murder while at Rome, go to Scotland, where they raise an army which they lead against the usurper. Meanwhile Flavia, daughter of Vortigern, and in love with Aurelius, flees from the court with her brother Pascentius in order to escape a forced marriage, and joins the invading army. Vortigern has already obtained Hengist and Horsus as Saxon allies against the invaders. He falls in love with Rowena, Hengist's daughter (through whom Hengist hopes to be able to depose Vortigern), and divorces Edmunda, his wife, who has become mad due to the absence of her children. In the battle between the forces of Vortigern and those of Aurelius and Uter, Hengist is killed, Rowena poisons herself, and Vortigern is overcome, but is spared from death through Flavia's pleading. Aurelius becomes King of Britain, and takes Flavia to be his Queen.

The plot of *Henry II*, which Ireland neglected to divide into acts and scenes, is less complicated. Henry II, hearing that Stephen Langton has died, returns from France and accepts the English throne. Under him Thomas a Becket rises rapidly in favor until he becomes Archbishop of Canterbury. Meanwhile, Henry falls in love with the beautiful Rosamond, daughter of Lord de Clifford, and abandons Queen Eleanor for his new love. Enraged by his conduct, Eleanor with her sons forms a faction against the King, which she persuades the ambitious Becket to join. Soon afterwards, Becket falls into disgrace. He is murdered in the Cathedral of Canterbury by four knights who take too literally certain angry words uttered in haste by Henry. Civil war follows, in which Henry is triumphant, and imprisons Eleanor, who has poisoned her rival Rosamond. But Eleanor's sons are pardoned for their part in the revolt.

Both plays show many distinct resemblances to plays of Shakspeare. Vortigern, like Macbeth, kills his king, seizes the throne, descends from one crime to another, and is finally overcome by the sons of the king he has murdered. Comparison might also be made between Vortigern's wife and Lady Macbeth. Both become mad, but the psychological causes underlying Lady Macbeth's madness are conspicuously absent in the case of Edmunda, who is also a virtuous character. We cannot help feeling that Ireland introduced a mad scene solely because he knew that one existed in *Macbeth*, and therefore felt that it must be peculiarly Shaksperian. A later scene in which Edmunda recovers her senses is, of course, derived from the famous scene in *King Lear* in which the old mad King is awakened before his daughter Cordelia. Also, Constantius's gift of half his kingdom to Vortigern naturally suggests Lear's partition of his kingdom between his daughters. The killing of Constantius by hired murderers is strikingly similar to the murder of Clarence in *Richard III*. And when Flavia goes wandering through the country, disguised as a man and accompanied by her brother Pascentius, we are reminded of Imogen's similar wanderings in *Cymbeline*. In the same way, the episode in which Pascentius kills Horsus, while protecting Flavia, naturally suggests the killing of Oswald by Edgar in *King Lear*. Both Pascentius and Edgar are noblemen disguised as

peasants, and from both Horsus and Oswald is obtained important information

Henry II as a play marks a considerable advance over *Vortigern*, yet if *Vortigern* is a modified *Macbeth*, *Henry II* is almost equally a modified *King Henry VIII*. In this play Becket, like Wolsey in *Henry VIII*, desires to obtain the Papacy, and falls to disaster through his inordinate ambition. The scene between Becket and Henry II, in which Becket loses the royal favor, is strikingly similar to the scene in which Wolsey falls from power. And the corresponding scenes immediately following, between Becket and his servant Salisbury, and Wolsey and his servant Cromwell, are even more closely parallel. Likewise, both Henry II and Henry VIII fall in love, the one with Rosamond de Clifford, the other with Anne Bullen. Both manage to dispose of the queens they already have, Henry II through imprisonment, Henry VIII through divorce.

Both *Vortigern* and *Henry II* contain many weaknesses. The sparing of Vortigern's life by Aurelius is a silly piece of sentimentality typical of an age that could enjoy such a mangled version of *King Lear* as Tate's. And surely the moral code is a poor one that portrays Henry's criminal love for Rosamond as a sweet idyllic thing, and allows Henry's sons, when they are captured in battle, to shift the whole blame for the conspiracy on their mother's shoulders, in a way that is utterly cowardly and despicable. Queen Eleanor, who after all had some justification for poisoning her rival, is sent off to prison, while her unlovely sons are freely pardoned, and Henry's final speech grates on our sensibilities by the light, almost flippant, way in which he dismisses the whole affair, and announces his intention to go roving once more through France.

But Ireland was not only guilty of general borrowing. He also made direct use of words and phrases occurring in such plays as *Romeo and Juliet*, *Merchant of Venice*, *Henry IV*, Parts I and II, *Henry V*, *Henry VIII*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *King Lear*, and, above all, *Macbeth*.

These plagiarisms might well have aroused suspicion among the Ireland followers. But Ireland succeeded fairly well in imitating some of Shakspeare's outward forms and stylistic devices. The acts and scenes of *Vortigern* (there are none in *Henry II*) follow the Shaksperian system rather well, especially in certain of the shorter shifting battle sequences. Monologues, dialogues, and scenes of general action come at about the times and places when one might expect them. Shakspeare's fools are so well known that Ireland seems to have felt it necessary to introduce one into *Vortigern*, and as the worthy follower of Flavia and Pascentius during their flight from Vortigern's court, this fool succeeds well enough in imitating the fool in *King Lear*. He sings the same songs and utters the same nonsense. In fact, he is lacking in but one quality, which is the quality of being interesting.

In some of the smaller details of technique Ireland has not always been so successful. To be sure, he gives the concluding speech in *Vortigern*, appropriately enough, to Aurelius, and in *Henry II* to Henry, these being the highest ranking characters left alive. But in other respects how woefully does he fall short! Shakspeare often closes his soliloquies with rhyming couplets, yet the couplet is used only three times in *Vortigern*, and twice in *Henry II*. It is more probable that Ireland was using it in these instances simply because he had

happened to notice its occurrences in Shakspeare, thin that he was following any definite stylistic principle Ireland's choice of words is likewise erratic He employs some that had a different meaning during Elizabethan times, and others that did not exist during that period at all For example, the possessive pronoun "its" was only beginning to come into use during the Elizabethan era, and the word appears but five times in the *Winter's Tale*, the play in which Shakspeare employs it most frequently Yet "its" occurs four times in the first act of *Vortigern* alone To give Ireland full justice, it must be admitted that several times he does employ the word "his" in places in which the impersonal "its" would ordinarily be found

Ireland's style is also uncertain, and his two dramatic forgeries show plain evidences of haste and carelessness His blank verse is usually smooth enough, but at times becomes ragged and uneven Often it is padded with repetitious words (such as "Here, here," or "Now, now") in order to fill out the meter Yet occasionally one runs across lines, or even groups of lines, that have a real Shaksperian touch For example ³¹

Now is the cup of my ambition full!

Or the line ³²

And wrap him in the cloak of lasting night

Or ³³

The second comes, to mock my tortur'd soul,
With idiot laughter, ringing to mine ears

But such purple patches are invariably spoiled by being followed by words or phrases that are unpoetic, trivial, or utterly incongruous For example, the word *fat* in the following quotation spoils what might otherwise have been a good passage ³⁴

Whilst round my neck was twin'd a giant arm
So toughly *fat*, that one might say, indeed,
The sinews that did work it were of brass

And notice the following complete incongruity ³⁵

Or headlong we must *totter* down again

Until now, I have tried to show to what extent Ireland succeeded in imitating Shakspeare's form But there are certain passages in both *Vortigern* and *Henry II* that are interesting because they are so peculiarly characteristic of the late eighteenth century, and so completely foreign to Shakspeare's own thought and spirit For example, though what might be termed the "sentimentally romantic" eighteenth century conception of nature has little place in either *Vortigern* or *Henry II*, yet the latter play contains one passage that is distinctly romantic ³⁶

³¹ *Vort* I, 1, p 2

³² *Ibid*, V, 11, p 64

³³ *Hen* II, p 59

³⁴ *Ibid*, p 12

³⁵ *Ibid*, p 24

³⁶ *Ibid*, p 11

(*Rosamond enters with a book*)

Rosa Wherefore, shou'd I thus read the works of man?
Is not thy book, O! nature, sweeter far,
Can all the sound and studied argument,
Or the high speech of proud philosophy
Raise in this mind such grand, such heav'nly thoughts,
As the bright East, where the hot blazing sun,
Now mounting upward, 'gins his daily course,
Staining the firmament with crimson hue,
Or wou'd ye blur a thousand, thousand leaves,
You ne'er cou'd speak of beauty half so well
As yonder hyacinth! whose leaf is fring'd
With the big glitt'ring drop of crystal dew,
That trembles, moistens, and now melts away,
Farewell! thou blotted page, I'll read no more

The influence of the French Revolution is apparent in the following patriotic passage in which King Henry speaks of a brotherhood of equal Englishmen ⁸⁷

My friends and citizens! I thank ye all!
Not as a King, but as an Englishman
And brother We are all children alike,
One earth doth nourish us, one only blood
Runs through our veins, animates our bodies,
And is in property so passing rare,
It stamps ye on this earth so many gods!
From every nation, bring me forth one soul,
Place too an Englishman among the rest,
And if he carry not the mark so strong
That I do single him, and him alone,
May I ne'er look for happiness to come

English humanitarianism of the late eighteenth century appears in *Vortigern* in a speech in which Aurelius exclaims ⁸⁸

O God! why shou'd I, a mere speck on earth,
Tear thousands from their wives, children, and homes!
O! wherefore from this transitory sleep,
That now doth steal from them their inward cares,
Should I send thousands to cold dreary death?
'Tis true, I am a King, and what of that?
Is not life dear to them, as 'tis to me?
O! peasant, envy not the prince's lot,
Thy page in life's great book is not foul charg'd,
And like to ours besmear'd with dying breaths
O! had I lives myself enough to answer
The ravenous and greedy jaws of death,
That will on these my friends, my soldiers,
Such havoc make, and wanton gluttony!
Father of mercy, great God, spare this blood!

⁸⁷ *Ibid* pp 17 ff

⁸⁸ *Vort*, III, 11, pp 33 ff

And if I must alone receive the crown,
 Bedeck'd with purple gore, I here resign it

Unfortunately, both *Vortigern* and *Henry II* are overloaded with passages of a sickly sentimental cloying sweetness. A few such passages might not be objectionable, but to find them liberally sprinkled throughout the pages of both dramas becomes distinctly annoying. Appeals to God, professions of faith, prayers for Almighty guidance, and pleadings for gentle treatment in the next world, may be all very well in theological tracts and sermons. But they are distinctly out of place in dramas which purport to have been written by Shakspeare, a dramatist who has sedulously avoided the betrayal of his religious faith. It is thoroughly in accord with eighteenth-century morality that *Vortigern*, *Hengist*, and *Becket* should all repent of their manifold sins before meeting their fates, that *Vortigern's* life should be spared through the pleas of a frenzied daughter, and that *Henry* should pardon his weak-minded sons for their part in a conspiracy, while throwing their far nobler mother into prison. But this is not the way Shakspeare would have arranged things, a fact that Ireland simply failed to recognize.

Among the least offensive passages of this kind is one expressing the concept that we are all parts of one all-embracing universe.³⁹

Constantius Though thou has plac'd me sovereign over men,
 And on my brow hath fix'd a diadem,
 Yet am I subject still to human frailty,
 And naught can boast more than my meanest vassal
 How wisely hast thou fram'd thy work of nature,
 Even the smallest reptile hath its instinct,
 Aye, is as nicely form'd as man, himself
 Both too must die, both rot and come to dust
 Yet man hath one great property besides,
 A never fading, an immortal soul!
 Upon that thought I rest my happiness

But the finale to the murder scene in *Vortigern* is considerably worse.⁴⁰

Constantius (After murderer stabs him) Oh! I die, sweet Heaven receive my soul!
 Forgive, oh pardon this his crime!
 I come! bliss! bliss! is my reward for ever (Dies)

In what has gone before I have tried to point out that in certain respects Ireland succeeded in imitating some of the external forms of Shakspeare's genius, that in others he fell short, and that in attempting to grasp Shakspeare's real genius he naturally enough failed utterly and abysmally. Taken as a whole, the Ireland case has value as a measure of the Shaksperian criticism of its day. As for the plays themselves, they would have little significance were they considered merely as the work of a young and immature boy. But considered as containing certain ideas typical of their era, and as exemplifying what at least a part of the public believed Shakspeare to be, they mean a good deal more.

³⁹ *Vort*, I, iv, p. 8

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, I, iv, p. 18

than this. Indeed, they are quite definitely characteristic productions of their era, and as such cannot well be overlooked by anyone really interested in Shaksperian criticism, or in the study of the influence of Shakspeare on English literature

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Biography

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Biography: Its Appreciation and Enjoyment

WHAT IS BIOGRAPHY?

ANY FORM of human expression that has been all things to all men is hard to define Biography, which is paradoxically one of the oldest and one of the newest branches of writing, is peculiarly elusive It has served every kind of use in the past and is practiced and interpreted so variously today that few clear-cut generalities about its aims and methods are likely to satisfy more than a modest majority of informed persons Before attempting, then, to capture it by the usual frontal attack with ready-made definitions, let us approach it warily with a flanking movement camouflaged by platitudes, by two familiar sayings, trite yet searching

Two Indispensable Ingredients of Biography The first is Alexander Pope's well-worn dictum, "The proper study of mankind is man," which seems to mean among other things that an understanding of the human race, of the development of social institutions, of the history of peoples in the aggregate must be based on an understanding of individual persons and of the human personality The other is the old adage, "Truth is stranger than fiction," which, referring to character, implies that however unusual and vivid and multifarious may be the creatures of pure invention, they can never equal the fascinating unexpectedness of figures who really lived Fantasy is much more prone to repeat itself than history Next year's events are less easily predictable than next year's novels Fiction indeed we judge partly by its verisimilitude, its life likeness And there always comes a time when the most romantic and unrealistic of us is moved to ask, "But is it a *true* story?"

Both of these sayings point unmistakably to virtues that reside in biography at its best, for good biography is always *individualized* and it is always *true* That much every one admits in principle We shall find that different generations have construed these terms differently, and have added many other criteria for judging the merit of life-writing, and have not found any of them easy of attainment

The Commemorative Impulse The first biographical work was the rude memorial of a man's existence painted or scratched on a monument of stone The man had lived and died, having distinguished himself from his fellows in some manner that seemed worthy to record in brief but lasting form Perhaps his patriarchal rank claimed this respect from his family Perhaps some feat of arms or some personal merit impelled his followers to attempt to defy time with some tablet to his honor At all events, here, however fragmentary, was the record of an individual life preserved for his survivors From epitaphs inscribed in stone or bronze to longer and less perishable accounts written or

printed in books in later ages, this has been the primary aim of biography—to perpetuate a man's memory

The Ethical Biography But the progress was not to be without reverses. First of all, the simple act of commemoration might be turned to account as an example of how other lives should be lived. Fables are vivid teachers of behavior, made to order, they point straight to the inevitable moral. But fables are essentially fiction, and to just that extent less impressive than "the plain undoctored incident that actually occurred," especially when a true story is ready at hand. "So and-so," remarked the moralist, "was a great man—the best we ever had. What better model for our children than his life? Let us set it down and say to every one who comes to read 'Go, and do thou likewise'." So the commemorative purpose was distorted by the didactic, and the struggle for biographic truth and individuality began.

The Individual vs. the Type The writer who sets out to commemorate his hero seeks, if he knows his business, to reveal the singularities of the man, those qualities and acts that made him *different* from other people and therefore memorable. The moralizer, on the other hand, intent on the lesson he is teaching, is likely to view his subject not as an individual but as a type, as a model of some virtue or vice, hence he does not favor those elements which are peculiar to his subject alone. More to his purpose are the characteristics which his subject possessed in *common* with all men of his type and which the reader may therefore take straight to heart and either emulate or shun. So strong has been the ethical purpose in biography that probably the greater number of lives have been written under its dictation. Yet had it succeeded in dominating the field, we should not now be interested in biography. For it is essentially the desire to understand rather than to imitate men, to become intimately acquainted with their lives rather than to find edifying formulas in them, that has led biographers to seek more and more skillful means of interpretation and portrayal.

Truth vs. Loyalty Yet even without this ethical bias the commemorative instinct may go astray. A memorial life is usually written out of a warm personal sympathy and an admiring devotion, the loyal tribute of a relative or follower of the deceased. Even if the writer knew his subject in his earlier years of trial and error, he sees now only the finished career, the rounded character full of dignity and honors. Every time he puts his pen to paper, the recollection of benevolent favors and of touching farewells stirs emotions which make it virtually impossible for him to disobey the ancient counsel *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*. Impartial and dispassionate judgment is never easy to attain, in such circumstances it is rare indeed. Moreover, the search for the whole truth did not become a conscious aim of life-writers until the eighteenth century, since few authors could have foreseen that their subjects were to be studied with the tools of historical and psychological research. The aim being to honor a hero fittingly while preserving a vivid recollection of his life and character, the writer was not ordinarily interested in contrasts and irregularities, much less in unflattering details.

History, Fiction, and Hero-Worship It has never been possible to tell everything, even when that "everything" is but meagerly understood. Because the

average man is more impressed with deeds than with motives, the "life" naturally develops into a straight narrative of action. Moreover, just as a man's crowning successes always tend to efface the memory of his intermittent or preliminary failures, his great accomplishments are held in higher esteem than the miscellany of his commonplace acts. The result—a more or less connected story of signal achievements in only their outward manifestations. Then, because a hero's public services gain in importance when linked patriotically with the destiny of his people or of some group, the narrative of his career is all too easily merged—and lost—in the national history or in the annals of his craft or party or movement. Again, as every epoch, receding into the past, takes on the patina of glamour, so every great man's exploits have a way of becoming magnified and even multiplied in retrospect until he is sometimes indistinguishable from figures of pure romance. Such mythical characterizations are incredibly tenacious. Generations of people can become so attached to the legend of their hero (George Washington, for instance) that they will persecute the scholar who turns up one jot of unflattering but revealing truth. To add, then, to the difficulties of giving an honest account of a life we have the difficulties of separating the individual life from history, of sifting fact from fiction, and of presenting it acceptably to a hero-worshipping public.

Gossip and Detraction Some writers are always willing to make capital out of spicy gossip about the great, and they always find an audience of a sort. If one cannot rise to fame oneself, there is, it would seem, a human satisfaction in pulling down the famous from their pedestals. So biography in all times has had its yellow journalists and its "debunkers." At its best the anecdotal work supplies particulars that render the subject individual and lifelike, while the "debunking" life has, after periods of unrestrained and sentimental laudation of the great, at least the justification of deflating the pompous reputation and of showing the monumental statue to have feet of clay. Unfortunately, the gossip and the debunker rarely stop there, before they are through, they too frequently have transformed the hero not into a man but, as Lewis Mumford puts it, into a gargoye, into a scoundrel or a dunce as unrealistic as the pretentious idol he had seemed before.

Getting at the Truth The correction of each of these false readings of character can be had of course only after a knowledge of the truth, of the biographic truth, that is, truth to fact and truth to impression. The sources of this truth will be found in whatever materials or memories the hero left behind him. Especially valuable are his autobiography, if he wrote one, his memoirs of people and events he knew, and the memoirs of persons who knew him, his diary, if he kept one, his personal letters, in which his very character should be discernible, if he was an author or a creator of any sort, his works, all miscellaneous pictures and relics of his past, and finally, the unwritten testimony of his close acquaintances, preferably the author himself. As people gained leisure and the incentive to study the past, libraries, museums, picture galleries, and private collections made many of these documents available. It has even become possible for a total stranger to compose a plausible life of a man he has never seen, even of a figure from the remote past.

With the growth of material and the improvement of scholarship a new

danger besets biography. In the laudable effort to tell the "whole truth" arises the strong, often unconquerable, temptation to put the stress upon sheer accumulation of factual evidence. To insist upon including every vestige of information bearing in any way on the subject tends to obscure the person and overwhelm the book with quotations and footnotes, producing not a narrative but a document, a static array of "cold roast facts," verified and ticketed but unreadable and for all the accuracy rather inhuman. This is all the more likely if the scholarly biographer is a critic, scientist, historian, or any other sort of specialist dealing with a figure and an epoch in his own vocation—unless, as with Boswell, that vocation is biography. His professional interests, which ought to increase his intimate understanding of the subject's career, too frequently only give occasion for a full record of contemporaneous events and circumstances or for a compendious, de-personalized treatise on the special field. In this way individuality is sacrificed to one kind of biographic truth.

The other kind is in just as precarious a position. For whereas it takes scholarship and patient industry to find and organize the truth of fact into a faithful reconstruction of a man's career and an expert estimate of his achievement, it requires courage, among other things, to convey the truth of impression, to give an equally faithful picture of his manner of life and an unbiased interpretation of his character. And courageous impartiality is not a quality we are born with. To subdue the natural emotional urge to praise the famous or beloved dead demands a highly educated sense of the ultimate values of life-writing. This was scarcely known in earlier times, and is, in every age, excessively hard to cultivate. Harold Nicolson, the English writer and student of biography, thinks that in periods of religious and moral certainty, like the Victorian, this kind of truth is hardly to be expected, but is in general a manifestation peculiar to eras of doubt and unrest like our own.

Special Sources and Skills However this may be, it is not the whole story. For even with the firmest of critical intentions, the biographer is still but half-armed for his task until he possesses that rarest of all skills, an accurate insight into the sources and motives of character. It is the problem again of understanding man, and not man only but men as individuals. This could never be solved so long as people were content with mere recitals of external deeds and honors or of catalogues and criticisms of works. It could come only with man's growing curiosity about his inner life, his personality. As the biographer needs the factual discipline of the scholar and historian, he must have in no less degree the taste and ability of the psychologist to probe the physical, mental, and emotional sources of human motive and tell us not only the *what* but also the *why* of individual behavior. Although psychology is yet an infant science, it has added one more essential tool to the biographer's craft.

Again, in order that the reconstruction of a man's life shall be not only individual and true but also permanently expressive, biography requires the same degree of literary art as the novel, for of what value is a heap of relics, however authentic, if the quickening imagination is lacking to restore their living significance and if there is not enough narrative and pictorial skill to communicate this powerfully to other people?

Finally, all of these qualities must somehow be brought together in our ideal

biographer the warm human sympathy of the commemorator, the philosopher's calm respect for moral values, the broad perspective of the historian, the average man's preference for human beings to idols and for individuals to types, the scholar's industry and exactitude, the trained judgment of the objective critic in whatever department is being treated, the psychologist's knowledge of mental processes and his ability to penetrate to the secret places of the human soul, and the novelist's re-creative imagination and literary skill

Biography Defined Biography, as we understand it today, results from the fusion of all these powers Not a panegyric, or a lesson in ethics, or a sensational tabloid, or a history, or a novel, or a document, or a critique, or a psychoanalysis, or even a memoir—it yet shares the best qualities of all these varieties of writing Defined according to its motive, it is “the history of the lives of individual men as a branch of literature” (*New English Dictionary*), that is, as Mr Nicolson explains, “a truthful record of an individual and composed as a work of art” Defined according to its type, it is “the narrative, from birth to death, of one man's life in its outward manifestations and inward workings” (Waldo Dunn) Defined according to its dominant method, it is “that type of writing which reveals, in narrative form, the outer and inner experiences of one personality through another” (J C Metcalf) Defined according to the modern spirit, it is “the study and presentment of a human character, with its contradictions and its failures, with its inner conflict of aim and impulse and its outer struggle between circumstance and temperament” (Osbert Burdett) Defined according to its essence, it is “the faithful portrait of a soul in its adventures through life” (Edmund Gosse) A true biography is *complete*, based on the entire career It is *objective*, viewing the subject from sufficient distance for a fair and detached interpretation At the same time it is *sympathetic*, for true insight into character can come only when the author is fundamentally in sympathy with his subject (“When we are negative to people,” as Rollo Walter Brown says, “we cannot gain full understanding of them When we are in sympathy with them, we discover what is really there”) As much as possible, therefore, it should be *intimate*, showing the man as he was known to his contemporaries It is *imaginative*, for only by a vivid reconstruction of the inner and outer circumstances of life can it arouse the imagination of the reader and make the past real, yet it must never violate the truth of fact It is *narrative*, that is, it tells a story, it moves Even though it be composed of a series of pictures or of critical analyses, it should present as a whole a sweeping climactic impression of the life as it was experienced and seen in its progress It is *artistic* in purpose and in form Written as a work of art and not of ethics or scholarship or something else, it should possess in satisfying degree the attributes of art order, proportion, unity, style Finally, it is *living* “It must, in a few hundred pages,” as Lewis Mumford says, “create the aesthetic equivalent of the subject's life, capture the changing landscape of its seasons, catch the tempo of its expression, trace out the relationship between the world within—chaotic, tumultuous, scarcely accessible—and the world without, in which it exhibited itself and created an order, a form”

BIOGRAPHY IN OUR TIME

To what do we owe the prevailing modes of life writing that we group under "modern" or "new" biography? A great many people have told us, "the scientific spirit", others, "the new psychology", still others, "reaction and revolt," "the World War," and so on. There is probably truth in all these explanations. Thus it is now clear that the methods of exact, thorough, and unemotional research practiced by Darwin, Huxley, Pasteur, and other scientists in the later nineteenth century were bound to spread to literature, effecting a shake-up of old patterns of fact and thought and necessitating a reinventory of the world's heroes and villains. More conspicuous still in its impact on literature, especially the novel and the biography, has been the rise of psychology. Doubtless the new science has provoked some queer and unconventional books, but doubtless, too, it has sharpened perception and shed light on regions of the mind unguessed before. It has been replacing the old deductive generalities and certainties of character with a strong sense of the complexity and mutability in human beings, it has been tracing the motives of man's behavior to causes of which he himself is frequently unaware, and it has been opening up for investigators the whole province of the personality. That the Victorian convention of the toga and the robes must inevitably have been routed by this new and fascinating study is now obvious. A Froude might be savagely assailed in 1884 for attempting even clumsily to probe the domestic infelicities of the Carlyles, but forty years later the "psychological biography" (not to add the "psycho-analytical") is an established type. That this is also due in part to a natural reaction to the past hardly needs proof. Every epoch removes from their frames the old-fashioned pictures of how life should be lived and inserts fresh ones of its own making. In every department of life the twentieth century has brought a sense of freedom from old restraints, old reverences, old reticences. With the War has come also a shock of universal doubt, suspicion, and dissatisfaction such as can only be alleviated after a period of unrest and painful experimentation. In the changes that have resulted much of the old was swept away, including heroes and hero-worship, edification and respectability, sentimentality and satisfaction with the external view of things. Thinking people became more than ever aware of the baffling interplay of vast, relentless forces shaping their destiny. The popular appetite for historical and biographical narratives became insatiable,—not even the theatre and cinema together being able to exhaust it. This abnormal demand has had its bad as well as its good effect on biography. Especially gratifying in the early nineteen-twenties were books that removed the gilt from figures too much gilded, showing queens and emperors, diplomats and generals as actual living persons who, as Professor A. B. Hart remarks, "had colds in their heads, and patronized an unholy mixture of brandy and porter, and took too many non-combatants with them on military campaigns." "Debunking" (the word itself is a significant coinage) was probably the result of a feeling that the modern generation had been grossly duped by its textbooks, perhaps also there was a vague nostalgic need to console the wounds and the insecurity of the present by flinging mud at the white-

washed statues of an older and more serene generation. More recently the tendency towards collectivism and the standardization of life may have fostered the compensatory study of interesting or powerful individuals. Further explanations of the new biography refer to the changes that took place earlier in other arts: painting, music, architecture, poetry. They point to the seeming exhaustion of the potentialities of the novel and the challenge which biography offers to the creative writer's interest and technical powers, to the invitation to fresh talent in a field where conventional standards and great examples need not deter the experimenter. Whatever the causes, one thing is certain: the new biography is nicely adjusted to the temper of the modern mind.

Lytton Strachey By common consent Lytton Strachey is held to have launched the contemporary vogue when in 1918 he published his *Eminent Victorians*, four brief portraits prefaced by a reassertion of biography's true aims.

The art of biography seems to have fallen on evil times in England. We have had, it is true, a few masterpieces, but we have never had, like the French, a great biographical tradition. With us, the most delicate and humane of all the branches of the art of writing has been relegated to the journeyman of letters, we do not reflect that it is perhaps as difficult to write a good life as to live one. Those two fat volumes, with which it is our custom to commemorate the dead—who does not know them, with their ill-digested masses of material, their slipshod style, their tone of tedious panegyric, their lamentable lack of selection, of detachment, of design? They are as familiar as the *cortege* of the undertaker, and wear the same air of slow, funereal barbarism. One is tempted to suppose, of some of them, that they were composed by that functionary, as the final item of his job. The studies in this book are indebted, in more ways than one, to such works—works which certainly deserve the name of Standard Biographies. For they have provided me not only with much indispensable information, but with something even more precious—an example. How many lessons are to be learnt from them! But it is hardly necessary to particularise. To preserve, for instance, a becoming brevity—a brevity which excludes everything that is redundant and nothing that is significant—that, surely, is the first duty of the biographer. The second, no less surely, is to maintain his own freedom of spirit. It is not his business to be complimentary, it is his business to lay bare the facts of the case, as he understands them. That is what I have aimed at in this book—to lay bare the facts of some cases, as I understand them, dispassionately, impartially, and without ulterior intentions. To quote the words of a Master [Sainte Beuve]—“*Je n'impose rien, je ne propose rien, j'expose*”

Besides his creed, Strachey, in this and subsequent books, brought to life-writing what it most lacked—style and humanity. Or rather, he effected that long-needed fusion of the English and the French techniques at their best. He did not require ten bulky volumes, or even two, to reconstruct the long career and gradually changing image of Queen Victoria. He subordinated document to delineation, assimilating rather than quoting his raw material and avoiding all but an occasional footnote. With consummate literary skill, with unsurpassed pictorial and dramatic power, with a flawless sense of perspective and proportion he presents the Queen under a hundred varied and human aspects. From a diction disarmingly simple he seems to get the maximum of beauty, force, and expressiveness and, when he wishes, of zestful irony. Here, in short, was a biography more readable than a novel.

If one looks more closely for the secret of his readability, one may find it in the unfailing smoothness and continuity of his well-made paragraphs with their leading topic-sentences and their varied, forward-flow, in his admirably balanced chapters, each with its climax, its "spire of meaning," its links with what precedes and follows, and, finally, in the perfect blending of narrative, description, and exposition into one coherent fabric. It was the brilliance of this achievement, even more than its substance, that stimulated other writers. If Strachey introduced any quite new element into biography it is the use of inference. So compelling is the charm of his manner and so subtle his talent for selection that the reader is frequently unaware that the author is carrying him over an historical gap on a splendid bridge of pure fiction. Not that Strachey is inventing facts, he is not even pretending to relate them. He is merely throwing out plausible suggestions to explain what no man could know. The most striking example of this practice is the final paragraph of *Queen Victoria*, where he describes what he thinks went through the dying Queen's mind, beginning

Yet, perhaps, in the secret chambers of consciousness, she had her thoughts, too. Perhaps her fading mind called up once more the shadows of the past to float before it, and retraced, for the last time, the vanished visions of that long history.

The word to be noticed amid this enchanting prose is the repeated "perhaps," frequently overlooked by Strachey's critics. Strachey did not always include the "perhaps" in his passages of inference. This was dangerous, especially when he was out of sympathy with his subjects, as he most frequently was. It set a bad example for less skillful imitators and it tended to bring the new biography as a class under suspicion. At other times, however, as here, it is entirely unobjectionable.

Another trick from the novelist's bag is Strachey's way of depicting persons by symbols. Thus under Disraeli's influence Victoria becomes the fairy queen Titania, and Bacon in *Elizabeth and Essex*, as a result of Aubrey's illuminating note, is symbolized as a serpent. This, also, is a dangerous tool in the hands of a writer whose profession requires absolute truth, yet here again Strachey succeeds where others too often flounder.

Emil Ludwig and André Maurois. England was not the only home of the new biography. In Germany Emil Ludwig, a dramatist, poet, and journalist, was bringing to fruition a life-long study of great men. Napoleon, Bismarck, Goethe, Rembrandt, and the rest. Ludwig acknowledged Plutarch as his model, with the qualification that "perhaps the portraitist of today, who is first of all a psychologist, is much nearer to the biologist than to the historian." His problem remains constant, it is the discovery of a human soul. Ludwig brought to biography undoubted gifts of psychological insight and remarkable pictorial skill. Despising the "Life and Times," he projects his characters before the reader almost devoid of environment. He sees their careers as dramatic plots in three or five acts and concentrates all his attention on the personal struggles that ended in victory or more often in defeat. His best biographies are *Napoleon* and *Three Titans*.

At the same moment in France André Maurois was applying a novelist's

creative talent to the romantic lives of Shelley, Disraeli, Byron, and others. Though he certainly did not invent material, his sparkling novelesque books provoked a veritable epidemic of "fictional biography," a type that fully deserved the castigation given it by critics of all lands. Bolder but less successful than his light imaginative touch and shapely narrative was Maurois' attempt to identify himself with the subject, to make biography a form of self-expression like the autobiography and the novel. The danger here lay in attaining personal intimacy with his subjects at the expense of objective interpretation. But two things have saved Maurois from excess in this direction: his instinctive preference for subjects whose actual lives assumed the color and pattern of romance, and his genius for design and literary style. It is now generally admitted that had the author himself not been at pains to explain his methods in his *Aspects of Biography* this novelty would hardly have been suspected. Moreover, since the publication of *Ariel, or the Life of Shelley*, in order to convince his critics that his biographies are founded on fact, Maurois has resorted to exact supplementary documentation without losing charm and fluency. His *Byron*, *Disraeli*, *Dickens*, and *Edward VII* are favorites with thousands of readers who would never have either the desire or the patience to wade through the "definitive" or "official" lives.

Gamaliel Bradford In America the foremost exponent of the new biography was Gamaliel Bradford. His talent was less for narrative, more for psychological analysis, or for what he liked to term "psychography." This consisted of examining each one of his many chosen characters according to a prearranged schedule or questionnaire. Beneath the myriad disparities of human beings Bradford discerned certain universal motives: money, fame, power, love, religion, and so on. Collecting and studying with the utmost pains all that could be found about his man, he would run through this questionnaire and note the answers. This became the material for his psychograph. As biography it has two important faults: it tends to be static rather than narrative, and it does not sufficiently reveal the complexity and mobility of human beings. Nevertheless, Bradford's work, including his illuminating discussions of the biographer's problems, has set a high mark for sincere and sustained devotion to the true aims of the art and has done a good deal to stimulate interest in biography in this country.

The Status of Biography Today. These are the leaders in the field, although they by no means stand alone, in fact, the roster of contemporary biographers is nothing less than astonishing. We must end our tour, however, with a glance at the principal new varieties of life-writing not yet so mentioned. There has been, broadly speaking, a shift in emphasis from commemoration to instruction, to esthetic entertainment. There has been an increasing concern with individuality and the growing skill in revealing the subtleties of character. There have developed, also, a stronger insistence on biographic truth and better and better means of ascertaining it. The writing of biography has developed into a profession. It is important, however, to avoid the impression that everything is now changed, that all the old is wiped away.

The fact is, all the species of life-writing ever practiced exist today in profusion. As a source-book for documentary information we still have the ency-

clopedic and the compendious factual biography, invaluable for reference. The "monument," too, remains and is at its best in the so called "appreciation." We see about us the expository "interpretation," the historical "life and times," the critical "life and letters," and the journalistic "story." Less prominent of late yet still with us are the biographies based on evidence which tends to reverse the flattering opinions of contemporaries. But each of these types has visibly profited by the example and competition of the biography that is written primarily as a work of art. It is hardly conceivable that after the appropriation of the science of psychology and the arts of the drama and the novel, contemporary biography as a whole should much resemble the old. Not only, indeed, has the prevalence of each one of these elements created its own special type of biography—the psychological, the psychoanalytical, the dramatic, the fictional, and so on—but even the old-fashioned "standard" biography described by Strachey comes now as often as not dressed up in an attractive format with a brisk, intriguing title and is written as if it were meant to be read with pleasure.

So the experimentation goes forward. Biographers are striving to adapt their instrument to every variety of subject. Perhaps the outstanding result is the development of their power of selection. Since it is patently impossible to reveal *all* the inner and outer experience of a human being, even if this could be known, authors must find ways of showing what they deem significant. The quest has been exceedingly productive. Thus half a dozen lives of the same man will shed light on half a dozen different facets of his character and career. One book will foreshorten the figure by stressing the youthful and formative period, another by focusing on its maturity, a third by turning the light upon the inner life, a fourth by relating the entire career as a dramatic struggle or a romantic adventure or a realistic achievement, a fifth will treat it retrospectively and perhaps convey the past by the novelist's tool of the stream-of-consciousness, while a sixth will set it forth in a "short biography."

The Short Biography This last-mentioned form, it should be noticed, is another modern development since, although learned from Sainte-Beuve and others, it has been freshly discovered and assiduously cultivated in recent years. Strachey, who proclaimed the merits of "becoming brevity" and announced his opinion that a biography should be either "as long as Boswell's or as short as Aubrey's," devoted some of his best years to the perfecting of the brief life-sketch. In like manner many of the other writers of longer biography have produced collections of short ones, in which, like Plutarch, they can assemble and compare a number of characters under some common denominator.

With all these modern improvements in the foreground, it is easy for us to think of the new biography as the culmination or terminus of the whole evolution since Plutarch. This view lacks historical perspective. We began by remarking that biography is old yet new. Precisely because it *is* new and vigorous and attractive there is every reason to expect it to develop in increasingly interesting shapes. Experiment and research should continue to widen the biographer's range, deepen his insight, vary his powers of expression, strengthen his grip on facts, and doubtless also enable him to cope with the new international problems of documentation that are arising in this age when many affairs, even of international importance, are settled by telephone instead of by

letter We still await the great biographer of the new school, who, as Bonamy Dobrée says, "can seize truth, leave it unromanticized, and yet produce a book which gives us the same sense of completion, of imaginative creation, as a great novel does" In the meantime the riches of a vast gallery are open to every reader, particularly to him who can honestly affirm with Samuel Johnson, "The biographical part of literature is what I love most"

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

The student who wishes to study further the writing of biography will find the following readings worth his attention

Adams, J T, "New Modes in Biography," and "Biography As an Art," in *The Tempo of Modern Life*, New York, Boni, 1931, Bradford, Gamaliel, "Psychography," in *A Naturalist of Souls*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1917, "Confessions of a Biographer," in *Wives*, New York, Harper, 1926, "Biography and the Human Heart," and "Biography by Mirror," in *Biography and the Human Heart*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1932, "Sainte Beuve and Biography," in *The Saturday Review of Literature*, July 11, 1931, Cross, W L, *An Outline of Biography from Plutarch to Strachey*, New York, Holt, 1924, Johnston, G A, "The New Biography Ludwig, Maurois, and Strachey," in *The Atlantic Monthly*, March, 1929, Lee, Sir Sidney, *Principles of Biography*, New York, Macmillan, 1911, Ludwig, Emil, "Introduction," *Genius and Character*, New York, Harcourt, Brace, 1927, Maurois, André, "The Modern Biographer," in *The Yale Review* January, 1928, *Aspects of Biography*, New York, Appleton, 1929, Nicolson, Harold, *The Development of English Biography*, New York, Harcourt, Brace, 1928, "How I Write Biography," in *The Saturday Review of Literature*, May 26, 1934, Notestein, Wallace, "History and the Biographer," in *The Yale Review*, March, 1933, Saintsbury, George, "Biography Modern Developments," in *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*

QUEEN VICTORIA¹

by Lytton Strachey

Giles Lytton Strachey (1880-1932) was the founder of a new school of biography. Against the conventional biography, the so-called standard life, Strachey brought two main objections. In the first place, he believed that it was too long and that its length was caused by the biographer's inclusion of much that was redundant and insignificant. Let the biographer, therefore, reduce the bulkiness of his work by a careful selection of significant details and an omission of trivialities. In the second place, Strachey objected to hero-worshiping on the part of the biographer, whose business, he stated, was not to be complimentary but to present the facts. Simple as his objections may seem to be, they have revolutionized the writing of this age-old type of literature.

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Strachey's own writings, influential though they have been and will continue to be, are not numerous. *Landmarks in French Literature* appeared in 1912, but it was not until six years later that he acquired his reputation with *Eminent Victorians*. Even more widely read and praised was *Queen Victoria*, published in 1921, the model for the new type of biography. Since then have appeared his *Books and Characters* (1922), *Pope* (1925), *Elizabeth and Essex* (1928), and *Portraits in Miniature* (1931).

What are the main characteristics of Strachey's writings? First, their clarity. Strachey never leaves the reader with blurred impressions. The picture as a whole is clear, the personality about whom he is writing is distinct. The sentences are never made obscure by excessive qualifying phrases, by a welter of adjectives, here and there one can point to a rhetorical passage, but in general his style is simple and direct.

The second characteristic is irony, polished, devastating, but never bludgeoning, the irony of an erudite and refined writer who will not bow his head in hero worship. Let us admit frankly that Strachey does not present all the facts, that he is not impartial, that he adroitly guides the reader to a conclusion. But with what economy of effort he passes judgment! Witness his terse comment on Dr. Arnold (in *Eminent Victorians*): "His *Roman History*, which he regarded as the 'chief monument of his historical fame' was based partly upon the researches of Niebuhr, and partly upon an aversion to Gibbon."

The biographies of Queen Victoria which preceded Strachey's account are for the most part models of abject worshipping and bad writing.² Perhaps their main quality is their mawkishness. We learn, for instance, that the walls of the room in which the future queen was born "are distempered a pretty, pale, duck egg green", that the palace "abounded with musical clocks, two of which chimed every quarter of an hour", that her bridal cake was three yards in circumference and weighed three hundred pounds, that "though one of them (her arms) differed from the other in having the smiling dimple, which Prince Albert, with a combination of lover-like pleasantries and lover-like tenderness, befitting a youthful husband, begged a sculptor to reproduce in marble, Her Majesty's shoulders were no less beautiful than her hands and arms for their beautiful symmetry and snowy whiteness", that Her Majesty's expression of the words "love, cherish, and obey" and "the confiding look with which they were accompanied, were inimitably chaste and beautiful", that the Prince Consort held the Queen's hand in his as they were returning by carriage to Buckingham Palace after the wedding, and held it "in such a way as to leave the wedding-ring visible to the assembled crowd." As the biographer quite truthfully records, "a rather pretty incident."

Not only Strachey's sense of humor but his sober appreciation of the value of selection restrained him from including such *trivia*. Or if he uses *trivia*—the young princess's enthusiasm for SWEET LITTLE ROSY, the mature Queen's gifts of primroses to Lord Beaconsfield, Gladstone's diligence in tree-felling—his purpose is to illuminate in a playful manner the characters in his biography. If one insists that a biographer should be fair minded, one can easily point to a weakness in Strachey's technique because he wishes to convey an impression, *his* impression of Queen Victoria and her associates, he selects the material, trivialities included, which will deepen that impression—and frequently excludes material that would weaken it, noticeably in the excerpts from the princess's diary and in his treatment of Gladstone.

² Particularly, Katharine Hodges, *Fifty Years a Queen* (1887), M. G. Fawcett *Life of Her Majesty, Queen Victoria* (1895), A. E. Knight, *Victoria, Her Life and Reign* (1897).

But Strachey's success is that he has given us a swift, clear cut study of this famous queen as a young girl, as a wife, as a mother, as a widow. But more than that, we see Queen Victoria as an indefatigable worker, whose influence on the course of government was important. When we finish the biography we say that now we understand Queen Victoria and her times. It is only fair to add the caution that we understand Queen Victoria and her times as Strachey understood them. The irony never ceases from the opening pages on the royal family to the last two pages with their almost cruel retrospect. Poise, restraint, clarity, detachment, polish, irony—these are the outstanding qualities of Strachey's *Queen Victoria*.

The following statement will aid the reader in his study of the first chapters of *Queen Victoria*. George III had six daughters and nine sons, in 1817, the year in which Princess Charlotte died, five daughters (none of whom had issue) and seven sons were surviving. George III went insane in 1811, and the Prince of Wales then became Prince Regent, in 1820, at the death of his father, he became George IV. The surviving sons of George III in order of seniority were the Prince Regent, and the dukes of York, Clarence, Kent, Cumberland, Sussex, and Cambridge. In 1818 Clarence, Kent, and Cambridge married to provide an heir. To Cambridge a son was born, March 26, 1819, to Kent, a daughter, Alexandrina Victoria, May 24, 1819, to Clarence, a daughter (Dec. 10, 1820), who died aged four months. The Duke of Kent died in 1820, the Duke of York (without issue) in 1827, and thus the Duke of Clarence became heir apparent. George IV died in 1830, and the Duke of Clarence succeeded to the throne as William IV. Inasmuch as the Duke of Cambridge was junior to the Duke of Kent, the daughter of the latter and not the son of the former became heir apparent. In 1837 Alexandrina Victoria ascended the throne as Queen Victoria.

I ANTECEDENTS

ON NOVEMBER 6, 1817, died the Princess Charlotte, only child of the Prince Regent, and heir to the crown of England. Her short life had hardly been a happy one. By nature impulsive, capricious, and vehement, she had always longed for liberty, and she had never possessed it. She had been brought up among violent family quarrels, had been early separated from her disreputable and eccentric mother, and handed over to the care of her disreputable and selfish father. When she was seventeen, he decided to marry her off to the Prince of Orange, she, at first, acquiesced, but, suddenly falling in love with Prince Augustus of Prussia, she determined to break off the engagement. This was not her first love affair, for she had previously carried on a clandestine correspondence with a Captain Hess. Prince Augustus was already married, morganatically, but she did not know it, and he did not tell her. While she was spinning out the negotiations with the Prince of Orange, the allied sovereigns—it was June, 1814—arrived in London to celebrate their victory. Among them, in the suite of the Emperor of Russia, was the young and handsome Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg. He made several attempts to attract the notice of the Princess, but she, with her heart elsewhere, paid very little attention. Next month the Prince Regent, discovering that his daughter was having secret meetings with Prince Augustus, suddenly appeared upon the scene and,

after dismissing her household, sentenced her to a strict seclusion in Windsor Park "God Almighty grant me patience!" she exclaimed, falling on her knees in an agony of agitation then she jumped up, ran down the back-stairs and out into the street, hailed a passing cab, and drove to her mother's house in Bayswater She was discovered, pursued, and at length, yielding to the persuasions of her uncles, the Dukes of York and Sussex, of Brougham, and of the Bishop of Salisbury, she returned to Carlton House at two o'clock in the morning She was immured at Windsor, but no more was heard of the Prince of Orange Prince Augustus, too, disappeared The way was at last open to Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg

This Prince was clever enough to get round the Regent, to impress the Ministers, and to make friends with another of the Princess's uncles, the Duke of Kent Through the Duke he was able to communicate privately with the Princess, who now declared that he was necessary to her happiness When, after Waterloo, he was in Paris, the Duke's aide-de-camp carried letters backwards and forwards across the Channel In January 1816 he was invited to England, and in May the marriage took place

The character of Prince Leopold contrasted strangely with that of his wife The younger son of a German princeling, he was at this time twenty-six years of age, he had served with distinction in the war against Napoleon, he had shown considerable diplomatic skill at the Congress of Vienna, and he was now to try his hand at the task of taming a tumultuous Princess Cold and formal in manner, collected in speech, careful in action, he soon dominated the wild, impetuous, generous creature by his side There was much in her, he found, of which he could not approve She quizzed, she stamped, she roared with laughter, she had very little of that self-command which is especially required of princes, her manners were abominable Of the latter he was a good judge, having moved, as he himself explained to his niece many years later, in the best society of Europe, being in fact "what is called in French *de la fleur des pois*" There was continual friction, but every scene ended in the same way Standing before him like a rebellious boy in petticoats, her body pushed forward, her hands behind her back, with flaming cheeks and sparkling eyes, she would declare at last that she was ready to do whatever he wanted "If you wish it, I will do it," she would say "I want nothing for myself," he invariably answered, "when I press something on you, it is from a conviction that it is for your interest and for your good"

Among the members of the household at Claremont, near Esher, where the royal pair were established, was a young German physician, Christian Friedrich Stockmar He was the son of a minor magistrate in Coburg, and, after taking part as a medical officer in the war, he had settled down as a doctor in his native town Here he had met Prince Leopold, who had been struck by his ability, and, on his marriage, brought him to England as his personal physician A curious fate awaited this young man, many were the gifts which the future held in store for him—many and various—influence, power, mystery, unhappiness, a broken heart At Claremont his position was a very humble one, but the Princess took a fancy to him, called him "Stocky," and romped with him along the corridors Dyspeptic by constitution, melancholic by temperament,

he could yet be lively on occasion, and was known as a wit in Coburg. He was virtuous, too, and observed the royal *ménage* with approbation. "My master," he wrote in his diary, "is the best of all husbands in all the five quarters of the globe, and his wife bears him an amount of love, the greatness of which can only be compared with the English national debt." Before long he gave proof of another quality—a quality which was to color the whole of his life—cautious sagacity. When, in the spring of 1817, it was known that the Princess was expecting a child, the post of one of her physicians-in-ordinary was offered to him, and he had the good sense to refuse it. He perceived that his colleagues would be jealous of him, that his advice would probably not be taken, but that, if anything were to go wrong, it would be certainly the foreign doctor who would be blamed. Very soon, indeed, he came to the opinion that the low diet and constant bleedings, to which the unfortunate Princess was subjected, were an error, he drew the Prince aside, and begged him to communicate this opinion to the English doctors, but it was useless. The fashionable lowering treatment was continued for months. On November 5, at nine o'clock in the evening, after a labor of over fifty hours, the Princess was delivered of a dead boy. At midnight her exhausted strength gave way. Then, at last, Stockmar consented to see her, he went in, and found her obviously dying, while the doctors were plying her with wine. She seized his hand and pressed it. "They have made me tipsy," she said. After a little he left her, and was already in the next room when he heard her call out in her loud voice "Stocky! Stocky!" As he ran back the death-rattle was in her throat. She tossed herself violently from side to side, then suddenly drew up her legs, and it was over.

The Prince, after hours of watching, had left the room for a few moments' rest, and Stockmar had now to tell him that his wife was dead. At first he could not be made to realize what had happened. On their way to her room he sank down on a chair while Stockmar knelt beside him. It was all a dream, it was impossible. At last, by the bed, he, too, knelt down and kissed the cold hands. Then rising and exclaiming, "Now I am quite desolate. Promise me never to leave me," he threw himself into Stockmar's arms.

II

The tragedy at Claremont was of a most upsetting kind. The royal kaleidoscope had suddenly shifted, and nobody could tell how the new pattern would arrange itself. The succession to the throne, which had seemed so satisfactorily settled, now became a matter of urgent doubt.

George III was still living, an aged lunatic, at Windsor, completely impervious to the impressions of the outer world. Of his seven sons, the youngest was of more than middle age, and none had legitimate offspring. The outlook, therefore, was ambiguous. It seemed highly improbable that the Prince Regent, who had lately been obliged to abandon his stays, and presented a preposterous figure of debauched obesity, could ever again, even on the supposition that he divorced his wife and re-married, become the father of a family. Besides the Duke of Kent, who must be noticed separately, the other brothers, in order of seniority, were the Dukes of York, Clarence, Cumberland, Sussex, and Cam-

bridge, their situations and prospects require a brief description. The Duke of York, whose escapades in times past with Mrs. Clarke and the army had brought him into trouble, now divided his life between London and a large, extravagantly ordered and extremely uncomfortable country house where he occupied himself with racing, whist, and improper stories. He was remarkable among the princes for one reason—he was the only one of them—so we are informed by a highly competent observer—who had the feelings of a gentleman. He had been long married to the Princess Royal of Prussia, a lady who rarely went to bed and was perpetually surrounded by vast numbers of dogs, parrots, and monkeys. They had no children. The Duke of Clarence had lived for many years in complete obscurity with Mrs. Jordan, the actress, in Bushey Park. By her he had had a large family of sons and daughters, and had appeared, in effect, to be married to her, when he suddenly separated from her and offered to marry Miss Wykeham, a crazy woman of large fortune, who, however, would have nothing to say to him. Shortly afterwards Mrs. Jordan died in distressed circumstances in Paris. The Duke of Cumberland was probably the most unpopular man in England. Hideously ugly, with a distorted eye, he was bad-tempered and vindictive in private, a violent reactionary in politics, and was subsequently suspected of murdering his valet and of having carried on an amorous intrigue of an extremely scandalous kind. He had lately married a German Princess, but there were as yet no children by the marriage. The Duke of Sussex had mildly literary tastes and collected books. He had married Lady Augusta Murray, by whom he had two children, but the marriage, under the Royal Marriages Act, was declared void. On Lady Augusta's death, he married Lady Cecilia Buggin, she changed her name to Underwood, but this marriage also was void. Of the Duke of Cambridge, the youngest of the brothers, not very much was known. He lived in Hanover, wore a blonde wig, chattered and fidgeted a great deal, and was unmarried.

Besides his seven sons, George III. had five surviving daughters. Of these, two—the Queen of Wurttemberg and the Duchess of Gloucester—were married and childless. The three unmarried princesses—Augusta, Elizabeth, and Sophia—were all over forty.

III

The fourth son of George III. was Edward, Duke of Kent. He was now fifty years of age—a tall, stout, vigorous man, highly colored, with bushy eyebrows, a bald top to his head, and what hair he had carefully dyed a glossy black. His dress was extremely neat, and in his whole appearance there was a rigidity which did not belie his character. He had spent his early life in the army—at Gibraltar, in Canada, in the West Indies—and, under the influence of military training, had become at first a disciplinarian and at last a martinet. In 1802, having been sent to Gibraltar to restore order in a mutinous garrison, he was recalled for undue severity, and his active career had come to an end. Since then he had spent his life regulating his domestic arrangements with great exactitude, busying himself with the affairs of his numerous dependents, designing clocks, and struggling to restore order to his finances, for, in spite of his being, as some one said who knew him well "*réglé comme du papier à*

musique," and in spite of an income of £24,000 a year, he was hopelessly in debt. He had quarreled with most of his brothers, particularly with the Prince Regent, and it was only natural that he should have joined the political Opposition and become a pillar of the Whigs.

What his political opinions may actually have been is open to doubt, it has often been asserted that he was a Liberal, or even a Radical, and, if we are to believe Robert Owen, he was a necessitarian Socialist. His relations with Owen—the shrewd, gullible, high-minded, wrong-headed, illustrious and preposterous father of Socialism and Cooperation—were curious and characteristic. He talked of visiting the Mills at New Lanark, he did, in fact, preside at one of Owen's public meetings, he corresponded with him on confidential terms, and he even (so Owen assures us) returned, after his death, from "the sphere of spirits" to give encouragement to the Owenites on earth. "In an especial manner," says Owen, "I have to name the very anxious feelings of the spirit of his Royal Highness the late Duke of Kent (who early informed me there were no titles in the spiritual spheres into which he had entered), to benefit, not a class, a sect, a party, or any particular country, but the whole of the human race through futurity." "His whole spirit-proceeding with me has been most beautiful," Owen adds, "making his own appointments, and never in one instance has this spirit not been punctual to the minute he had named." But Owen was of a sanguine temperament. He also numbered among his proselytes President Jefferson, Prince Metternich, and Napoleon, so that some uncertainty must still linger over the Duke of Kent's views. But there is no uncertainty about another circumstance: his Royal Highness borrowed from Robert Owen, on various occasions, various sums of money which were never repaid and amounted in all to several hundred pounds.

After the death of the Princess Charlotte it was clearly important, for more than one reason, that the Duke of Kent should marry. From the point of view of the nation, the lack of heirs in the reigning family seemed to make the step almost obligatory, it was also likely to be highly expedient from the point of view of the Duke. To marry as a public duty, for the sake of the royal succession, would surely deserve some recognition from a grateful country. When the Duke of York had married he had received a settlement of £25,000 a year. Why should not the Duke of Kent look forward to an equal sum? But the situation was not quite simple. There was the Duke of Clarence to be considered, he was the elder brother, and, if *he* married, would clearly have the prior claim. On the other hand, if the Duke of Kent married, it was important to remember that he would be making a serious sacrifice: a lady was involved.

The Duke, reflecting upon all these matters with careful attention, happened, about a month after his niece's death, to visit Brussels, and learnt that Mr Creevey was staying in the town. Mr Creevey was a close friend of the leading Whigs and an inveterate gossip, and it occurred to the Duke that there could be no better channel through which to communicate his views upon the situation to political circles at home. Apparently it did not occur to him that Mr Creevey was malicious and might keep a diary. He therefore sent for him on some trivial pretext, and a remarkable conversation ensued.

After referring to the death of the Princess, to the improbability of the Re-

gent's seeking a divorce, to the childlessness of the Duke of York, and to the possibility of the Duke of Clarence marrying, the Duke adverted to his own position "Should the Duke of Clarence not marry," he said, "the next prince in succession is myself, and although I trust I shall be at all times ready to obey any call my country may make upon me, God only knows the sacrifice it will be to make, whenever I shall think it my duty to become a married man. It is now seven-and-twenty years that Madame St Laurent and I have lived together—we are of the same age, and have been in all climates, and in all difficulties together, and you may well imagine, Mr Creevey, the pang it will occasion me to part with her. I put it to your own feelings—in the event of any separation between you and Mrs Creevey. As for Madame St Laurent herself, I protest I don't know what is to become of her if a marriage is to be forced upon me, her feelings are already so agitated upon the subject." The Duke went on to describe how, one morning, a day or two after the Princess Charlotte's death, a paragraph had appeared in the *Morning Chronicle*, alluding to the possibility of his marriage. He had received the newspaper at breakfast together with his letters, and "I did as is my constant practice, I threw the newspaper across the table to Madame St Laurent, and began to open and read my letters. I had not done so but a very short time, when my attention was called to an extraordinary noise and a strong convulsive movement in Madame St Laurent's throat. For a short time I entertained serious apprehensions for her safety, and when, upon her recovery, I enquired into the occasion of this attack, she pointed to the article in the *Morning Chronicle*."

The Duke then returned to the subject of the Duke of Clarence "My brother the Duke of Clarence is the elder brother, and has certainly the right to marry if he chooses, and I would not interfere with him on any account. If he wishes to be king—to be married and have children, poor man—God help him! let him do so. For myself—I am a man of no ambition, and wish only to remain as I am. Easter, you know, falls very early this year—the 22nd of March. If the Duke of Clarence does not take any step before that time, I must find some pretext to reconcile Madame St Laurent to my going to England for a short time. When once there, it will be easy for me to consult with my friends as to the proper steps to be taken. Should the Duke of Clarence do nothing before that time as to marrying it will become my duty, no doubt, to take some measures upon the subject myself." Two names, the Duke said, had been mentioned in this connection—those of the Princess of Baden and the Princess of Saxe-Coburg. The latter, he thought, would perhaps be the better of the two, from the circumstance of Prince Leopold being so popular with the nation, but before any other steps were taken, he hoped and expected to see justice done to Madame St Laurent. "She is," he explained, "of very good family, and has never been an actress, and I am the first and only person who ever lived with her. Her disinterestedness, too, has been equal to her fidelity. When she first came to me it was upon £100 a year. That sum was afterwards raised to £400, and finally to £1000, but when my debts made it necessary for me to sacrifice a great part of my income, Madame St Laurent insisted upon again returning to her income of £400 a year. If Madame St Laurent is to return to live amongst her friends, it must be in such a state of independence as to command

their respect I shall not require very much, but a certain number of servants and a carriage are essentials" As to his own settlement, the Duke observed that he would expect the Duke of York's marriage to be considered the precedent "That," he said, "was a marriage for the succession, and £25,000 for income was settled, in addition to all his other income, purely on that account I shall be contented with the same arrangement, without making any demands grounded on the difference of the value of money in 1792 and at present As for the payment of my debts," the Duke concluded, "I don't call them great The nation, on the contrary, is greatly my debtor" Here a clock struck, and seemed to remind the Duke that he had an appointment, he rose, and Mr Creevey left him

Who could keep such a communication secret? Certainly not Mr Creevey He hurried off to tell the Duke of Wellington, who was very much amused, and he wrote a long account of it to Lord Sefton, who received the letter "very apropos," while a surgeon was sounding his bladder to ascertain whether he had a stone "I never saw a fellow more astonished than he was," wrote Lord Sefton in his reply, "at seeing me laugh as soon as the operation was over Nothing could be more first-rate than the royal Edward's ingenuousness One does not know which to admire most—the delicacy of his attachment to Madame St Laurent, the refinement of his sentiments towards the Duke of Clarence, or his own perfect disinterestedness in pecuniary matters"

As it turned out, both the brothers decided to marry The Duke of Kent, selecting the Princess of Saxe-Coburg in preference to the Princess of Baden, was united to her on May 29, 1818 On June 11, the Duke of Clarence followed suit with a daughter of the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen But they were disappointed in their financial expectations, for though the Government brought forward proposals to increase their allowances, together with that of the Duke of Cumberland, the motions were defeated in the House of Commons At this the Duke of Wellington was not surprised "By God!" he said, "there is a great deal to be said about that They are the damnedest millstones about the necks of any Government that can be imagined They have insulted—*personally* insulted—two-thirds of the gentlemen of England, and how can it be wondered at that they take their revenge upon them in the House of Commons? It is their only opportunity, and I think, by God! they are quite right to use it" Eventually, however, Parliament increased the Duke of Kent's annuity by £6000

The subsequent history of Madame St Laurent has not transpired

IV

The new Duchess of Kent, Victoria Mary Louisa, was a daughter of Francis, Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld, and a sister of Prince Leopold The family was an ancient one, being a branch of the great House of Wettin, which since the eleventh century had ruled over the March of Meissen on the Elbe In the fifteenth century the whole possessions of the House had been divided between the Albertine and Ernestine branches from the former descended the electors and kings of Saxony, the latter, ruling over Thuringia, became further subdivided into five branches, of which the duchy of Saxe Coburg was one This

principality was very small, containing about 60,000 inhabitants, but it enjoyed independent and sovereign rights. During the disturbed years which followed the French Revolution, its affairs became terribly involved. The Duke was extravagant, and kept open house for the swarms of refugees, who fled eastward over Germany as the French power advanced. Among these was the Prince of Leiningen, an elderly beau, whose domains on the Moselle had been seized by the French, but who was granted in compensation the territory of Amorbach in Lower Franconia. In 1803 he married the Princess Victoria, at that time seventeen years of age. Three years later Duke Francis died a ruined man. The Napoleonic harrow passed over Saxe-Coburg. The duchy was seized by the French, and the ducal family were reduced to beggary, almost to starvation. At the same time the little principality of Amorbach was devastated by the French, Russian, and Austrian armies, marching and counter-marching across it. For years there was hardly a cow in the country, nor enough grass to feed a flock of geese. Such was the desperate plight of the family which, a generation later, was to have gained a foothold in half the reigning Houses of Europe. The Napoleonic harrow had indeed done its work, the seed was planted, and the crop would have surprised Napoleon. Prince Leopold, thrown upon his own resources at fifteen, made a career for himself and married the heiress of England. The Princess of Leiningen, struggling at Amorbach with poverty, military requisitions, and a futile husband, developed an independence of character and a tenacity of purpose which were to prove useful in very different circumstances. In 1814, her husband died, leaving her with two children and the regency of the principality. After her brother's marriage with the Princess Charlotte, it was proposed that she should marry the Duke of Kent, but she declined, on the ground that the guardianship of her children and the management of her domains made other ties undesirable. The Princess Charlotte's death, however, altered the case, and when the Duke of Kent renewed his offer, she accepted it. She was thirty-two years old—short, stout, with brown eyes and hair, and rosy cheeks, cheerful and voluble, and gorgeously attired in rustling silks and bright velvets.

She was certainly fortunate in her contented disposition, for she was fated, all through her life, to have much to put up with. Her second marriage, with its dubious prospects, seemed at first to be chiefly a source of difficulties and discomforts. The Duke, declaring that he was still too poor to live in England, moved about with uneasy precision through Belgium and Germany, attending parades and inspecting barracks in a neat military cap, while the English notabilities looked askance, and the Duke of Wellington dubbed him the Corporal "God damme!" he exclaimed to Mr. Creevey, "d'y'e know what his sisters call him? By God! they call him Joseph Surface!" At Valenciennes, where there was a review and a great dinner, the Duchess arrived with an old and ugly lady-in-waiting, and the Duke of Wellington found himself in a difficulty. "Who the devil is to take out the maid of honor?" he kept asking, but at last he thought of a solution. "Damme, Freemantle, find out the mayor and let him do it." So the Mayor of Valenciennes was brought up for the purpose, and—so we learn from Mr. Creevey—"a capital figure he was." A few days later, at Brussels, Mr. Creevey himself had an unfortunate experience. A military

school was to be inspected—before breakfast The company assembled, every thing was highly satisfactory, but the Duke of Kent continued for so long examining every detail and asking meticulous question after meticulous question, that Mr Creevey at last could bear it no longer, and whispered to his neighbor that he was damned hungry The Duke of Wellington heard him, and was delighted “I recommend you,” he said, “whenever you start with the royal family in a morning, and particularly with *the Corporal*, always to break fast first” He and his staff, it turned out, had taken that precaution, and the great man amused himself, while the stream of royal inquiries poured on, by pointing at Mr Creevey from time to time with the remark, “Voilà le monsieur qui n’a pas déjeuné!”

Settled down at last at Amorbach, the time hung heavily on the Duke’s hands The establishment was small, the country was impoverished, even clock-making grew tedious at last He brooded—for in spite of his piety the Duke was not without a vein of superstition—over the prophecy of a gypsy at Gibraltar who told him that he was to have many losses and crosses, that he was to die in happiness, and that his only child was to be a great queen Before long it became clear that a child was to be expected the Duke decided that it should be born in England Funds were lacking for the journey, but his determination was not to be set aside Come what might, he declared, his child must be English-born A carriage was hired, and the Duke himself mounted the box Inside were the Duchess, her daughter Feodora, a girl of fourteen, with maids, nurses, lap-dogs, and canaries Off they drove—through Germany, through France bad roads, cheap inns, were nothing to the rigorous Duke and the equable, abundant Duchess The Channel was crossed, London was reached in safety The authorities provided a set of rooms in Kensington Palace, and there, on May 24, 1819, a female infant was born

II CHILDHOOD

THE CHILD who, in these not very impressive circumstances, appeared in the world, received but scant attention There was small reason to foresee her destiny The Duchess of Clarence, two months before, had given birth to a daughter, this infant, indeed, had died almost immediately, but it seemed highly probable that the Duchess would again become a mother, and so it actually fell out More than this, the Duchess of Kent was young, and the Duke was strong, there was every likelihood that before long a brother would follow, to snatch her faint chance of the succession from the little princess

Nevertheless, the Duke had other views there were prophecies At any rate, he would christen the child Elizabeth, a name of happy augury In this, however, he reckoned without the Regent, who, seeing a chance of annoying his brother, suddenly announced that he himself would be present at the baptism, and signified at the same time that one of the godfathers was to be the Emperor Alexander of Russia And so when the ceremony took place, and the Archbishop of Canterbury asked by what name he was to baptize the child, the Regent replied “Alexandria” At this the Duke ventured to suggest that another

name might be added "Certainly," said the Regent, "Georgina?" "Or Elizabeth?" said the Duke. There was a pause, during which the Archbishop, with the baby in his lawn sleeves, looked with some uneasiness from one Prince to the other. "Very well, then," said the Regent at last, "call her after her mother. But Alexandrina must come first." Thus, to the disgust of her father, the child was christened Alexandrina Victoria.

The Duke had other subjects of disgust. The meager grant of the Commons had by no means put an end to his financial distresses. It was to be feared that his services were not appreciated by the nation. His debts continued to grow. For many years he had lived upon £7000 a year, but now his expenses were exactly doubled, he could make no further reductions, as it was, there was not a single servant in his establishment who was idle for a moment from morning to night. He poured out his griefs in a long letter to Robert Owen, whose sympathy had the great merit of being practical. "I now candidly state," he wrote, "that, after viewing the subject in every possible way, I am satisfied that, to continue to live in England, even in the quiet way in which we are going on, *without splendor, and without show, nothing short of doubling the seven thousand pounds will do, REDUCTION BEING IMPOSSIBLE*." It was clear that he would be obliged to sell his house for £51,300. If that failed, he would go and live on the Continent. "If my services are useful to my country, it surely becomes *those who have the power* to support me in substantiating those just claims I have for the very extensive losses and privations I have experienced, during the very long period of my professional servitude in the Colonies, and if this is not attainable, *it is a clear proof to me that they are not appreciated*, and under that impression I shall not scruple, in *due* time, to resume my retirement abroad, when the Duchess and myself shall have fulfilled our duties in establishing the *English* birth of my child, and giving it material nutriment on the soil of Old England, and which we shall certainly repeat, if Providence destines to give us any further increase of family."

In the meantime, he decided to spend the winter at Sidmouth, "in order," he told Owen, "that the Duchess may have the benefit of tepid sea bathing, and our infant that of sea air, on the fine coast of Devonshire, during the months of the year that are so odious in London." In December the move was made. With the new year, the Duke remembered another prophecy. In 1820, a fortune-teller had told him, two members of the Royal Family would die. Who would they be? He speculated on the various possibilities. The King, it was plain, could not live much longer, and the Duchess of York had been attacked by a mortal disease. Probably it would be the King and the Duchess of York, or perhaps the King and the Duke of York, or the King and the Regent. He himself was one of the healthiest men in England. "My brothers," he declared, "are not so strong as I am, I have lived a regular life. I shall outlive them all. The crown will come to me and my children." He went out for a walk, and got his feet wet. On coming home, he neglected to change his stockings. He caught cold, inflammation of the lungs set in, and on January 22 he was a dying man. By a curious chance, young Dr. Stockmar was staying in the house at the time, two years before, he had stood by the death-bed of the Princess Charlotte, and now he was watching the Duke of Kent in his

agony On Stockmar's advice, a will was hastily prepared The Duke's earthly possessions were of a negative character, but it was important that the guardianship of the unwitting child, whose fortunes were now so strangely changing, should be assured to the Duchess The Duke was just able to understand the document, and to append his signature Having inquired whether his writing was perfectly clear, he became unconscious, and breathed his last on the following morning Six days later came the fulfillment of the second half of the gypsy's prophecy The long, unhappy, and inglorious life of George the Third of England was ended

II

Such was the confusion of affairs at Sidmouth, that the Duchess found herself without the means of returning to London Prince Leopold hurried down, and himself conducted his sister and her family, by slow and bitter stages, to Kensington The widowed lady, in her voluminous blacks, needed all her equanimity to support her Her prospects were more dubious than ever She had £6000 a year of her own, but her husband's debts loomed before her like a mountain Soon she learnt that the Duchess of Clarence was once more expecting a child What had she to look forward to in England? Why should she remain in a foreign country, among strangers, whose language she could not speak, whose customs she could not understand? Surely it would be best to return to Amorbach, and there, among her own people, bring up her daughters in economical obscurity But she was an inveterate optimist, she had spent her life in struggles, and would not be daunted now And besides, she adored her baby "*C'est mon bonheur, mes delices, mon existence,*" she declared, the darling should be brought up as an English princess, whatever lot awaited her Prince Leopold came forward nobly with an offer of an additional £3000 a year, and the Duchess remained at Kensington

The child herself was extremely fat, and bore a remarkable resemblance to her grandfather "*C'est l'image du feu Roi!*" exclaimed the Duchess "*C'est le Roi Georges en jupons,*" echoed the surrounding ladies, as the little creature waddled with difficulty from one to the other

Before long, the world began to be slightly interested in the nursery at Kensington When, early in 1821, the Duchess of Clarence's second child, the Princess Elizabeth, died within three months of its birth, the interest increased Great forces and fierce antagonisms seemed to be moving, obscurely, about the royal cradle It was a time of faction and anger, of violent repression and profound discontent A powerful movement, which had for long been checked by adverse circumstances, was now spreading throughout the country New passions, new desires, were abroad, or rather old passions and old desires, incarnated with a new potency love of freedom, hatred of injustice, hope for the future of man The mighty still sat proudly in their seats, dispensing their ancient tyranny, but a storm was gathering out of the darkness, and already there was lightning in the sky But the vastest forces must needs operate through frail human instruments, and it seemed for many years as if the great cause of English liberalism hung upon the life of the little girl at Kensington She alone stood between the country and her terrible uncle, the Duke of Cumber

land, the hideous embodiment of reaction. Inevitably, the Duchess of Kent threw in her lot with her husband's party, Whig leaders, Radical agitators, rallied round her, she was intimate with the bold Lord Durham, she was on friendly terms with the redoubtable O'Connell himself. She received Wilberforce—though, to be sure, she did not ask him to sit down. She declared in public that she put her faith in "the liberties of the People." It was certain that the young Princess would be brought up in the way that she should go, yet there, close behind the throne, waiting, sinister, was the Duke of Cumberland Brougham, looking forward into the future in his scurrilous fashion, hinted at dreadful possibilities. "I never prayed so heartily for a Prince before," he wrote, on hearing that George IV had been attacked by illness. "If he had gone, all the troubles of these villains [the Tory Ministers] went with him, and they had Fred I [the Duke of York] their own man for his life. He [Fred I] won't live long either, that Prince of Blackguards, 'Brother William,' is as bad a life, so we come in the course of nature to be *assassinated* by King Ernest I or Regent Ernest [the Duke of Cumberland]." Such thoughts were not peculiar to Brougham, in the seething state of public feeling, they constantly leapt to the surface, and, even so late as the year previous to her accession, the Radical newspapers were full of suggestions that the Princess Victoria was in danger from the machinations of her wicked uncle.

But no echo of these conflicts and forebodings reached the little Drina—for so she was called in the family circle—as she played with her dolls, or scampered down the passages, or rode on the donkey her uncle York had given her along the avenues of Kensington Gardens. The fair-haired, blue-eyed child was idolized by her nurses, and her mother's ladies, and her sister Feodora, and for a few years there was danger, in spite of her mother's strictness, of her being spoilt. From time to time, she would fly into a violent passion, stamp her little foot, and set every one at defiance, whatever they might say, she would not learn her letters—no, she *would not*, afterwards, she was very sorry, and burst into tears, but her letters remained unlearned. When she was five years old, however, a change came, with the appearance of Fraulein Lehzen. This lady, who was the daughter of a Hanoverian clergyman and had previously been the Princess Feodora's governess, soon succeeded in instilling a new spirit into her charge. At first, indeed, she was appalled by the little Princess's outbursts of temper, never in her life, she declared, had she seen such a passionate and naughty child. Then she observed something else, the child was extraordinarily truthful, whatever punishment might follow, she never told a lie. Firm, very firm, the new governess yet had the sense to see that all the firmness in the world would be useless, unless she could win her way into little Drina's heart. She did so, and there were no more difficulties. Drina learnt her letters like an angel, and she learnt other things as well. The Baroness de Spath taught her how to make little board boxes and decorate them with tinsel and painted flowers, her mother taught her religion. Sitting in the pew every Sunday morning, the child of six was seen listening in rapt attention to the clergyman's endless sermon, for she was to be examined upon it in the afternoon. The Duchess was determined that her daughter, from the earliest possible moment, should be prepared for her high station in a way that would

commend itself to the most respectable, her good, plain, thrifty German mind recoiled with horror and amazement from the shameless junketings at Carlton House, Drina should never be allowed to forget for a moment the virtues of simplicity, regularity, propriety, and devotion. The little girl, however, was really in small need of such lessons, for she was naturally simple and orderly, she was pious without difficulty, and her sense of propriety was keen. She understood very well the niceties of her own position. When, a child of six, Lady Jane Ellice was taken by her grandmother to Kensington Palace, she was put to play with the Princess Victoria, who was the same age as herself. The young visitor, ignorant of etiquette, began to make free with the toys on the floor, in a way which was a little too familiar, but "You must not touch those," she was quickly told, "they are mine, and I may call you Jane, but you must not call me Victoria." The Princess's most constant playmate was Victoire, the daughter of Sir John Conroy, the Duchess's major-domo. The two girls were very fond of one another, they would walk hand in hand together in Kensington Gardens. But little Drina was perfectly aware for which of them it was that they were followed, at a respectful distance, by a gigantic scarlet flunkey.

Warm-hearted, responsive, she loved her dear Lehzen, and she loved her dear Feodora, and her dear Victoire, and her dear Madame de Spath. And her dear Mamma—of course, she loved her too, it was her duty, and yet—she could not tell why it was—she was always happier when she was staying with her Uncle Leopold at Claremont. There old Mrs. Louis, who, years ago, had waited on her Cousin Charlotte, petted her to her heart's content, and her uncle himself was wonderfully kind to her, talking to her seriously and gently, almost as if she were a grown-up person. She and Feodora invariably wept when the too short visit was over, and they were obliged to return to the dutiful monotony, and the affectionate supervision of Kensington. But sometimes when her mother had to stay at home, she was allowed to go out driving all alone with her dear Feodora and her dear Lehzen, and she could talk and look as she liked, and it was very delightful.

The visits to Claremont were frequent enough, but one day, on a special occasion, she paid one of a rarer and more exciting kind. When she was seven years old, she and her mother and sister were asked by the King to go down to Windsor. George IV, who had transferred his fraternal ill-temper to his sister-in-law and her family, had at last grown tired of sulking, and decided to be agreeable. The old rip, bewigged and gouty, ornate and enormous, with his jeweled mistress by his side and his flaunting court about him, received the tiny creature who was one day to hold in those same halls a very different state. "Give me your little paw," he said, and two ages touched. Next morning, driving in his phaeton with the Duchess of Gloucester, he met the Duchess of Kent and her child in the Park. "Pop her in," were his orders, which, to the terror of the mother and the delight of the daughter, were immediately obeyed. Off they dashed to Virginia Water, where there was a great barge, full of lords and ladies fishing, and another barge with a band, and the King ogled Feodora, and praised her manners, and then turned to his own small niece. "What is your favorite tune? The band shall play it." "God Save the King, sir," was

the instant answer The Princess's reply has been praised as an early example of a tact which was afterwards famous But she was a very truthful child, and perhaps it was her genuine opinion

III

In 1827 the Duke of York, who had found some consolation for the loss of his wife in the sympathy of the Duchess of Rutland, died, leaving behind him the unfinished immensity of Stafford House and £200,000 worth of debts Three years later George IV also disappeared, and the Duke of Clarence reigned in his stead The new Queen, it was now clear, would in all probability never again be a mother, the Princess Victoria, therefore, was recognized by Parliament as heir-presumptive, and the Duchess of Kent, whose annuity had been doubled five years previously, was now given an additional £10,000 for the maintenance of the Princess, and was appointed regent, in case of the death of the King before the majority of her daughter At the same time a great convulsion took place in the constitution of the State The power of the Tories, who had dominated England for more than forty years, suddenly began to crumble In the tremendous struggle that followed, it seemed for a moment as if the tradition of generations might be snapped, as if the blind tenacity of the reactionaries and the determined fury of their enemies could have no other issue than revolution But the forces of compromise triumphed the Reform Bill was passed The center of gravity in the constitution was shifted towards the middle classes, the Whigs came into power, and the complexion of the Government assumed a Liberal tinge One of the results of this new state of affairs was a change in the position of the Duchess of Kent and her daughter From being the *protégées* of an opposition clique, they became assets of the official majority of the nation The Princess Victoria was henceforward the living symbol of the victory of the middle classes

The Duke of Cumberland, on the other hand, suffered a corresponding eclipse his claws had been pared by the Reform Act He grew insignificant and almost harmless, though his ugliness remained, he was the wicked uncle still—but only of a story

The Duchess's own liberalism was not very profound She followed naturally in the footsteps of her husband, repeating with conviction the catchwords of her husband's clever friends and the generalizations of her clever brother Leopold She herself had no pretensions to cleverness, she did not understand very much about the Poor Law and the Slave Trade and Political Economy, but she hoped that she did her duty, and she hoped—she ardently hoped—that the same might be said of Victoria Her educational conceptions were those of Dr Arnold, whose views were just then beginning to permeate society Dr Arnold's object was, first and foremost, to make his pupils "in the highest and truest sense of the words, Christian gentlemen", intellectual refinements might follow The Duchess felt convinced that it was her supreme duty in life to make quite sure that her daughter should grow up into a Christian queen To this task she bent all her energies, and, as the child developed, she flattered herself that her efforts were not unsuccessful When the Princess was eleven,

she desired the Bishops of London and Lincoln to submit her daughter to an examination, and report upon the progress that had been made "I feel the time to be now come," the Duchess explained, in a letter obviously drawn up by her own hand, "that what has been done should be put to some test, that if anything has been done in error of judgment it may be corrected, and that the plan for the future should be open to consideration and revision I attend almost always myself every lesson, or a part, and as the lady about the Princess is a competent person, she assists Her in preparing Her lessons, for the various masters, as I resolved to act in that manner so as to be Her Governess myself

When she was at a proper age she commenced attending Divine Service regularly with me, and I have every feeling that she has religion at Her heart, that she is morally impressed with it to that degree, that she is less liable to error by its application to her feelings as a Child capable of reflection "The general bent of Her character," added the Duchess, "is strength of intellect, capable of receiving with ease, information, and with a peculiar readiness in coming to a very just and benignant decision on any point Her opinion is asked on Her adherence to truth is of so marked a character that I feel no apprehension of that Bulwark being broken down by any circumstances" The Bishops attended at the Palace, and the result of their examination was all that could be wished "In answering a great variety of questions proposed to her," they reported, "the Princess displayed an accurate knowledge of the most important features of Scripture History, and of the leading truths and precepts of the Christian Religion as taught by the Church of England, as well as an acquaintance with the Chronology and principal facts of English History remarkable in so young a person To questions in Geography, the use of the Globes, Arithmetic, and Latin Grammar, the answers which the Princess returned were equally satisfactory" They did not believe that the Duchess's plan of education was susceptible of any improvement, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was also consulted, came to the same gratifying conclusion

One important step, however, remained to be taken So far, as the Duchess explained to the Bishops, the Princess had been kept in ignorance of the station that she was likely to fill "She is aware of its duties, and that a Sovereign should live for others, so that when Her innocent mind receives the impression of Her future fate, she receives it with a mind formed to be sensible of what is to be expected from Her, and it is to be hoped, she will be too well grounded in Her principles to be dazzled with the station she is to look to" In the following year it was decided that she should be enlightened on this point The well known scene followed the history lesson, the genealogical table of the Kings of England slipped beforehand by the governess into the book, the Princess's surprise, her inquiries, her final realization of the facts When the child at last understood, she was silent for a moment, and then she spoke "I will be good," she said The words were something more than a conventional protestation, something more than the expression of a superimposed desire, they were, in their limitation and their intensity, their egotism and their humility, an instinctive summary of the dominating qualities of a life "I cried much on learning it," her Majesty noted long afterwards No doubt, while the others

were present, even her dear Lehzen, the little girl kept up her self command, and then crept away somewhere to ease her heart of an inward, unfamiliar agitation, with a handkerchief, out of her mother's sight

But her mother's sight was by no means an easy thing to escape. Morning and evening, day and night, there was no relaxation of the maternal vigilance. The child grew into the girl, the girl into the young woman, but still she slept in her mother's bedroom, still she had no place allowed her where she might sit or work by herself. An extraordinary watchfulness surrounded her every step up to the day of her accession, she never went downstairs without some one beside her holding her hand. Plainness and regularity ruled the household. The hours, the days, the years passed slowly and methodically by. The dolls—the innumerable dolls, each one so neatly dressed, each one with its name so punctiliously entered in the catalogue—were laid aside, and a little music and a little dancing took their place. Taglioni came, to give grace and dignity to the figure, and Lablache, to train the piping treble upon his own rich bass. The Dean of Chester, the official preceptor, continued his endless instruction in Scripture history, while the Duchess of Northumberland, the official governess, presided over every lesson with becoming solemnity. Without doubt, the Princess's main achievement during her schooldays was linguistic. German was naturally the first language with which she was familiar, but English and French quickly followed, and she became virtually trilingual, though her mastery of English grammar remained incomplete. At the same time, she acquired a working knowledge of Italian and some smattering of Latin. Nevertheless, she did not read very much. It was not an occupation that she cared for, partly, perhaps, because the books that were given her were all either sermons, which were very dull, or poetry, which was incomprehensible. Novels were strictly forbidden. Lord Durham persuaded her mother to get her some of Miss Martineau's tales, illustrating the truths of Political Economy, and they delighted her, but it is to be feared that it was the unaccustomed pleasure of the story that filled her mind and that she never really mastered the theory of exchanges or the nature of rent.

It was her misfortune that the mental atmosphere which surrounded her during these years of adolescence was almost entirely feminine. No father, no brother, was there to break in upon the gentle monotony of the daily round with impetuosity, with rudeness, with careless laughter and wafts of freedom from the outside world. The Princess was never called by a voice that was loud and growling, never felt, as a matter of course, a hard rough cheek on her own soft one, never climbed a wall with a boy. The visits to Claremont—delicious little escapes into male society—came to an end when she was eleven years old and Prince Leopold left England to be King of the Belgians. She loved him still, he was still "*il mio secondo padre—or, rather, solo padre*, for he is indeed like my real father, as I have none", but his fatherliness now came to her dimly and indirectly, through the cold channel of correspondence. Henceforward female duty, female elegance, female enthusiasm, hemmed her completely in, and her spirit, amid the enclosing folds, was hardly reached by those two great influences, without which no growing life can truly prosper—humor and imagination. The Baroness Lehzen—for she had been raised to that rank in the

Hanoverian nobility by George IV before he died—was the real center of the Princess's world. When Feodora married, when Uncle Leopold went to Belgium, the Baroness was left without a competitor. The Princess gave her mother her dutiful regards, but Lehzen had her heart. The voluble, shrewd daughter of the pastor in Hanover, lavishing her devotion on her royal charge, had reaped her reward in an unbounded confidence and a passionate adoration. The girl would have gone through fire for her "*precious* Lehzen," the "best and truest friend," she declared, that she had had since her birth. Her journal, begun when she was thirteen, where she registered day by day the small succession of her doings and her sentiments, bears on every page of it the traces of the Baroness and her circumambient influence. The young creature that one sees there, self-depicted in ingenuous clarity, with her sincerity, her simplicity, her quick affections and pious resolutions, might almost have been the daughter of a German pastor herself. Her enjoyments, her admirations, her *engouement*s were of the kind that clothed themselves naturally in underlinings and exclamation marks. "It was a *delightful* ride. We cantered a good deal. SWEET LITTLE ROSY WENT BEAUTIFULLY!! We came home at a $\frac{1}{4}$ past 1. At 20 minutes to 7 we went out to the Opera. Rubini came on and sang a song out of 'Anna Boulena' *quite beautifully*. We came home at $\frac{1}{2}$ past 11." In her comments on her readings, the mind of the Baroness is clearly revealed. One day, by some mistake, she was allowed to take up a volume of memoirs by Fanny Kemble. "It is certainly very pertly and oddly written. One would imagine by the style that the authoress must be very pert, and not well bred, for there are so many vulgar expressions in it. It is a great pity that a person endowed with so much talent, as Mrs. Butler really is, should turn it to so little account and publish a book which is so full of trash and nonsense which can only do her harm. I stayed up till 20 minutes past 9." Madame de Sévigné's letters, which the Baroness read aloud, met with more approval. "How truly elegant and natural her style is! It is so full of *navet  *, cleverness, and grace." But her highest admiration was reserved for the Bishop of Chester's *Exposition of the Gospel of St. Matthew*. "It is a very fine book indeed. Just the sort of one I like, which is just plain and comprehensible and full of truth and good feeling. It is not one of those learned books in which you have to cavil at almost every paragraph. Lehzen gave it me on the Sunday that I took the Sacrament." A few weeks previously she had been confirmed, and she described the event as follows. "I felt that my confirmation was one of the most solemn and important events and acts in my life, and that I trusted that it might have a salutary effect on my mind. I felt deeply repentant for all that I had done which was wrong and trusted in God Almighty to strengthen my heart and mind, and to forsake all that is bad and follow all that is virtuous and right. I went with the firm determination to become a true Christian, to try and comfort my dear Mamma in all her griefs, trials, and anxieties, and to become a dutiful and affectionate daughter to her. Also to be obedient to *dear* Lehzen, who has done so much for me. I was dressed in a white lace dress, with a white crape bonnet with a wreath of white roses round it. I went in the chariot with my dear Mamma and the others followed in another carriage." One seems to hold in one's hand a small smooth crystal pebble, without a flaw and with

out a scintillation, and so transparent that one can see through it at a glance.

Yet perhaps, after all, to the discerning eye, the purity would not be absolute. The careful searcher might detect, in the virgin soil, the first faint traces of an unexpected vein. In that conventual existence visits were exciting events, and, as the Duchess had many relatives, they were not infrequent, aunts and uncles would often appear from Germany, and cousins too. When the Princess was fourteen she was delighted by the arrival of a couple of boys from Württemberg, the Princes Alexander and Ernst, sons of her mother's sister and the reigning duke. "They are both *extremely tall*," she noted, "Alexander is *very handsome*, and Ernst has a *very kind expression*. They are both *extremely amiable*." And their departure filled her with corresponding regrets. "We saw them get into the barge, and watched them sailing away for some time on the beach. They were so amiable and so pleasant to have in the house, they were *always satisfied, always good-humored*, Alexander took such care of me in getting out of the boat, and rode next to me, so did Ernst." Two years later, two other cousins arrived, the Princes Ferdinand and Augustus. "Dear Ferdinand," the Princess wrote, "has elicited universal admiration from all parties. He is so very unaffected, and has such a very distinguished appearance and carriage. They are both very dear and charming young men. Augustus is very amiable, too, and, when known, shows much good sense." On another occasion, "Dear Ferdinand came and sat near me and talked so dearly and sensibly. I do so love him. Dear Augustus sat near me and talked with me, and he is also a dear good young man, and is very handsome." She could not quite decide which was the handsomer of the two. On the whole, she concluded, "I think Ferdinand handsomer than Augustus, his eyes are so beautiful, and he has such a lively clever expression, *both* have such a sweet expression, Ferdinand has something *quite beautiful* in his expression when he speaks and smiles, and he is *so good*." However, it was perhaps best to say that they were "both very handsome and *very dear*." But shortly afterwards two more cousins arrived, who threw all the rest into the shade. These were the Princes Ernest and Albert, sons of her mother's eldest brother, the Duke of Saxe-Coburg. This time the Princess was more particular in her observations. "Ernest," she remarked, "is as tall as Ferdinand and Augustus, he has dark hair, and fine dark eyes and eyebrows, but the nose and mouth are not good, he has a most kind, honest and intelligent expression in his countenance, and has a very good figure. Albert, who is just as tall as Ernest but stouter, is extremely handsome, his hair is about the same color as mine, his eyes are large and blue, and he has a beautiful nose and a very sweet mouth with fine teeth, but the charm of his countenance is his expression, which is most delightful, *c'est à la fois* full of goodness and sweetness, and very clever and intelligent." "Both my cousins," she added, "are so kind and good, they are much more *formés* and men of the world than Augustus, they speak English very well, and I speak it with them. Ernest will be 18 years old on the 21st of June, and Albert 17 on the 26th of August. Dear Uncle Ernest made me the present of a most delightful *Lory*, which is so tame that it remains on your hand and you may put your finger into its beak, or do anything with it, without its ever attempting to bite. It is larger than Mamma's gray parrot." A little later, "I sat between my dear cousins on the sofa and we

looked at drawings They both draw very well, particularly Albert, and are both exceedingly fond of music, they play very nicely on the piano The more I see them the more I am delighted with them, and the more I love them

It is delightful to be with them, they are so fond of being occupied too, they are quite an example for any young person " When, after a stay of three weeks, the time came for the young men and their father to return to Germany, the moment of parting was a melancholy one "It was our last *HAPPY HAPPY* breakfast, with this dear Uncle and those *dearest* beloved cousins, whom I *do* love so *VERY VERY* dearly, *much more dearly* than any other cousins in the *world* Dearly as I love Ferdinand, and also good Augustus, I love Ernest and Albert *more* than them, oh yes, *MUCH more*

They have both learnt a good deal, and are very clever, naturally clever, particularly Albert, who is the most reflecting of the two, and they like very much talking about serious and instructive things and yet are so *very very* merry and gay and happy, like young people ought to be, Albert always used to have some fun and some clever witty answer at breakfast and everywhere, he used to play and fondle Dash so funnily too

Dearest Albert was playing on the piano when I came down At 11 dear Uncle, my *dearest beloved* cousins, and Charles, left us, accompanied by Count Kolowrat I embraced both my dearest cousins most warmly, as also my dear Uncle I cried bitterly, very bitterly " The Princess shared her ecstasies and her italics between them, but it is clear enough where her secret preference lay "Particularly Albert"! She was just seventeen, and deep was the impression left upon that budding organism by the young man's charm and goodness and accomplishments, and his large blue eyes and beautiful nose, and his sweet mouth and fine teeth

IV

King William could not away with his sister-in-law, and the Duchess fully returned his antipathy Without considerable tact and considerable forbearance their relative positions were well calculated to cause ill feeling, and there was very little tact in the composition of the Duchess, and no forbearance at all in that of his Majesty A bursting, bubbling old gentleman, with quarter deck gestures, round rolling eyes, and a head like a pineapple, his sudden elevation to the throne after fifty-six years of utter insignificance had almost sent him crazy His natural exuberance completely got the best of him, he rushed about doing preposterous things in an extraordinary manner, spreading amusement and terror in every direction, and talking all the time His tongue was decidedly Hanoverian, with its repetitions, its catchwords—"That's quite another thing! That's quite another thing!"—its rattling indomitability, its loud indiscreetness His speeches, made repeatedly at the most inopportune junctures, and filled pell-mell with all the fancies and furies that happened at the moment to be whisking about in his head, were the consternation of Ministers He was one part blackguard, people said, and three parts buffoon, but those who knew him better could not help liking him—he meant well, and he was really good-humored and kind-hearted, if you took him the right way If you took him the wrong way, however, you must look out for squalls, as the Duchess of Kent discovered

She had no notion of how to deal with him—could not understand him in the least. Occupied with her own position, her own responsibilities, her duty, and her daughter, she had no attention to spare for the peppery susceptibilities of a foolish, disreputable old man. She was the mother of the heiress of England, and it was for him to recognize the fact—to put her at once upon a proper footing—to give her the precedence of a dowager Princess of Wales, with a large annuity from the privy purse. It did not occur to her that such pretensions might be galling to a king who had no legitimate child of his own, and who yet had not altogether abandoned the hope of having one. She pressed on, with bulky vigor, along the course she had laid out. Sir John Conroy, an Irishman with no judgment and a great deal of self-importance, was her intimate counselor, and egged her on. It was advisable that Victoria should become acquainted with the various districts of England, and through several summers a succession of tours—in the West, in the Midlands, in Wales—were arranged for her. The intention of the plan was excellent, but its execution was unfortunate. The journeys, advertised in the Press, attracting enthusiastic crowds, and involving official receptions, took on the air of royal progresses. Addresses were presented by loyal citizens, the delighted Duchess, swelling in sweeping feathers and almost obliterating the diminutive Princess, read aloud, in her German accent, gracious replies prepared beforehand by Sir John, who, bustling and ridiculous, seemed to be mingling the rôles of major-domo and Prime Minister. Naturally the King fumed over his newspaper at Windsor. "That woman is a nuisance!" he exclaimed. Poor Queen Adelaide, amiable though disappointed, did her best to smooth things down, changed the subject, and wrote affectionate letters to Victoria, but it was useless. News arrived that the Duchess of Kent, sailing in the Solent, had insisted that whenever her yacht appeared it should be received by royal salutes from all the men-of-war and all the forts. The King declared that these continual poppings must cease, the Premier and the First Lord of the Admiralty were consulted, and they wrote privately to the Duchess, begging her to waive her rights. But she would not hear of it, Sir John Conroy was adamant. "As her Royal Highness's *confidential adviser*," he said, "I cannot recommend her to give way on this point." Eventually the King, in a great state of excitement, issued a special Order in Council, prohibiting the firing of royal salutes to any ships except those which carried the reigning sovereign or his consort on board.

When King William quarreled with his Whig Ministers the situation grew still more embittered, for now the Duchess, in addition to her other short comings, was the political partisan of his enemies. In 1836 he made an attempt to prepare the ground for a match between the Princess Victoria and one of the sons of the Prince of Orange, and at the same time did his best to prevent the visit of the young Coburg princes to Kensington. He failed in both these objects, and the only result of his efforts was to raise the anger of the King of the Belgians, who, forgetting for a moment his royal reserve, addressed an indignant letter on the subject to his niece. "I am really *astonished*," he wrote, "at the conduct of your old Uncle the King, this invitation of the Prince of Orange and his sons, this forcing him on others, is very extraordinary

Not later than yesterday I got a half official communication from England, insinuating that it would be *highly* desirable that the visit of *your* relatives *should not take place this year*—qu'en dites-vous? The relations of the Queen and the King, therefore, to the God-knows what degree, are to come in shoals and rule the land, when *your relations* are to be *forbidden* the country, and that when, as you know, the whole of your relations have ever been very dutiful and kind to the King Really and truly I never heard or saw anything like it, and I hope it will a *little rouse your spirit*, now that slavery is even abolished in the British Colonies, I do not comprehend *why your lot alone should be to be kept a white little slavey in England*, for the pleasure of the Court, who never bought you, as I am not aware of their ever having gone to any expense on that head, or the King's ever having *spent a sixpence for your existence*

Oh, consistency and political or *other honesty*, where must one look for you!"

Shortly afterwards King Leopold came to England himself, and his reception was as cold at Windsor as it was warm at Kensington "To hear dear Uncle speak on any subject," the Princess wrote in her diary, "is like reading a highly instructive book, his conversation is so enlightened, so clear He is universally admitted to be one of the first politicians now extant He speaks so mildly, yet firmly and impartially, about politics Uncle tells me that Belgium is quite a pattern for its organization, its industry, and prosperity, the finances are in the greatest perfection Uncle is so beloved and revered by his Belgian subjects, that it must be a great compensation for all his extreme trouble " But her other uncle by no means shared her sentiments He could not, he said, put up with a water-drinker, and King Leopold would touch no wine "What's that you're drinking, sir?" he asked him one day at dinner "Water, sir" "God damn it, sir!" was the rejoinder "Why don't you drink wine? I never allow anybody to drink water at my table "

It was clear that before very long there would be a great explosion, and in the hot days of August it came The Duchess and the Princess had gone down to stay at Windsor for the King's birthday party, and the King himself, who was in London for the day to prorogue Parliament, paid a visit at Kensington Palace in their absence There he found that the Duchess had just appropriated, against his express orders, a suite of seventeen apartments for her own use He was extremely angry, and, when he returned to Windsor, after greeting the Princess with affection, he publicly rebuked the Duchess for what she had done But this was little to what followed On the next day was the birthday banquet, there were a hundred guests, the Duchess of Kent sat on the King's right hand, and the Princess Victoria opposite At the end of the dinner, in reply to the toast of the King's health, he rose, and, in a long, loud, passionate speech, poured out the vials of his wrath upon the Duchess She had, he declared, insulted him—grossly and continually, she had kept the Princess away from him in the most improper manner, she was surrounded by evil advisers, and was incompetent to act with propriety in the high station which she filled, but he would bear it no longer, he would have her to know he was King, he was determined that his authority should be respected, hence forward the Princess should attend at every Court function with the utmost

regularity, and he hoped to God that his life might be spared for six months longer, so that the calamity of a regency might be avoided, and the functions of the Crown pass directly to the heiress presumptive instead of into the hands of the "person now near him," upon whose conduct and capacity no reliance whatever could be placed. The flood of vituperation rushed on for what seemed an interminable period, while the Queen blushed scarlet, the Princess burst into tears, and the hundred guests sat aghast. The Duchess said not a word until the tirade was over and the company had retired, then in a tornado of rage and mortification, she called for her carriage and announced her immediate return to Kensington. It was only with the utmost difficulty that some show of a reconciliation was patched up, and the outraged lady was prevailed upon to put off her departure till the morrow.

Her troubles, however, were not over when she had shaken the dust of Windsor from her feet. In her own household she was pursued by bitterness and vexation of spirit. The apartments at Kensington were seething with subdued disaffection, with jealousies and animosities virulently intensified by long years of propinquity and spite.

There was a deadly feud between Sir John Conroy and Baroness Lehzen. But that was not all. The Duchess had grown too fond of her Major-Domo. There were familiarities, and one day the Princess Victoria discovered the fact. She confided what she had seen to the Baroness, and to the Baroness's beloved ally, Madame de Spath. Unfortunately, Madame de Spath could not hold her tongue, and was actually foolish enough to reprove the Duchess, whereupon she was instantly dismissed. It was not so easy to get rid of the Baroness. That lady, prudent and reserved, maintained an irreproachable demeanor. Her position was strongly entrenched, she had managed to secure the support of the King, and Sir John found that he could do nothing against her. But henceforward the household was divided into two camps. The Duchess supported Sir John with all the abundance of her authority, but the Baroness, too, had an adherent who could not be neglected. The Princess Victoria said nothing, but she had been much attached to Madame de Spath, and she adored her Lehzen. The Duchess knew only too well that in this horrid embroilment her daughter was against her. Chagrin, annoyance, moral reprobation, tossed her to and fro. She did her best to console herself with Sir John's affectionate loquacity, or with the sharp remarks of Lady Flora Hastings, one of her maids of honor, who had no love for the Baroness. The subject lent itself to satire, for the pastor's daughter, with all her airs of stiff superiority, had habits which betrayed her origin. Her passion for caraway seeds, for instance, was uncontrollable. Little bags of them came over to her from Hanover, and she sprinkled them on her bread and butter, her cabbage, and even her roast beef. Lady Flora could not resist a caustic observation, it was repeated to the Baroness, who pursed her lips in fury, and so the mischief grew.

V

The King had prayed that he might live till his niece was of age, and a few days before her eighteenth birthday—the date of her legal majority—a sudden

attack of illness very nearly carried him off. He recovered, however, and the Princess was able to go through her birthday festivities—a state ball and a drawing-room—with unperturbed enjoyment. “Count Zichy,” she noted in her diary, “is very good-looking in uniform, but not in plain clothes. Count Waldstein looks remarkably well in his pretty Hungarian uniform.” With the latter young gentleman she wished to dance, but there was an insurmountable difficulty. “He could not dance quadrilles, and, as in my station I unfortunately cannot valse and gallop, I could not dance with him.” Her birthday present from the King was of a pleasing nature, but it led to a painful domestic scene. In spite of the anger of her Belgian uncle, she had remained upon good terms with her English one. He had always been very kind to her, and the fact that he had quarreled with her mother did not appear to be a reason for disliking him. He was, she said, “odd, very odd and singular,” but “his intentions were often ill interpreted.” He now wrote her a letter, offering her an allowance of £10,000 a year, which he proposed should be at her own disposal, and independent of her mother. Lord Conyngham, the Lord Chamberlain, was instructed to deliver the letter into the Princess’s own hands. When he arrived at Kensington, he was ushered into the presence of the Duchess and the Princess, and, when he produced the letter, the Duchess put out her hand to take it. Lord Conyngham begged her Royal Highness’s pardon, and repeated the King’s commands. Thereupon the Duchess drew back, and the Princess took the letter. She immediately wrote to her uncle, accepting his kind proposal. The Duchess was much displeased, £4000 a year, she said, would be quite enough for Victoria, as for the remaining £6000, it would be only proper that she should have that herself.

King William had thrown off his illness, and returned to his normal life. Once more the royal circle at Windsor—their Majesties, the elder Princesses and some unfortunate Ambassador or Minister’s wife—might be seen ranged for hours round a mahogany table, while the Queen netted a purse, and the King slept, occasionally waking from his slumbers to observe, “Exactly so, ma’am, exactly so!” But this recovery was of short duration. The old man suddenly collapsed, with no specific symptoms besides an extreme weakness, he yet showed no power of rallying, and it was clear to every one that his death was now close at hand.

All eyes, all thoughts, turned towards the Princess Victoria, but she still remained, shut away in the seclusion of Kensington, a small, unknown figure, lost in the large shadow of her mother’s domination. The preceding year had in fact been an important one in her development. The soft tendrils of her mind had for the first time begun to stretch out towards unchildish things. In this King Leopold encouraged her. After his return to Brussels, he had resumed his correspondence in a more serious strain, he discussed the details of foreign politics, he laid down the duties of kingship, he pointed out the iniquitous foolishness of the newspaper press. On the latter subject, indeed, he wrote with some asperity. “If all the editors,” he said, “of the papers in the countries where the liberty of the press exists were to be assembled, we should have a *crew* to which you would *not* confide a dog that you would value, still less your honor and reputation.” On the functions of a monarch, his views were

unexceptionable "The business of the highest in a State," he wrote, "is certainly, in my opinion, to act with great impartiality and a spirit of justice for the good of all" At the same time the Princess's tastes were opening out Though she was still passionately devoted to riding and dancing, she now began to have a genuine love of music as well, and to drink in the roulades and arias of the Italian opera with high enthusiasm She even enjoyed reading poetry—at any rate, the poetry of Sir Walter Scott

When King Leopold learnt that King William's death was approaching, he wrote several long letters of excellent advice to his niece "In every letter I shall write to you," he said, "I mean to repeat to you, as a *fundamental rule, to be courageous, firm, and honest, as you have been till now*" For the rest, in the crisis that was approaching, she was not to be alarmed, but to trust in her 'good natural sense and the *truth*' of her character, she was to do nothing in a hurry, to hurt no one's *amour-propre*, and to continue her confidence in the Whig administration Not content with letters, however, King Leopold determined that the Princess should not lack personal guidance, and sent over to her aid the trusted friend whom, twenty years before, he had taken to his heart by the death-bed at Claremont Thus, once again, as if in accordance with some preordained destiny, the figure of Stockmar is discernible—inevitably present at a momentous hour

On June 18, the King was visibly sinking The Archbishop of Canterbury was by his side, with all the comforts of the church Nor did the holy words fall upon a rebellious spirit, for many years his Majesty had been a devout believer "When I was a young man," he once explained at a public banquet, "as well as I can remember, I believed in nothing but pleasure and folly—nothing at all But when I went to sea, got into a gale, and saw the wonders of the mighty deep, then I believed, and I have been a sincere Christian ever since" It was the anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo, and the dying man remembered it He should be glad to live, he said, over that day, he would never see another sunset "I hope your Majesty may live to see many," said Dr Chambers "Oh! that's quite another thing, that's quite another thing," was the answer One other sunset he did live to see, and he died in the early hours of the following morning It was on June 20, 1837

When all was over, the Archbishop and the Lord Chamberlain ordered a carriage, and drove post-haste from Windsor to Kensington They arrived at the Palace at five o'clock, and it was only with considerable difficulty that they gained admittance At six the Duchess woke up her daughter, and told her that the Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Conyngham were there, and wished to see her She got out of bed, put on her dressing-gown, and went, alone into the room where the messengers were standing Lord Conyngham fell on his knees, and officially announced the death of the King, the Archbishop added some personal details Looking at the bending, murmuring dignitaries before her, she knew that she was Queen of England "Since it has pleased Providence," she wrote that day in her journal, "to place me in this station, I shall do my utmost to fulfill my duty towards my country, I am very young, and perhaps in many, though not in all things, inexperienced, but I am sure that very few have more real good will and more real desire to do what is fit

and right than I have " But there was scant time for resolutions and reflections At once, affairs were thick upon her Stockmar came to breakfast, and gave some good advice She wrote a letter to her uncle Leopold, and a hurried note to her sister Feodora A letter came from the Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne, announcing his approaching arrival He came at nine, in full court dress, and kissed her hand She saw him alone, and repeated to him the lesson which, no doubt, the faithful Stockmar had taught her at breakfast "It has long been my intention to retain your Lordship and the rest of the present Ministry at the head of affairs", whereupon Lord Melbourne again kissed her hand and shortly after left her She then wrote a letter of condolence to Queen Adelaide At eleven, Lord Melbourne came again, and at half-past eleven she went downstairs into the red saloon to hold her first Council The great assembly of lords and notables, bishops, generals, and Ministers of State, saw the doors thrown open and a very short, very slim girl in deep plain mourning come into the room alone and move forward to her seat with extraordinary dignity and grace, they saw a countenance, not beautiful, but prepossessing—fair hair, blue prominent eyes, a small curved nose, an open mouth revealing the upper teeth, a tiny chin, a clear complexion, and, over all, the strangely mingled signs of innocence, of gravity, of youth, and of composure, they heard a high unwavering voice reading aloud with perfect clarity, and then, the ceremony was over, they saw the small figure rise and, with the same consummate grace, the same amazing dignity, pass out from among them, as she had come in, alone

III LORD MELBOURNE

THE NEW queen was almost entirely unknown to her subjects In her public appearances her mother had invariably dominated the scene Her private life had been that of a novice in a convent hardly a human being from the outside world had ever spoken to her, and no human being at all, except her mother and the Baroness Lehzen, had ever been alone with her in a room Thus it was not only the public at large that was in ignorance of everything concerning her, the inner circles of statesmen and officials and high-born ladies were equally in the dark When she suddenly emerged from this deep obscurity, the impression that she created was immediate and profound Her bearing at her first Council filled the whole gathering with astonishment and admiration, the Duke of Wellington, Sir Robert Peel, even the savage Croker, even the cold and caustic Greville—all were completely carried away Everything that was reported of her subsequent proceedings seemed to be of no less happy augury Her perceptions were quick, her decisions were sensible, her language was discreet, she performed her royal duties with extraordinary facility Among the outside public there was a great wave of enthusiasm Sentiment and romance were coming into fashion, and the spectacle of the little girl-queen, innocent, modest, with fair hair and pink cheeks, driving through her capital, filled the hearts of the beholders with raptures of affectionate loyalty What, above all, struck everybody with overwhelming force was

the contrast between Queen Victoria and her uncles. The nasty old men, debauched and selfish, pig headed and ridiculous, with their perpetual burden of debts, confusions, and disreputabilities—they had vanished like the snows of winter, and here at last, crowned and radiant, was the spring. Lord John Russell, in an elaborate oration, gave voice to the general sentiment. He hoped that Victoria might prove an Elizabeth without her tyranny, an Anne without her weakness. He asked England to pray that the illustrious Princess who had just ascended the throne with the purest intentions and the justest desires might see slavery abolished, crime diminished, and education improved. He trusted that her people would henceforward derive their strength, their conduct, and their loyalty from enlightened religious and moral principles, and that, so fortified, the reign of Victoria might prove celebrated to posterity and to all the nations of the earth.

Very soon, however, there were signs that the future might turn out to be not quite so simple and roseate as a delighted public dreamed. The "illustrious Princess" might perhaps, after all, have something within her which squared ill with the easy vision of a well-conducted heroine in an edifying story-book. The purest intentions and the justest desires? No doubt, but was that all? To those who watched closely, for instance, there might be something ominous in the curious contour of that little mouth. When, after her first Council, she crossed the ante-room and found her mother waiting for her, she said, "And now, Mamma, am I really and truly Queen?" "You see, my dear, that it is so." "Then, dear Mamma, I hope you will grant me the first request I make to you, as Queen. Let me be by myself for an hour." For an hour she remained in solitude. Then she reappeared, and gave a significant order: her bed was to be moved out of her mother's room. It was the doom of the Duchess of Kent. The long years of waiting were over at last, the moment of a lifetime had come, her daughter was Queen of England, and that very moment brought her own annihilation. She found herself, absolutely and irretrievably, shut off from every vestige of influence, of confidence, of power. She was surrounded, indeed, by all the outward signs of respect and consideration, but that only made the inward truth of her position the more intolerable. Through the mingled formalities of Court etiquette and filial duty, she could never penetrate to Victoria. She was unable to conceal her disappointment and her rage. "*Il n'y a plus d'avenir pour moi*," she exclaimed to Madame de Lieven, "*je ne suis plus rien*." For eighteen years, she said, this child had been the sole object of her existence, of her thoughts, her hopes, and now—no! she would not be comforted, she had lost everything, she was to the last degree unhappy. Sailing, so gallantly and so pertinaciously, through the buffeting storms of life, the stately vessel, with sails still swelling and pennons flying, had put into harbor at last, to find there nothing—a land of bleak desolation.

Within a month of the accession, the realities of the new situation assumed a visible shape. The whole royal household moved from Kensington to Buckingham Palace, and, in the new abode, the Duchess of Kent was given a suite of apartments entirely separate from the Queen's. By Victoria herself the change was welcomed, though, at the moment of departure, she could afford to be sentimental. "Though I rejoice to go into B. P. for many reasons," she

wrote in her diary, "it is not without feelings of regret that I shall bid adieu *for ever* to this my birthplace, where I have been born and bred, and to which I am really attached!" Her memory lingered for a moment over visions of the past her sister's wedding, pleasant balls and *delicious* concerts and there were other recollections "I have gone through painful and disagreeable scenes here, 'tis true," she concluded, "but still I am fond of the poor old palace"

At the same time she took another decided step She had determined that she would see no more of Sir John Conroy She rewarded his past services with liberality he was given a baronetcy and a pension of £3000 a year, he remained a member of the Duchess's household, but his personal intercourse with the Queen came to an abrupt conclusion

II

It was clear that these interior changes—whatever else they might betoken—marked the triumph of one person—the Baroness Lehzen The pastor's daughter observed the ruin of her enemies Discreet and victorious, she remained in possession of the field More closely than ever did she cleave to the side of her mistress, her pupil, and her friend, and in the recesses of the palace her mysterious figure was at once invisible and omnipresent When the Queen's Ministers came in at one door, the Baroness went out by another, when they retired, she immediately returned Nobody knew—nobody ever will know—the precise extent and the precise nature of her influence She herself declared that she never discussed public affairs with the Queen, that she was concerned with private matters only—with private letters and the details of private life Certainly her hand is everywhere discernible in Victoria's early correspondence The Journal is written in the style of a child, the Letters are not so simple, they are the work of a child, rearranged—with the minimum of alteration, no doubt, and yet perceptibly—by a governess And the governess was no fool narrow, jealous, provincial, she might be, but she was an acute and vigorous woman, who had gained by a peculiar insight, a peculiar ascendancy That ascendancy she meant to keep No doubt it was true that technically she took no part in public business, but the distinction between what is public and what is private is always a subtle one, and in the case of a reigning sovereign—as the next few years were to show—it is often imaginary Considering all things—the characters of the persons, and the character of the times—it was something more than a mere matter of private interest that the bedroom of Baroness Lehzen at Buckingham Palace should have been next door to the bedroom of the Queen

But the influence wielded by the Baroness, supreme as it seemed within its own sphere, was not unlimited, there were other forces at work For one thing, the faithful Stockmar had taken up his residence in the palace During the twenty years which had elapsed since the death of the Princess Charlotte his experiences had been varied and remarkable The unknown counselor of a disappointed princeling had gradually risen to a position of European importance His devotion to his master had been not only whole-hearted but cau

nous and wise. It was Stockmar's advice that had kept Prince Leopold in England during the critical years which followed his wife's death, and had thus secured to him the essential requisite of a *point d'appui* in the country of his adoption. It was Stockmar's discretion which had smoothed over the embarrassments surrounding the Prince's acceptance and rejection of the Greek crown. It was Stockmar who had induced the Prince to become the constitutional Sovereign of Belgium. Above all, it was Stockmar's tact, honesty, and diplomatic skill which, through a long series of arduous and complicated negotiations, had led to the guarantee of Belgian neutrality by the Great Powers. His labors had been rewarded by a German barony and by the complete confidence of King Leopold. Nor was it only in Brussels that he was treated with respect and listened to with attention. The statesmen who governed England—Lord Grey, Sir Robert Peel, Lord Palmerston, Lord Melbourne—had learnt to put a high value upon his probity and his intelligence. "He is one of the cleverest fellows I ever saw," said Lord Melbourne—"the most discreet man, the most well-judging, and most cool man." And Lord Palmerston cited Baron Stockmar as the only absolutely disinterested man he had come across in life. At last he was able to retire to Coburg, and to enjoy for a few years the society of the wife and children whom his labors in the service of his master had hitherto only allowed him to visit at long intervals for a month or two at a time. But in 1836 he had been again entrusted with an important negotiation, which he had brought to a successful conclusion in the marriage of Prince Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg, a nephew of King Leopold's, with Queen Maria II of Portugal. The House of Coburg was beginning to spread over Europe, and the establishment of the Baron at Buckingham Palace in 1837 was to be the prelude of another and a more momentous advance.

King Leopold and his counselor provide in their careers an example of the curious diversity of human ambitions. The desires of man are wonderfully various, but no less various are the means by which those desires may reach satisfaction, and so the work of the world gets done. The correct mind of Leopold craved for the whole apparatus of royalty. Mere power would have held no attractions for him, he must be an actual king—the crowned head of a people. It was not enough to do, it was essential also to be recognized, anything else would not be fitting. The greatness that he dreamt of was surrounded by every appropriate circumstance. To be a Majesty, to be a cousin of Sovereigns, to marry a Bourbon for diplomatic ends, to correspond with the Queen of England, to be very stiff and very punctual, to found a dynasty, to bore ambassadors into fits, to live, on the highest pinnacle, an exemplary life devoted to the public service—such were his objects, and such, in fact, were his achievements. The "Marquis Peu-à-peu," as George IV called him, had what he wanted. But this would never have been the case if it had not happened that the ambition of Stockmar took a form exactly complementary to his own. The sovereignty that the Baron sought for was by no means obvious. The satisfaction of his essential being lay in obscurity, in invisibility—in passing, unobserved, through a hidden entrance, into the very central chamber of power, and in sitting there, quietly, pulling the subtle strings that set the wheels of the whole world in motion. A very few people, in very high places, and

exceptionally well informed, knew that Baron Stockmar was a most important person that was enough. The fortunes of the master and the servant, intimately interacting, rose together. The Baron's secret skill had given Leopold his unexceptionable kingdom, and Leopold, in his turn, as time went on, was able to furnish the Baron with more and more keys to more and more back doors.

Stockmar took up his abode in the Palace partly as the emissary of King Leopold, but more particularly as the friend and adviser of a queen who was almost a child, and who, no doubt, would be much in need of advice and friendship. For it would be a mistake to suppose that either of these two men was actuated by a vulgar selfishness. The King, indeed, was very well aware on which side his bread was buttered, during an adventurous and checkered life he had acquired a shrewd knowledge of the world's workings, and he was ready enough to use that knowledge to strengthen his position and to spread his influence. But then, the firmer his position and the wider his influence, the better for Europe, of that he was quite certain. And besides, he was a constitutional monarch, and it would be highly indecorous in a constitutional monarch to have any aims that were low or personal. As for Stockmar, the disinterestedness which Palmerston had noted was undoubtedly a basic element in his character. The ordinary schemer is always an optimist, and Stockmar, racked by dyspepsia and haunted by gloomy forebodings, was a constitutionally melancholy man. A schemer, no doubt, he was, but he schemed distrustfully, splenetically, to do good. To do good! What nobler end could a man scheme for? Yet it is perilous to scheme at all.

With Lehzen to supervise every detail of her conduct, with Stockmar in the next room, so full of wisdom and experience of affairs, with her Uncle Leopold's letters, too, pouring out so constantly their stream of encouragements, general reflections, and highly valuable tips, Victoria, even had she been without other guidance, would have stood in no lack of private counselors. But other guidance she had, for all these influences paled before a new star, of the first magnitude, which, rising suddenly upon her horizon, immediately dominated her life.

III

William Lamb, Viscount Melbourne, was fifty-eight years of age, and had been for the last three years Prime Minister of England. In every outward respect he was one of the most fortunate of mankind. He had been born into the midst of riches, brilliance, and power. His mother, fascinating and intelligent, had been a great Whig hostess, and he had been bred up as a member of that radiant society which, during the last quarter of the eighteenth century, concentrated within itself the ultimate perfections of a hundred years of triumphant aristocracy. Nature had given him beauty and brains, the unexpected death of an elder brother brought him wealth, a peerage, and the possibility of high advancement. Within that charmed circle, whatever one's personal disabilities, it was difficult to fail, and to him, with all his advantages, success was well-nigh unavoidable. With little effort, he attained political eminence. On the triumph of the Whigs he became one of the leading members of the Government, and when Lord Grey retired from the premiership he quietly

stepped into the vacant place Nor was it only in the visible signs of fortune that Fate had been kind to him Bound to succeed, and to succeed easily, he was gifted with so fine a nature that his success became him His mind, at once supple and copious, his temperament, at once calm and sensitive, enabled him not merely to work, but to live with perfect facility and with the grace of strength In society he was a notable talker, a captivating companion, a charming man If one looked deeper, one saw at once that he was not ordinary, that the piquancies of his conversation and his manner—his free and-easy vaguenesses, his abrupt questions, his lollings and loungings, his innumerable oaths—were something more than an amusing ornament, were the outward manifestation of an individuality that was fundamental

The precise nature of this individuality was very difficult to gauge it was dubious, complex, perhaps self contradictory Certainly there was an ironical discordance between the inner history of the man and his apparent fortunes He owed all he had to his birth, and his birth was shameful, it was known well enough that his mother had passionately loved Lord Egremont, and that Lord Melbourne was not his father His marriage, which had seemed to be the crown of his youthful ardors, was a long, miserable, desperate failure the incredible Lady Caroline,

with pleasures too refined to please,
With too much spirit to be e'er at ease,
With too much quickness to be ever taught,
With too much thinking to have common thought,

was very nearly the destruction of his life When at last he emerged from the anguish and confusion of her folly, her extravagance, her rage, her despair, and her devotion, he was left alone with endless memories of intermingled farce and tragedy, and an only son, who was an imbecile But there was something else that he owed to Lady Caroline While she whirled with Byron in a hectic frenzy of love and fashion, he had stayed at home in an indulgence bordering on cynicism, and occupied his solitude with reading It was thus that he had acquired those habits of study, that love of learning, and that wide and accurate knowledge of ancient and modern literature, which formed so unexpected a part of his mental equipment His passion for reading never deserted him, even when he was Prime Minister he found time to master every new important book With an incongruousness that was characteristic, his favorite study was theology An accomplished classical scholar, he was deeply read in the Fathers of the Church, heavy volumes of commentary and exegesis he examined with scrupulous diligence, and at any odd moment he might be found turning over the pages of the Bible To the ladies whom he most liked he would lend some learned work on the Revelation, crammed with marginal notes in his own hand, or Dr Lardner's "Observations upon the Jewish Errors with respect to the Conversion of Mary Magdalene" The more pious among them had high hopes that these studies would lead him into the right way, but of this there were no symptoms in his after-dinner conversations

The paradox of his political career was no less curious By temperament an aristocrat, by conviction a conservative, he came to power as the leader

of the popular party, the party of change. He had profoundly disliked the Reform Bill, which he had only accepted at last as a necessary evil, and the Reform Bill lay at the root of the very existence, of the very meaning, of his government. He was far too skeptical to believe in progress of any kind. Things were best as they were—or rather, they were least bad. “You’d better try to do no good,” was one of his dictums, “and then you’ll get into no scrapes.” Education at best was futile, education of the poor was positively dangerous. The factory children? “Oh, if you’d only have the goodness to leave them alone!” Free Trade was a delusion, the ballot was nonsense, and there was no such thing as a democracy. Nevertheless, he was not a reactionary, he was simply an opportunist. The whole duty of government, he said, was “to prevent crime and to preserve contracts.” All one could really hope to do was to carry on. He himself carried on in a remarkable manner—with perpetual compromises, with fluctuations and contradictions, with every kind of weakness, and yet with shrewdness, with gentleness, even with conscientiousness, and a light and airy mastery of men and of events. He conducted the transactions of business with extraordinary nonchalance. Important persons, ushered up for some grave interview, found him in a touseled bed, littered with books and papers, or vaguely shaving in a dressing room, but, when they went downstairs again, they would realize that somehow or other they had been pumped. When he had to receive a deputation, he could hardly ever do so with becoming gravity. The worthy delegates of the tallow-chandlers, or the Society for the Abolition of Capital Punishment, were distressed and mortified when, in the midst of their speeches, the Prime Minister became absorbed in blowing a feather, or suddenly cracked an unseemly joke. How could they have guessed that he had spent the night before diligently getting up the details of their case? He hated patronage and the making of appointments—a feeling rare in Ministers. “As for the Bishops,” he burst out, “I positively believe they die to vex me.” But when at last the appointment was made, it was made with keen discrimination. His colleagues observed another symptom—was it of his irresponsibility or his wisdom? He went to sleep in the Cabinet.

Probably, if he had been born a little earlier, he would have been a simpler and a happier man. As it was, he was a child of the eighteenth century whose lot was cast in a new, difficult, unsympathetic age. He was an autumn rose. With all his gracious amenity, his humor, his happy-go-lucky ways, a deep disquietude possessed him. A sentimental cynic, a skeptical believer, he was restless and melancholy at heart. Above all, he could never harden himself, those sensitive petals shivered in every wind. Whatever else he might be, one thing was certain. Lord Melbourne was always human, supremely human—too human, perhaps.

And now, with old age upon him, his life took a sudden, new, extraordinary turn. He became, in the twinkling of an eye, the intimate adviser and the daily companion of a young girl who had stepped all at once from a nursery to a throne. His relations with women had been, like everything else about him, ambiguous. Nobody had ever been able quite to gauge the shifting, emotional complexities of his married life, Lady Caroline vanished, but his peculiar susceptibilities remained. Female society of some kind or other was

necessary to him, and he did not stint himself, a great part of every day was invariably spent in it. The feminine element in him made it easy, made it natural and inevitable for him to be the friend of a great many women; but the masculine element in him was strong as well. In such circumstances it is also easy, it is even natural, perhaps it is even inevitable, to be something more than a friend. There were rumors and combustions: Lord Melbourne was twice a co-respondent in a divorce action, but on each occasion he won his suit. The lovely Lady Brandon, the unhappy and brilliant Mrs. Norton the law exonerated them both. Beyond that hung an impenetrable veil. But at any rate it was clear that, with such a record, the Prime Minister's position in Buckingham Palace must be a highly delicate one. However, he was used to delicacies, and he met the situation with consummate success. His behavior was from the first moment impeccable. His manner towards the young Queen mingled, with perfect facility, the watchfulness and the respect of a statesman and a courtier with the tender solicitude of a parent. He was at once reverential and affectionate, at once the servant and the guide. At the same time the habits of his life underwent a surprising change. His comfortable, unpunctual days became subject to the unaltering routine of a palace, no longer did he sprawl on sofas, not a single "damn" escaped his lips. The man of the world who had been the friend of Byron and the regent, the talker whose paradoxes had held Holland House enthralled, the cynic whose ribaldries had enlivened so many deep potations, the lover whose soft words had captivated such beauty and such passion and such wit, might now be seen, evening after evening, talking with infinite politeness to a schoolgirl, bolt upright, amid the silence and the rigidity of Court etiquette.

IV

On her side, Victoria was instantaneously fascinated by Lord Melbourne. The good report of Stockmar had no doubt prepared the way, Lehzen was wisely propitiated, and the first highly favorable impression was never afterwards belied. She found him perfect, and perfect in her sight he remained. Her absolute and unconcealed adoration was very natural, what innocent young creature could have resisted, in any circumstances, the charm and the devotion of such a man? But, in her situation, there was a special influence which gave a peculiar glow to all she felt. After years of emptiness and dullness and suppression, she had come suddenly, in the heyday of youth, into freedom and power. She was mistress of herself, of great domains and palaces, she was Queen of England. Responsibilities and difficulties she might have, no doubt, and in heavy measure, but one feeling dominated and absorbed all others—the feeling of joy. Everything pleased her. She was in high spirits from morning till night. Mr. Creevey, grown old now, and very near his end, catching a glimpse of her at Brighton, was much amused, in his sharp fashion, by the ingenuous gayety of "little Vic"—"A more homely little being you never beheld, *when she is at her ease*, and she is evidently dying to be always more so. She laughs in real earnest, opening her mouth as wide as it can go, showing not very pretty gums. She eats quite as heartily as she laughs,

I think I may say she gobbles She blushes and laughs every instant in so natural a way as to disarm anybody" But it was not merely when she was laughing or gobbling that she enjoyed herself, the performance of her official duties gave her intense satisfaction "I really have immensely to do," she wrote in her Journal a few days after her accession, "I receive so many communications from my Ministers, but I like it very much" And again, a week later, "I repeat what I said before that I have *so many* communications from the Ministers, and from me to them, and I get so many papers to sign every day, that I have always a *very great* deal to do I *delight* in this work" Through the girl's immaturity the vigorous predestined tastes of the woman were pushing themselves into existence with eager velocity, with delicious force

One detail of her happy situation deserves particular mention Apart from the splendor of her social position and the momentousness of her political one, she was a person of great wealth As soon as Parliament met, an annuity of £385,000 was settled upon her When the expenses of her household had been discharged, she was left with £68,000 a year of her own She enjoyed besides the revenues of the Duchy of Lancaster, which amounted annually to over £27,000 The first use to which she put her money was characteristic she paid off her father's debts In money matters, no less than in other matters, she was determined to be correct She had the instincts of a man of business, and she never could have borne to be in a position that was financially unsound

With youth and happiness gilding every hour, the days passed merrily enough And each day hinged upon Lord Melbourne Her diary shows us, with undiminished clarity, the life of the young sovereign during the early months of her reign—a life satisfactorily regular, full of delightful business, a life of simple pleasures, mostly physical—riding, eating, dancing—a quick, easy, highly unsophisticated life, sufficient unto itself The light of the morning is upon it, and, in the rosy radiance, the figure of "Lord M" emerges, glorified and supreme If she is the heroine of the story, he is the hero, but indeed they are more than hero and heroine, for there are no other characters at all Lehzen, the Baron, Uncle Leopold, are unsubstantial shadows—the incidental supers of the piece Her paradise was peopled by two persons, and surely that was enough One sees them together still, a curious couple, strangely united in those artless pages, under the magical illumination of that dawn of eighty years ago the polished high fine gentleman with the whitening hair and whiskers and the thick dark eyebrows and the mobile lips and the big expressive eyes, and beside him the tiny Queen—fair, slim, elegant, active, in her plain girl's dress and little tippet, looking up at him earnestly, adoringly, with eyes blue and projecting, and half-open mouth So they appear upon every page of the Journal, upon every page Lord M is present, Lord M is speaking, Lord M is being amusing, instructive, delightful, and affectionate at once, while Victoria drinks in the honied words, laughs till she shows her gums, tries hard to remember, and runs off, as soon as she is left alone, to put it all down Their long conversations touched upon a multitude of topics Lord M would criticize books, throw out a remark or two on the British Constitution, make some passing reflections on human life, and tell story after story of the great people of the eighteenth century Then there would be business—a despatch perhaps

from Lord Durham in Canada, which Lord M would read But first he must explain a little "He said that I must know that Canada originally belonged to the French, and was only ceded to the English in 1760, when it was taken in an expedition under Wolfe 'a very daring enterprise,' he said Canada was then entirely French, and the British only came afterwards Lord M explained this very clearly (and much better than I have done) and said a good deal more about it He then read me Durham's despatch, which is a very long one and took him more than $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour to read Lord M read it beautifully with that fine soft voice of his, and with so much expression, so that it is needless to say I was much interested by it" And then the talk would take a more personal turn Lord M would describe his boyhood, and she would learn that "he wore his hair long, as all boys then did, till he was 17 (*how* handsome he must have looked!)" Or she would find out about his queer tastes and habits—how he never carried a watch, which seemed quite extraordinary "I always ask the servant what o'clock it is, and then he tells me what he likes," said Lord M Or, as the rooks wheeled about round the trees, "in a manner which indicated rain," he would say that he could sit looking at them for an hour, and "was quite surprised at my disliking them Lord M said, 'The rooks are my delight'"

The day's routine, whether in London or at Windsor, was almost invariable The morning was devoted to business and Lord M In the afternoon the whole Court went out riding The Queen, in her velvet riding-habit and a top-hat with a veil draped about the brim, headed the cavalcade, and Lord M rode beside her The lively troupe went fast and far, to the extreme exhilaration of Her Majesty Back in the Palace again, there was still time for a little more fun before dinner—a game of battledore and shuttlecock perhaps, or a romp along the galleries with some children Dinner came, and the ceremonial decidedly tightened The gentleman of highest rank sat on the right hand of the Queen, on her left—it soon became an established rule—sat Lord Melbourne After the ladies had left the dining room, the gentlemen were not permitted to remain behind for very long, indeed, the short time allowed them for their wine-drinking formed the subject—so it was rumored—of one of the very few disputes between the Queen and her Prime Minister, but her determination carried the day, and from that moment after-dinner drunkenness began to go out of fashion When the company was reassembled in the drawing-room the etiquette was stiff For a few moments the Queen spoke in turn to each one of her guests, and during these short uneasy colloquies the aridity of royalty was apt to become painfully evident One night Mr Greville, the Clerk of the Privy Council, was present, his turn soon came, the middle-aged, hard faced *viveur* was addressed by his young hostess "Have you been riding today, Mr Greville?" asked the Queen "No, Madam, I have not," replied Mr Greville "It was a fine day," continued the Queen "Yes, Madam, a very fine day," said Mr Greville "It was rather cold, though," said the Queen "It *was* rather cold, Madam," said Mr Greville "Your sister, Lady Frances Egerton, rides, I think, doesn't she?" said the Queen "She does ride some times, Madam," said Mr Greville There was a pause, after which Mr Greville ventured to take the lead, though he did not venture to change the subject

"Has your Majesty been riding today?" asked Mr Greville "Oh, yes, a very long ride," answered the Queen with animation "Has your Majesty got a nice horse?" said Mr Greville "Oh, a very nice horse," said the Queen It was over Her Majesty gave a smile and an inclination of the head, Mr Greville a profound bow, and the next conversation began with the next gentleman When all the guests had been disposed of, the Duchess of Kent sat down to her whist, while everybody else was ranged about the round table Lord Melbourne sat beside the Queen, and talked pertinaciously—very often *a propos* to the contents of one of the large albums of engravings with which the round table was covered—until it was half-past eleven and time to go to bed

Occasionally, there were little diversions the evening might be spent at the opera or at the play Next morning the royal critic was careful to note down her impressions "It was Shakespeare's tragedy of *Hamlet*, and we came in at the beginning of it Mr Charles Kean (son of old Kean) acted the part of Hamlet, and I must say beautifully His conception of this very difficult, and I may almost say incomprehensible, character is admirable, his delivery of all the fine long speeches quite beautiful, he is excessively graceful and all his actions and attitudes are good, though not at all good looking in face I came away just as *Hamlet* was over" Later on, she went to see Macready in *King Lear* The story was new to her, she knew nothing about it, and at first she took very little interest in what was passing on the stage, she preferred to chatter and laugh with the Lord Chamberlain But, as the play went on, her mood changed, her attention was fixed, and then she laughed no more Yet she was puzzled, it seemed a strange, a horrible business What did Lord M think? Lord M thought it was a very fine play, but to be sure, "a rough, coarse play, written for those times, with exaggerated characters" "I'm glad you've seen it," he added But, undoubtedly, the evenings which she enjoyed most were those on which there was dancing She was always ready enough to seize any excuse—the arrival of cousins—a birthday—a gathering of young people—to give the command for that Then, when the band played, and the figures of the dancers swayed to the music, and she felt her own figure swaying too, with youthful spirits so close on every side—then her happiness reached its height, her eyes sparkled, she must go on and on into the small hours of the morning For a moment Lord M himself was forgotten

V

The months flew past The summer was over "the pleasantest summer I EVER passed in *my life*, and I shall never forget this first summer of my reign" With surprising rapidity, another summer was upon her The coronation came and went—a curious dream The antique, intricate, endless ceremonial worked itself out as best it could, like some machine of gigantic complexity which was a little out of order The small central figure went through her gyrations She sat, she walked, she prayed, she carried about an orb that was almost too heavy to hold, the Archbishop of Canterbury came and crushed a ring upon the wrong finger, so that she was ready to cry out with the pain, old Lord Rolle tripped up in his mantle and fell down the steps as he was doing

homage, she was taken into a side chapel, where the altar was covered with a table-cloth, sandwiches, and bottles of wine, she perceived Lehzen in an upper box and exchanged a smile with her as she sat, robed and crowned, on the Confessor's throne "I shall ever remember this day as the *proudest* of my life," she noted But the pride was soon merged once more in youth and simplicity When she returned to Buckingham Palace at last she was not tired, she ran up to her private rooms, doffed her splendors, and gave her dog Dash its evening bath

Life flowed on again with its accustomed smoothness—though, of course, the smoothness was occasionally disturbed For one thing, there was the distressing behavior of Uncle Leopold The King of the Belgians had not been able to resist attempting to make use of his family position to further his diplomatic ends But, indeed, why should there be any question of resisting? Was not such a course of conduct, far from being a temptation, simply *selon les regles*? What were royal marriages for, if they did not enable sovereigns, in spite of the hindrances of constitutions, to control foreign politics? For the highest purposes, of course, that was understood The Queen of England was his niece—more than that—almost his daughter, his confidential agent was living, in a position of intimate favor, at her court Surely, in such circumstances, it would be preposterous, it would be positively incorrect, to lose the opportunity of bending to his wishes by means of personal influence, behind the backs of the English Ministers, the foreign policy of England

He set about the task with becoming precautions He continued in his letters his admirable advice Within a few days of her accession, he recommended the young Queen to lay emphasis, on every possible occasion, upon her English birth, to praise the English nation, "the Established Church I also recommend strongly, you cannot, without *pledging* yourself to anything *particular*, say too much on the subject" And then "before you decide on anything important I should be glad if you would consult me, this would also have the advantage of giving you time", nothing was more injurious than to be hurried into wrong decisions unawares His niece replied at once with all the accustomed warmth of her affection, but she wrote hurriedly—and, perhaps, a trifle vaguely too "Your advice is always of the *greatest importance* to me," she said

Had he, possibly, gone too far? He could not be certain, perhaps Victoria *had* been hurried In any case, he would be careful, he would draw back—*pour mieux sauter*, he added to himself with a smile In his next letters he made no reference to his suggestion of consultations with himself, he merely pointed out the wisdom, in general, of refusing to decide upon important questions off hand So far, his advice was taken, and it was noticed that the Queen, when applications were made to her, rarely gave an immediate answer Even with Lord Melbourne, it was the same, when he asked for her opinion upon any subject, she would reply that she would think it over, and tell him her conclusions next day

King Leopold's counsels continued The Princess de Lieven, he said, was a dangerous woman, there was reason to think that she would make attempts to pry into what did not concern her, let Victoria beware "A rule which I cannot sufficiently recommend is *never to permit* people to speak on subjects

concerning yourself or your affairs, without you having yourself desired them to do so" Should such a thing occur, "change the conversation, and make the individual feel that he has made a mistake" This piece of advice was also taken, for it fell out as the King had predicted Madame de Lieven sought an audience, and appeared to be verging towards confidential topics, whereupon the Queen, becoming slightly embarrassed, talked of nothing but commonplaces The individual felt that she had made a mistake

The King's next warning was remarkable Letters, he pointed out, are almost invariably read in the post This was inconvenient, no doubt, but the fact, once properly grasped, was not without its advantages "I will give you an example we are still plagued by Prussia concerning those fortresses, now to tell the Prussian Government many things, which we *should not like* to tell them officially, the Minister is going to write a despatch to our man at Berlin, sending it *by post*, the Prussians *are sure* to read it, and to learn in this way what we wish them to hear" Analogous circumstances might very probably occur in England "I tell you the *trick*," wrote His Majesty, "that you should be able to guard against it" Such were the subtleties of constitutional sovereignty

It seemed that the time had come for another step The King's next letter was full of foreign politics—the situation in Spain and Portugal, the character of Louis Philippe, and he received a favorable answer Victoria, it is true, began by saying that she had shown the *political part* of his letter to Lord Melbourne, but she proceeded to a discussion of foreign affairs It appeared that she was not unwilling to exchange observations on such matters with her uncle So far so good But King Leopold was still cautious, though a crisis was impending in his diplomacy, he still hung back, at last, however, he could keep silence no longer It was of the utmost importance to him that, in his maneuverings with France and Holland, he should have, or at any rate appear to have, English support But the English Government appeared to adopt a neutral attitude, it was too bad, not to be for him was to be against him—could they not see that? Yet, perhaps, they were only wavering, and a little pressure upon them from Victoria might still save all He determined to put the case before her, delicately yet forcibly—just as he saw it himself "All I want from your kind Majesty," he wrote, "is, that you will *occasionally* express to your Ministers, and particularly to good Lord Melbourne, that, as far as it is *compatible* with the interests of *your own* dominions, you do *not* wish that your Government should take the lead in such measures as might in a short time bring on the *destruction* of this country, as well as that of your uncle and his family" The result of this appeal was unexpected, there was dead silence for more than a week When Victoria at last wrote, she was prodigal of her affection—"it would, indeed, my dearest Uncle, be *very wrong* of you, if you thought my feelings of warm and devoted attachment to you, and of great affection for you, could be changed—*nothing* can ever change them"—but her references to foreign politics, though they were lengthy and elaborate, were non-committal in the extreme, they were almost cast in an official and diplomatic form Her Ministers, she said, entirely shared her views upon the subject, she understood and sympathized with the difficulties of her beloved uncle's position, and he

might rest assured "that both Lord Melbourne and Lord Palmerston are most anxious at all times for the prosperity and welfare of Belgium" That was all The King in his reply declared himself delighted, and reechoed the affectionate protestations of his niece "My dearest and most beloved Victoria," he said, "you have written me a *very dear* and long letter, which has given me *great pleasure and satisfaction*" He would not admit that he had had a rebuff

A few months later the crisis came King Leopold determined to make a bold push, and to carry Victoria with him, this time, by a display of royal vigor and avuncular authority In an abrupt, an almost peremptory letter, he laid his case, once more, before his niece "You know from experience," he wrote, "that I *never ask anything of you*" But, as I said before, if we are not careful we may see serious consequences which may affect more or less everybody, and *this* ought to be the object of our most anxious attention I remain, my dear Victoria, your affectionate uncle, Leopold R" The Queen immediately despatched this letter to Lord Melbourne, who replied with a carefully thought out form of words, signifying nothing whatever, which, he suggested, she should send to her uncle She did so, copying out the elaborate formula, with a liberal scattering of "dear Uncles" interspersed, and she concluded her letter with a message of "affectionate love to Aunt Louise and the children" Then at last King Leopold was obliged to recognize the facts His next letter contained no reference at all to politics "I am glad," he wrote, "to find that you like Brighton better than last year I think Brighton very agreeable at this time of the year, till the east winds set in The pavilion, besides, is comfortable, that cannot be denied Before my marriage, it was there that I met the Regent Charlotte afterwards came with old Queen Charlotte How distant all this already, but still how present to one's memory" Like poor Madame de Lieven, His Majesty felt that he had made a mistake

Nevertheless, he could not quite give up all hope Another opportunity offered, and he made another effort—but there was not very much conviction in it, and it was immediately crushed "My dear Uncle," the Queen wrote, "I have to thank you for your last letter which I received on Sunday Though you seem not to dislike my political sparks, I think it is better not to increase them, as they might finally take fire, particularly as I see with regret that upon this one subject we cannot agree I shall, therefore, limit myself to my expressions of very sincere wishes for the welfare and prosperity of Belgium" After that, it was clear that there was no more to be said Henceforward there is audible in the King's letters a curiously elegiac note "My dearest Victoria, your *delightful* little letter has just arrived and went like *an arrow to my heart* Yes, my beloved Victoria! *I do love you tenderly* I love you *for yourself*, and I love in you the dear child whose welfare I tenderly watched" He had gone through much, yet, if life had its disappointments, it had its satisfactions too "I have all the honors that can be given, and I am, politically speaking, very solidly established" But there were other things besides politics, there were romantic yearnings in his heart "The only longing I still have is for the Orient, where I perhaps shall once end my life, rising in the west and setting in the east" As for his devotion to his niece, that could never end "I never press my services on you, nor my councils, though I may say with some truth

that from the extraordinary fate which the higher powers had ordained for me, my experience, both political and of private life, is great I am *always ready* to be useful to you *when and where* it may be, and I repeat it, *all I want in return is some little sincere affection from you*"

VI

The correspondence with King Leopold was significant of much that still lay partly hidden in the character of Victoria Her attitude towards her uncle had never wavered for a moment To all his advances she had presented an absolutely unyielding front The foreign policy of England was not his province, it was hers and her Ministers', his insinuations, his entreaties, his struggles—all were quite useless, and he must understand that this was so The rigidity of her position was the more striking owing to the respectfulness and the affection with which it was accompanied From start to finish the unmoved Queen remained the devoted niece Leopold himself must have envied such perfect correctitude, but what may be admirable in an elderly statesman is alarming in a maiden of nineteen And privileged observers were not without their fears The strange mixture of ingenuous light heartedness and fixed determination, of frankness and reticence, of childishness and pride, seemed to augur a future that was perplexed and full of dangers As time passed the less pleasant qualities in this curious composition revealed themselves more often and more seriously There were signs of an imperious, a peremptory temper, an egotism that was strong and hard It was noticed that the palace etiquette, far from relaxing, grew ever more and more inflexible By some, this was attributed to Lehzen's influence, but, if that was so, Lehzen had a willing pupil, for the slightest infringements of the freezing rules of regularity and deference were invariably and immediately visited by the sharp and haughty glances of the Queen Yet Her Majesty's eyes, crushing as they could be, were less crushing than her mouth The self-will depicted in those small projecting teeth and that small receding chin was of a more dismaying kind than that which a powerful jaw betokens, it was a self-will imperturbable, impenetrable, unintelligent, a self-will dangerously akin to obstinacy And the obstinacy of monarchs is not as that of other men

Within two years of her accession, the storm-clouds which, from the first, had been dimly visible on the horizon, gathered and burst Victoria's relations with her mother had not improved The Duchess of Kent, still surrounded by all the galling appearances of filial consideration, remained in Buckingham Palace a discarded figure, powerless and inconsolable Sir John Conroy, banished from the presence of the Queen, still presided over the Duchess's household, and the hostilities of Kensington continued unabated in the new surroundings Lady Flora Hastings still cracked her malicious jokes, the animosity of the Baroness was still unappeased One day, Lady Flora found the joke was turned against her Early in 1839, traveling in the suite of the Duchess, she had returned from Scotland in the same carriage with Sir John A change in her figure became the subject of an unseemly jest, tongues wagged, and the jest grew serious It was whispered that Lady Flora was with child The state of

her health seemed to confirm the suspicion, she consulted Sir James Clark, the royal physician, and, after the consultation, Sir James let his tongue wag, too. On this, the scandal flared up sky-high. Every one was talking, the Baroness was not surprised, the Duchess rallied tumultuously to the support of her lady, the Queen was informed. At last the extraordinary expedient of a medical examination was resorted to, during which Sir James, according to Lady Flora, behaved with brutal rudeness, while a second doctor was extremely polite. Finally, both physicians signed a certificate entirely exculpating the lady. But this was by no means the end of the business. The Hastings family, socially a very powerful one, threw itself into the fray with all the fury of outraged pride and injured innocence, Lord Hastings insisted upon an audience of the Queen, wrote to the papers, and demanded the dismissal of Sir James Clark. The Queen expressed her regret to Lady Flora, but Sir James Clark was not dismissed. The tide of opinion turned violently against the Queen and her advisers, high society was disgusted by all this washing of dirty linen in Buckingham Palace, the public at large was indignant at the ill-treatment of Lady Flora. By the end of March, the popularity, so radiant and so abundant, with which the young Sovereign had begun her reign, had entirely disappeared.

There can be no doubt that a great lack of discretion had been shown by the Court. Ill-natured tittle-tattle, which should have been instantly nipped in the bud, had been allowed to assume disgraceful proportions, and the Throne itself had become involved in the personal malignities of the palace. A particularly awkward question had been raised by the position of Sir James Clark. The Duke of Wellington, upon whom it was customary to fall back, in cases of great difficulty in high places, had been consulted upon this question, and he had given it as his opinion that, as it would be impossible to remove Sir James without a public enquiry, Sir James must certainly stay where he was. Probably the Duke was right, but the fact that the peccant doctor continued in the Queen's service made the Hastings family irreconcilable and produced an unpleasant impression of unrepentant error upon the public mind. As for Victoria, she was very young and quite inexperienced, and she can hardly be blamed for having failed to control an extremely difficult situation. That was clearly Lord Melbourne's task, he was a man of the world, and, with vigilance and circumspection, he might have quietly put out the ugly flames while they were still smoldering. He did not do so, he was lazy and easy-going, the Baroness was persistent, and he let things slide. But doubtless his position was not an easy one, passions ran high in the palace, and Victoria was not only very young, she was very headstrong, too. Did he possess the magic bridle which would curb that fiery steed? He could not be certain. And then, suddenly, another violent crisis revealed more unmistakably than ever the nature of the mind with which he had to deal.

VII

The Queen had for long been haunted by a terror that the day might come when she would be obliged to part with her Minister. Ever since the passage

of the Reform Bill, the power of the Whig Government had steadily declined. The General Election of 1837 had left them with a very small majority in the House of Commons, since then, they had been in constant difficulties—abroad, at home, in Ireland, the Radical group had grown hostile, it became highly doubtful how much longer they could survive. The Queen watched the development of events in great anxiety. She was a Whig by birth, by upbringing, by every association, public and private, and, even if those ties had never existed, the mere fact that Lord M. was the head of the Whigs would have amply sufficed to determine her politics. The fall of the Whigs would mean a sad upset for Lord M. But it would have a still more terrible consequence. Lord M. would have to leave her, and the daily, the hourly, presence of Lord M. had become an integral part of her life. Six months after her accession she had noted in her diary, "I shall be very sorry to lose him *even for one night*", and this feeling of personal dependence on her Minister steadily increased. In these circumstances it was natural that she should have become a Whig partisan. Of the wider significance of political questions she knew nothing, all she saw was that her friends were in office and about her, and that it would be dreadful if they ceased to be so. "I cannot say," she wrote when a critical division was impending "(though I feel *confident* of *our success*), how *low*, how *sad* I feel, when I think of the *possibility* of this excellent and truly kind man not *remaining* my Minister! Yet I trust fervently that *He* who has so wonderfully protected me through such manifold difficulties will not *now* desert me! I should have liked to have expressed to Lord M. my anxiety, but the tears were nearer than words throughout the time I saw him, and I felt I should have choked, had I attempted to say anything." Lord Melbourne realized clearly enough how undesirable was such a state of mind in a constitutional sovereign who might be called upon at any moment to receive as her Ministers the leaders of the opposite party, he did what he could to cool her ardor, but in vain.

With considerable lack of foresight, too, he had himself helped to bring about this unfortunate condition of affairs. From the moment of her accession, he had surrounded the Queen with ladies of his own party, the Mistress of the Robes and all the Ladies of the Bedchamber were Whigs. In the ordinary course, the Queen never saw a Tory eventually she took pains never to see one in any circumstances. She disliked the whole tribe, and she did not conceal the fact. She particularly disliked Sir Robert Peel, who would almost certainly be the next Prime Minister. His manners were detestable, and he wanted to turn out Lord M. His supporters, without exception, were equally bad, and as for Sir James Graham, she could not bear the sight of him, he was exactly like Sir John Conroy.

The affair of Lady Flora intensified these party rumors still further. The *Hastings* were Tories, and Lord Melbourne and the Court were attacked by the Tory press in unmeasured language. The Queen's sectarian zeal proportionately increased. But the dreaded hour was now fast approaching. Early in May the Ministers were visibly tottering, on a vital point of policy they could only secure a majority of five in the House of Commons, they determined to resign. When Victoria heard the news she burst into tears. Was it possible,

then, that all was over? Was she, indeed, about to see Lord M. for the last time? Lord M. came, and it is a curious fact that, even in this crowning moment of misery and agitation, the precise girl noted, to the minute, the exact time of the arrival and the departure of her beloved Minister. The conversation was touching and prolonged, but it could only end in one way—the Queen must send for the Duke of Wellington. When, next morning, the Duke came, he advised her Majesty to send for Sir Robert Peel. She was in “a state of dreadful grief,” but she swallowed down her tears, and braced herself, with royal resolution, for the odious, odious interview.

Peel was by nature reserved, proud, and shy. His manners were not perfect, and he knew it, he was easily embarrassed, and, at such moments, he grew even more stiff and formal than before, while his feet mechanically performed upon the carpet a dancing-master’s measure. Anxious as he now was to win the Queen’s good graces, his very anxiety to do so made the attainment of his object the more difficult. He entirely failed to make any headway whatever with the haughty hostile girl before him. She coldly noted that he appeared to be unhappy and “put out,” and, while he stood in painful fixity, with an occasional uneasy pointing of the toe, her heart sank within her at the sight of that manner. “Oh! how different, how dreadfully different, to the frank, open, natural, and most kind warm manner of Lord Melbourne.” Nevertheless, the audience passed without disaster. Only at one point had there been some slight hint of a disagreement. Peel had decided that a change would be necessary in the composition of the royal Household: the Queen must no longer be entirely surrounded by the wives and sisters of his opponents, some, at any rate, of the Ladies of the Bedchamber should be friendly to his Government. When this matter was touched upon, the Queen had intimated that she wished her Household to remain unchanged, to which Sir Robert had replied that the question could be settled later, and shortly afterwards withdrew to arrange the details of his Cabinet. While he was present, Victoria had remained, as she herself said, “very much collected, civil and high, and betrayed no agitation”, but as soon as she was alone she completely broke down. Then she pulled herself together to write to Lord Melbourne an account of all that had happened, and of her own wretchedness. “She feels,” she said, “Lord Melbourne will understand it, amongst enemies to those she most relied on and most esteemed, but what is worst of all is the being deprived of seeing Lord Melbourne as she used to do.”

Lord Melbourne replied with a very wise letter. He attempted to calm the Queen and to induce her to accept the new position gracefully, and he had nothing but good words for the Tory leaders. As for the question of the Ladies of the Household, the Queen, he said, should strongly urge what she desired, as it was a matter which concerned her personally, “but,” he added, “if Sir Robert is unable to concede it, it will not do to refuse and to put off the negotiation upon it.”

On this point there can be little doubt that Lord Melbourne was right. The question was a complicated and subtle one, and it had never arisen before, but subsequent constitutional practice has determined that a Queen Regnant must accede to the wishes of her Prime Minister as to the *personnel* of the

female part of her Household Lord Melbourne's wisdom, however, was wasted. The Queen would not be soothed, and still less would she take advice. It was outrageous of the Tories to want to deprive her of her Ladies, and that night she made up her mind that, whatever Sir Robert might say, she would refuse to consent to the removal of a single one of them. Accordingly, when, next morning, Peel appeared again, she was ready for action. He began by detailing the Cabinet appointments, and then he added, "Now, ma'am, about the Ladies"—when the Queen sharply interrupted him. "I cannot give up *any* of my Ladies," she said. "What, ma'am!" said Sir Robert, "does your Majesty mean to retain them *all*?" "*All*," said the Queen. Sir Robert's face worked strangely, he could not conceal his agitation. "The Mistress of the Robes and the Ladies of the Bedchamber?" he brought out at last. "*All*," replied once more her Majesty. It was in vain that Peel pleaded and argued, in vain that he spoke, growing every moment more pompous and uneasy, of the constitution, and Queen's Regnant, and the public interest, in vain that he danced his pathetic minuet. She was adamant, but he, too, through all his embarrassment, showed no sign of yielding, and when at last he left her, nothing had been decided—the whole formation of the Government was hanging in the wind. A frenzy of excitement now seized upon Victoria. Sir Robert, she believed in her fury, had tried to outwit her, to take her friends from her, to impose his will upon her own, but that was not all she had suddenly perceived, while the poor man was moving so uneasily before her, the one thing that she was desperately longing for—a loop-hole of escape. She seized a pen and dashed off a note to Lord Melbourne.

"Sir Robert has behaved very ill," she wrote, "he insisted on my giving up my Ladies, to which I replied that I *never* would consent, and I never saw a man so frightened. I was calm but very decided, and I think you would have been pleased to see my composure and great firmness, the Queen of England will not submit to such trickery. Keep yourself in readiness, for you may soon be wanted." Hardly had she finished when the Duke of Wellington was announced. "Well, ma'am," he said as he entered, "I am very sorry to find there is a difficulty." "Oh!" she instantly replied, "*he* began it, not me." She felt that only one thing now was needed: she must be firm. And firm she was. The venerable conqueror of Napoleon was outfaced by the relentless equanimity of a girl in her teens. He could not move the Queen one inch. At last, she even ventured to rally him. "Is Sir Robert so weak," she asked, "that even the Ladies must be of his opinion?" On which the Duke made a brief and humble expostulation, bowed low, and departed.

Had she won? Time would show, and in the meantime she scribbled down another letter. "Lord Melbourne must not think the Queen rash in her conduct. The Queen felt this was an attempt to see whether she could be led and managed like a child." The Tories were not only wicked but ridiculous. Peel, having, as she understood, expressed a wish to remove only those members of the Household who were in Parliament, now objected to her Ladies. "I should like to know," she exclaimed in triumphant scorn, "if they mean to give the *Ladies* seats in Parliament?"

The end of the crisis was now fast approaching. Sir Robert returned, and told her that if she insisted upon retaining all her Ladies he could not form a Government. She replied that she would send him her final decision in writing. Next morning the late Whig Cabinet met. Lord Melbourne read to them the Queen's letters, and the group of elderly politicians were overcome by an extraordinary wave of enthusiasm. They knew very well that, to say the least, it was highly doubtful whether the Queen had acted in strict accordance with the constitution, that in doing what she had done she had brushed aside Lord Melbourne's advice, that, in reality, there was no public reason whatever why they should go back upon their decision to resign. But such considerations vanished before the passionate urgency of Victoria. The intensity of her determination swept them headlong down the stream of her desire. They unanimously felt that "it was impossible to abandon such a Queen and such a woman." Forgetting that they were no longer her Majesty's Ministers, they took the unprecedented course of advising the Queen by letter to put an end to her negotiation with Sir Robert Peel. She did so, all was over, she had triumphed. That evening there was a ball at the Palace. Every one was present. "Peel and the Duke of Wellington came by looking very much put out." She was perfectly happy, Lord M. was Prime Minister once more, and he was by her side.

VIII

Happiness had returned with Lord M., but it was happiness in the midst of agitation. The domestic imbroglio continued unabated, until at last the Duke, rejected as a Minister, was called in once again in his old capacity as moral physician to the family. Something was accomplished when, at last, he induced Sir John Conroy to resign his place about the Duchess of Kent and leave the Palace for ever, something more when he persuaded the Queen to write an affectionate letter to her mother. The way seemed open for a reconciliation, but the Duchess was stormy still. She didn't believe that Victoria had written that letter, it was not in her handwriting, and she sent for the Duke to tell him so. The Duke, assuring her that the letter was genuine, begged her to forget the past. But that was not so easy. "What am I to do if Lord Melbourne comes up to me?" "Do, ma'am? Why, receive him with civility." Well, she would make an effort. "But what am I to do if Victoria asks me to shake hands with Lehzen?" "Do, ma'am? Why, take her in your arms and kiss her." "What!" The Duchess bristled in every feather, and then she burst into a hearty laugh. "No, ma'am, no," said the Duke, laughing too. "I don't mean you are to take *Lehzen* in your arms and kiss *her*, but the Queen."

The Duke might perhaps have succeeded, had not all attempts at conciliation been rendered hopeless by a tragical event. Lady Flora, it was discovered, had been suffering from a terrible internal malady, which now grew rapidly worse. There could be little doubt that she was dying. The Queen's unpopularity reached an extraordinary height. More than once she was publicly insulted. "Mrs. Melbourne," was shouted at her when she appeared at her balcony, and, at Ascot, she was hissed by the Duchess of Montrose and Lady Sarah Ingestre as she passed. Lady Flora died. The whole scandal burst out again.

with redoubled vehemence, while, in the Palace, the two parties were hence forth divided by an impassable, a Stygian, gulf

Nevertheless, Lord M was back, and every trouble faded under the enchantment of his presence and his conversation. He, on his side, had gone through much, and his distresses were intensified by a consciousness of his own shortcomings. He realized clearly enough that, if he had intervened at the right moment, the Hastings scandal might have been averted, and, in the bedchamber crisis, he knew that he had allowed his judgment to be overruled and his conduct to be swayed by private feelings and the impetuosity of Victoria. But he was not one to suffer too acutely from the pangs of conscience. In spite of the dullness and the formality of the Court, his relationship with the Queen had come to be the dominating interest in his life, to have been deprived of it would have been heartrending, that dread eventuality had been—somehow—avoided, he was installed once more, in a kind of triumph, let him enjoy the fleeting hours to the full! And so, cherished by the favor of a sovereign and warmed by the adoration of a girl, the autumn rose, in those autumn months of 1839, came to a wondrous blooming. The petals expanded, beautifully, for the last time. For the last time in this unlooked-for, this incongruous, this almost incredible intercourse, the old epicure tasted the exquisiteness of romance. To watch, to teach, to restrain, to encourage the royal young creature beside him—that was much, to feel with such a constant intimacy the impact of her quick affection, her radiant vitality—that was more, most of all, perhaps, was it good to linger vaguely in humorous contemplation, in idle apostrophe, to talk disconnectedly, to make a little joke about an apple or a furbelow, to dream. The springs of his sensibility, hidden deep within him, were overflowing. Often, as he bent over her hand and kissed it, he found himself in tears.

Upon Victoria, with all her impermeability, it was inevitable that such a companionship should have produced, eventually, an effect. She was no longer the simple schoolgirl of two years since. The change was visible even in her public demeanor. Her expression, once "ingenuous and serene," now appeared to a shrewd observer to be "bold and discontented." She had learnt something of the pleasures of power and the pains of it, but that was not all. Lord Melbourne with his gentle instruction had sought to lead her into the paths of wisdom and moderation, but the whole unconscious movement of his character had swayed her in a very different direction. The hard clear pebble, subjected for so long and so constantly to that encircling and insidious fluidity, had suffered a curious corrosion, it seemed to be actually growing a little soft and a little clouded. Humanity and fallibility are infectious things, was it possible that Lehzen's prim pupil had caught them? That she was beginning to listen to siren voices? That the secret impulses of self-expression, of self-indulgence even, were mastering her life? For a moment the child of a new age looked back, and wavered towards the eighteenth century. It was the most critical moment of her career. Had those influences lasted, the development of her character, the history of her life, would have been completely changed.

And why should they not last? She, for one, was very anxious that they should. Let them last for ever! She was surrounded by Whigs, she was

free to do whatever she wanted, she had Lord M., she could not believe that she could ever be happier. Any change would be for the worse, and the worst change of all—no, she would not hear of it, it would be quite intolerable, it would upset everything, if she were to marry. And yet every one seemed to want her to—the general public, the Ministers, her Saxe-Coburg relations—was always the same story. Of course, she knew very well that there were excellent reasons for it. For one thing, if she remained childless, and were to die, her uncle Cumberland, who was now the King of Hanover, would succeed to the Throne of England. That, no doubt, would be a most unpleasant event, and she entirely sympathized with everybody who wished to avoid it. But there was no hurry, naturally, she would marry in the end—but not just yet—not for three or four years. What was tiresome was that her uncle Leopold had apparently determined, not only that she ought to marry, but that her cousin Albert ought to be her husband. That was very like her uncle Leopold, who wanted to have a finger in every pie, and it was true that long ago, in far off days, before her accession even, she had written to him in a way which might well have encouraged him in such a notion. She had told him then that Albert possessed “every quality that could be desired to render her perfectly happy,” and had begged her “dearest uncle to take care of the health of one, now *so dear* to me, and to take him under *your special* protection,” adding, “I hope and trust all will go on prosperously and well on this subject of so much importance to me.” But that had been years ago, when she was a mere child, perhaps, indeed, to judge from the language, the letter had been dictated by Lehzen, at any rate, her feelings, and all the circumstances, had now entirely changed. Albert hardly interested her at all.

In later life the Queen declared that she had never for a moment dreamt of marrying any one but her cousin, her letters and diaries tell a very different story. On August 26, 1837, she wrote in her journal “Today is my *dearest* cousin Albert’s 18th birthday, and I pray Heaven to pour its choicest blessings on his beloved head!” In the subsequent years, however, the date passes unnoticed. It had been arranged that Stockmar should accompany the Prince to Italy, and the faithful Baron left her side for that purpose. He wrote to her more than once with sympathetic descriptions of his young companion, but her mind was by this time made up. She liked and admired Albert very much, but she did not want to marry him. “At present,” she told Lord Melbourne in April, 1839, “my feeling is quite against ever marrying.” When her cousin’s Italian tour came to an end, she began to grow nervous, she knew that, according to a long-standing engagement, his next journey would be to England. He would probably arrive in the autumn, and by July her uneasiness was intense. She determined to write to her uncle, in order to make her position clear. It must be understood, she said, that “there is *no engagement* between us.” If she should like Albert, she could “make *no final promise this year*, for, at the *very earliest*, any such event could not take place till *two or three years hence*.” She had, she said, “a *great* repugnance” to change her present position, and, if she should not like him, she was “*very anxious* that it should be understood that she would *not* be guilty of any breach of promise, for she *never gave any*.” To Lord Melbourne she was more explicit. She told

him that she "had no great wish to see Albert, as the whole subject was an odious one", she hated to have to decide about it, and she repeated once again that seeing Albert would be "a disagreeable thing." But there was no escaping the horrid business, the visit must be made, and she must see him. The summer slipped by and was over, it was the autumn already, on the evening of October 10 Albert, accompanied by his brother Ernest, arrived at Windsor.

Albert arrived, and the whole structure of her existence crumbled into nothingness like a house of cards. He was beautiful—she gasped—she knew no more. Then, in a flash, a thousand mysteries were revealed to her, the past, the present, rushed upon her with a new significance, the delusions of years were abolished, and an extraordinary, an irresistible certitude leapt into being in the light of those blue eyes, the smile of that lovely mouth. The succeeding hours passed in a rapture. She was able to observe a few more details—the "exquisite nose," the "delicate mustachios and slight but very slight whiskers," the "beautiful figure, broad in the shoulders and a fine waist." She rode with him, danced with him, talked with him, and it was all perfection. She had no shadow of a doubt. He had come on a Thursday evening, and on the following Sunday morning she told Lord Melbourne that she had "a good deal changed her opinion as to marrying." Next morning, she told him that she had made up her mind to marry Albert. The morning after that, she sent for her cousin. She received him alone, and "after a few minutes I said to him that I thought he must be aware *why* I wished them to come here—and that it would make me *too happy* if he would consent to what I wished (to marry me)." Then "we embraced each other, and he was *so* kind, *so* affectionate." She said that she was quite unworthy of him, while he murmured that he would be very happy "Das Leben mit dir zu zubringen." They parted, and she felt "the happiest of human beings," when Lord M. came in. At first she beat about the bush, and talked of the weather, and indifferent subjects. Somehow or other she felt a little nervous with her old friend. At last, summoning up her courage, she said, "I have got well through this with Albert." "Oh! you have," said Lord M.

IV MARRIAGE

IT was decidedly a family match. Prince Francis Charles Augustus Albert Emmanuel of Saxe-Coburg Gotha—for such was his full title—had been born just three months after his cousin Victoria, and the same midwife had assisted at the two births. The children's grandmother, the Dowager Duchess of Coburg, had from the first looked forward to their marriage, as they grew up, the Duke, the Duchess of Kent, and King Leopold came equally to desire it. The Prince, ever since the time when, as a child of three, his nurse had told him that some day "the little English May flower" would be his wife, had never thought of marrying any one else. When eventually Baron Stockmar himself signified his assent, the affair seemed as good as settled.

The Duke had one other child—Prince Ernest, Albert's senior by one year, and heir to the principality. The Duchess was a sprightly and beautiful woman with fair hair and blue eyes, Albert was very like her and was her declared favorite. But in his fifth year he was parted from her for ever. The ducal court was not noted for the strictness of its morals, the Duke was a man of gallantry, and it was rumored that the Duchess followed her husband's example. There were scandals—one of the Court Chamberlains, a charming and cultivated man of Jewish extraction, was talked of, at last there was a separation, followed by a divorce. The Duchess retired to Paris, and died unhappily in 1831. Her memory was always very dear to Albert.

He grew up a pretty, clever, and high-spirited boy. Usually well-behaved he was, however, sometimes violent. He had a will of his own, and asserted it, his elder brother was less passionate, less purposeful, and, in their wrangles, it was Albert who came out top. The two boys, living for the most part in one or other of the Duke's country houses, among pretty hills and woods and streams, had been at a very early age—Albert was less than four—separated from their nurses and put under a tutor, in whose charge they remained until they went to the University. They were brought up in a simple and unostentatious manner, for the Duke was poor and the duchy very small and very insignificant. Before long it became evident that Albert was a model lad. Intelligent and painstaking, he had been touched by the moral earnestness of his generation, at the age of eleven he surprised his father by telling him that he hoped to make himself "a good and useful man." And yet he was not over-serious, though, perhaps, he had little humor, he was full of fun—of practical jokes and mimicry. He was no milksop, he rode, and shot, and fenced, above all did he delight in being out of doors, and never was he happier than in his long rambles with his brother through the wild country round his beloved Rosenau—stalking the deer, admiring the scenery, and returning laden with specimens for his natural history collection. He was, besides, passionately fond of music. In one particular it was observed that he did not take after his father, owing either to his peculiar upbringing or to a more fundamental idiosyncrasy he had a marked distaste for the opposite sex. At the age of five, at a children's dance, he screamed with disgust and anger when a little girl was led up to him for a partner, and though, later on, he grew more successful in disguising such feelings, the feelings remained.

The brothers were very popular in Coburg, and, when the time came for them to be confirmed, the preliminary examination which, according to ancient custom, was held in public in the "Giants' Hall" of the Castle, was attended by an enthusiastic crowd of functionaries, clergy, delegates from the villages of the duchy, and miscellaneous onlookers. There were also present, besides the Duke and the Dowager Duchess, their Serene Highnesses the Princes Alexander and Ernst of Württemberg, Prince Leiningen, Princess Hohenlohe Langenburg, and Princess Hohenlohe-Schillingsfurst. Dr. Jacobi, the Court chaplain, presided at an altar, simply but appropriately decorated, which had been placed at the end of the hall, and the proceedings began by the choir singing the first verse of the hymn, "Come, Holy Ghost." After some introductory remarks, Dr. Jacobi began the examination. "The dignified and de

corous bearing of the Princes," we are told in a contemporary account, "their strict attention to the questions, the frankness, decision, and correctness of their answers, produced a deep impression on the numerous assembly" Nothing was more striking in their answers than the evidence they gave of deep feeling and of inward strength of conviction. The questions put by the examiner were not such as to be met by a simple "yes" or "no." They were carefully considered in order to give the audience a clear insight into the views and feelings of the young princes. One of the most touching moments was when the examiner asked the hereditary prince whether he intended steadfastly to hold to the Evangelical Church, and the Prince answered not only "Yes!" but added in a clear and decided tone "I and my brother are firmly resolved ever to remain faithful to the acknowledged truth." The examination having lasted an hour, Dr. Jacobi made some concluding observations, followed by a short prayer, the second and third verses of the opening hymn were sung, and the ceremony was over. The Princes, stepping down from the altar, were embraced by the Duke and the Dowager Duchess, after which the loyal inhabitants of Coburg dispersed, well satisfied with their entertainment.

Albert's mental development now proceeded apace. In his seventeenth year he began a careful study of German literature and German philosophy. He set about, he told his tutor, "to follow the thoughts of the great Klopstock into their depths—though in this, for the most part," he modestly added, "I do not succeed." He wrote an essay on the "Mode of Thought of the Germans, and a Sketch of the History of German Civilisation," "making use," he said, "in its general outlines, of the divisions which the treatment of the subject itself demands," and concluding with "a retrospect of the shortcomings of our time, with an appeal to every one to correct those shortcomings in his own case, and thus set a good example to others." Placed for some months under the care of King Leopold at Brussels, he came under the influence of Adolphe Quetelet, a mathematical professor, who was particularly interested in the application of the laws of probability to political and moral phenomena, this line of inquiry attracted the Prince, and the friendship thus begun continued till the end of his life. From Brussels he went to the University of Bonn, where he was speedily distinguished both by his intellectual and his social activities, his energies were absorbed in metaphysics, law, political economy, music, fencing, and amateur theatricals. Thirty years later his fellow-students recalled with delight the fits of laughter into which they had been sent by Prince Albert's mimicry. The *verve* with which his Serene Highness reproduced the tones and gestures of one of the professors who used to point to a picture of a row of houses in Venice with the remark, "That is the Ponte Reale," and of another who fell down in a race and was obliged to look for his spectacles, was especially appreciated.

After a year at Bonn, the time had come for a foreign tour, and Baron Stockmar arrived from England to accompany the Prince on an expedition to Italy. The Baron had been already, two years previously, consulted by King Leopold as to his views upon the proposed marriage of Albert and Victoria. His reply had been remarkable. With a characteristic foresight, a characteristic absence of optimism, a characteristic sense of the moral elements in the situation, Stockmar had pointed out what were, in his opinion, the conditions essen-

tial to make the marriage a success. Albert, he wrote, was a fine young fellow, well grown for his age, with agreeable and valuable qualities, and it was probable that in a few years he would turn out a strong handsome man, of a kindly, simple, yet dignified demeanor. "Thus, externally, he possesses all that pleases the sex, and at all times and in all countries must please." Supposing, therefore, that Victoria herself was in favor of the marriage, the further question arose as to whether Albert's mental qualities were such as to fit him for the position of husband of the Queen of England. On this point, continued the Baron, one heard much to his credit, the Prince was said to be discreet and intelligent, but all such judgments were necessarily partial, and the Baron preferred to reserve his opinion until he could come to a trustworthy conclusion from personal observation. And then he added "But all this is not enough. The young man ought to have not merely great ability, but a *right* ambition, and great force of will as well. To pursue for a lifetime a political career so arduous demands more than energy and inclination—it demands also that earnest frame of mind which is ready of its own accord to sacrifice mere pleasure to real usefulness. If he is not satisfied hereafter with the consciousness of having achieved one of the most influential positions in Europe, how often will he feel tempted to repent his adventure! If he does not from the very outset accept it as a vocation of grave responsibility, on the efficient performance of which his honor and happiness depend, there is small likelihood of his succeeding."

Such were the views of Stockmar on the qualifications necessary for the due fulfillment of that destiny which Albert's family had marked out for him, and he hoped, during the tour in Italy, to come to some conclusion as to how far the Prince possessed them. Albert on his side was much impressed by the Baron, whom he had previously seen but rarely, he also became acquainted, for the first time in his life, with a young Englishman, Lieut. Francis Seymour, who had been engaged to accompany him, whom he found *sehr lebenswürdig*, and with whom he struck up a warm friendship. He delighted in the galleries and scenery of Florence, though with Rome he was less impressed. "But for some beautiful palaces," he said, "it might just as well be any town in Germany." In an interview with Pope Gregory XVI, he took the opportunity of displaying his erudition. When the Pope observed that the Greeks had taken their art from the Etruscans, Albert replied that, on the contrary, in his opinion, they had borrowed from the Egyptians. His Holiness politely acquiesced. Wherever he went he was eager to increase his knowledge, and, at a ball in Florence, he was observed paying no attention whatever to the ladies, and deep in conversation with the learned Signor Capponi. "Voilà un prince dont nous pouvons être fiers," said the Grand Duke of Tuscany, who was standing by "la belle danseuse l'attend, le savant l'occupe."

On his return to Germany, Stockmar's observations, imparted to King Leopold, were still critical. Albert, he said, was intelligent, kind, and amiable, he was full of the best intentions and the noblest resolutions, and his judgment was in many things beyond his years. But great exertion was repugnant to him, he seemed to be too willing to spare himself, and his good resolutions too often came to nothing. It was particularly unfortunate that he took not the slightest

interest in politics, and never read a newspaper. In his manners, too, there was still room for improvement. "He will always," said the Baron, "have more success with men than with women, in whose society he shows too little *empressement*, and is too indifferent and retiring." One other feature of the case was noted by the keen eye of the old physician: the Prince's constitution was not a strong one. Yet, on the whole, he was favorable to the projected marriage. But by now the chief obstacle seemed to lie in another quarter, Victoria was apparently determined to commit herself to nothing. And so it happened that when Albert went to England he had made up his mind to withdraw entirely from the affair. Nothing would induce him, he confessed to a friend, to be kept vaguely waiting, he would break it all off at once. His reception at Windsor threw an entirely new light upon the situation. The wheel of fortune turned with a sudden rapidity, and he found, in the arms of Victoria, the irrevocable assurance of his overwhelming fate.

II

He was not in love with her. Affection, gratitude, the natural reactions to the unqualified devotion of a lively young cousin who was also a queen—such feelings possessed him, but the ardors of reciprocal passion were not his. Though he found that he liked Victoria very much, what immediately interested him in his curious position was less her than himself. Dazzled and delighted, riding, dancing, singing, laughing, amid the splendors of Windsor, he was aware of a new sensation—the stirrings of ambition in his breast. His place would indeed be a high, an enviable one! And then, on the instant, came another thought. The teaching of religion, the admonitions of Stockmar, his own inmost convictions, all spoke with the same utterance. He would not be there to please himself, but for a very different purpose—to do good. He must be "noble, manly, and princely in all things," he would have "to live and to sacrifice himself for the benefit of his new country", to "use his powers and endeavors for a great object—that of promoting the welfare of multitudes of his fellowmen." One serious thought led on to another. The wealth and the bustle of the English Court might be delightful for the moment, but, after all, it was Coburg that had his heart. "While I shall be untiring," he wrote to his grandmother, "in my efforts and labors for the country to which I shall in future belong, and where I am called to so high a position, I shall never cease *ein treuer Deutscher, Coburger, Gothaner zu sein*." And now he must part from Coburg for ever! Sobered and sad, he sought relief in his brother Ernest's company, the two young men would shut themselves up together, and, sitting down at the piano-forte, would escape from the present and the future in the sweet familiar gayety of a Haydn duet.

They returned to Germany, and while Albert, for a few farewell months, enjoyed, for the last time, the happiness of home, Victoria, for the last time, resumed her old life in London and Windsor. She corresponded daily with her future husband in a mingled flow of German and English, but the accustomed routine reasserted itself, the business and the pleasures of the day would brook no interruption, Lord M. was once more constantly beside her, and the Tories

were as intolerable as ever. Indeed, they were more so. For now, in these final moments, the old feud burst out with redoubled fury. The impetuous sovereign found, to her chagrin, that there might be disadvantages in being the declared enemy of one of the great parties in the State. On two occasions, the Tories directly thwarted her in a matter on which she had set her heart. She wished her husband's rank to be fixed by statute, and their opposition prevented it. She wished her husband to receive a settlement from the nation of £50,000 a year, and, again owing to the Tories, he was only allowed £30,000. It was too bad. When the question was discussed in Parliament, it had been pointed out that the bulk of the population was suffering from great poverty, and that £30,000 was the whole revenue of Coburg, but her uncle Leopold had been given £50,000, and it would be monstrous to give Albert less. Sir Robert Peel—it might have been expected—had had the effrontery to speak and vote for the smaller sum. She was very angry, and determined to revenge herself by omitting to invite a single Tory to her wedding. She would make an exception in favor of old Lord Liverpool, but even the Duke of Wellington she refused to ask. When it was represented to her that it would amount to a national scandal if the Duke were absent from her wedding, she was angrier than ever. "What! That old rebel! I won't have him," she was reported to have said. Eventually she was induced to send him an invitation, but she made no attempt to conceal the bitterness of her feelings, and the Duke himself was only too well aware of all that had passed.

Nor was it only against the Tories that her irritation rose. As the time for her wedding approached, her temper grew steadily sharper and more arbitrary. Queen Adelaide annoyed her. King Leopold, too, was "ungracious" in his correspondence, "Dear Uncle," she told Albert, "is given to believe that he must rule the roost everywhere. However," she added with asperity, "that is not a necessity." Even Albert himself was not impeccable. Engulfed in Coburgs, he failed to appreciate the complexity of English affairs. There were difficulties about his household. He had a notion that he ought not to be surrounded by violent Whigs, very likely, but he would not understand that the only alternatives to violent Whigs were violent Tories, and it would be preposterous if his Lords and Gentlemen were to be found voting against the Queen's. He wanted to appoint his own Private Secretary. But how could he choose the right person? Lord M. was obviously best qualified to make the appointment, and Lord M. had decided that the Prince should take over his own Private Secretary—George Anson, a staunch Whig. Albert protested, but it was useless, Victoria simply announced that Anson was appointed, and instructed Lehzen to send the Prince an explanation of the details of the case. Then, again, he had written anxiously upon the necessity of maintaining unspotted the moral purity of the Court. Lord M.'s pupil considered that dear Albert was strait-laced, and, in a brisk Anglo-German missive, set forth her own views. "I like Lady A. very much," she told him, "only she is a little *strict and particular*, and too severe towards others, which is not right, for I think one ought always to be indulgent towards other people, as I always think, if we had not been well taken care of, we might also have gone astray. That is always my feeling. Yet it is always right to show that one does not like to see what is obviously wrong, but it is

very dangerous to be *too* severe, and I am certain that as a rule such people always greatly regret that in their youth they have not been so careful as they ought to have been. I have explained this so badly and written it so badly, that I fear you will hardly be able to make it out."

On one other matter she was insistent. Since the affair of Lady Flora Hastings, a sad fate had overtaken Sir James Clark. His flourishing practice had quite collapsed, nobody would go to him any more. But the Queen remained faithful. She would show the world how little she cared for their disapproval, and she desired Albert to make "poor Clark" his physician in ordinary. He did as he was told, but, as it turned out, the appointment was not a happy one.

The wedding-day was fixed, and it was time for Albert to tear himself away from his family and the scenes of his childhood. With an aching heart, he had revisited his beloved haunts—the woods and the valleys where he had spent so many happy hours shooting rabbits and collecting botanical specimens, in deep depression, he had sat through the farewell banquets in the Palace and listened to the *Freischütz* performed by the State band. It was time to go. The streets were packed as he drove through them, for a short space his eyes were gladdened by a sea of friendly German faces, and his ears by a gathering volume of good guttural sounds. He stopped to bid a last adieu to his grandmother. It was a heartrending moment. "Albert! Albert!" she shrieked, and fell fainting into the arms of her attendants as his carriage drove away. He was whirled rapidly to his destiny. At Calais a steamboat awaited him, and, together with his father and his brother, he stepped, dejected, on board. A little later, he was more dejected still. The crossing was a very rough one, the Duke went hurriedly below, while the two Princes, we are told, lay on either side of the cabin staircase "in an almost helpless state." At Dover a large crowd was collected on the pier, and "it was by no common effort that Prince Albert, who had continued to suffer up to the last moment, got up to bow to the people." His sense of duty triumphed. It was a curious omen: his whole life in England was foreshadowed as he landed on English ground.

Meanwhile Victoria, in growing agitation, was a prey to temper and to nerves. She grew feverish, and at last Sir James Clark pronounced that she was going to have the measles. But, once again, Sir James's diagnosis was incorrect. It was not the measles that were attacking her, but a very different malady, she was suddenly prostrated by alarm, regret, and doubt. For two years she had been her own mistress—the two happiest years, by far, of her life. And now it was all to end! She was to come under an alien domination—she would have to promise that she would honor and obey some one, who might, after all, thwart her, oppose her—and how dreadful that would be! Why had she embarked on this hazardous experiment? Why had she not been contented with Lord M? No doubt, she loved Albert, but she loved power too. At any rate, one thing was certain: she might be Albert's wife, but she would always be Queen of England. He reappeared, in an exquisite uniform, and her hesitations melted in his presence like mist before the sun. On February 10, 1840, the marriage took place. The wedded pair drove down to Windsor, but they were not, of course, entirely alone. They were accompanied by their suites, and, in particular, by two persons—the Baron Stockmar and the Baroness Lehzen.

III

Albert had foreseen that his married life would not be all plain sailing, but he had by no means realized the gravity and the complication of the difficulties which he would have to face. Politically, he was a cipher. Lord Melbourne was not only Prime Minister, he was in effect the Private Secretary of the Queen, and thus controlled the whole of the political existence of the sovereign. A queen's husband was an entity unknown to the British Constitution. In State affairs there seemed to be no place for him, nor was Victoria herself at all unwilling that this should be so. "The English," she had told the Prince when, during their engagement, a proposal had been made to give him a peerage, "are very jealous of any foreigner interfering in the government of this country, and have already in some of the papers expressed a hope that you would not interfere. Now, though I know you never would, still, if you were a Peer, they would all say, the Prince meant to play a political part." "I know you never would!" In reality, she was not quite so certain, but she wished Albert to understand her views. He would, she hoped, make a perfect husband, but, as for governing the country, he would see that she and Lord M. between them could manage that very well, without his help.

But it was not only in politics that the Prince discovered that the part cut out for him was a negligible one. Even as a husband, he found, his functions were to be of an extremely limited kind. Over the whole of Victoria's private life the Baroness reigned supreme, and she had not the slightest intention of allowing that supremacy to be diminished by one iota. Since the accession, her power had greatly increased. Besides the undefined and enormous influence which she exercised through her management of the Queen's private correspondence, she was now the superintendent of the royal establishment and controlled the important office of Privy Purse. Albert very soon perceived that he was not master in his own house. Every detail of his own and his wife's existence was supervised by a third person. Nothing could be done until the consent of Lehzen had first been obtained. And Victoria, who adored Lehzen with unabated intensity, saw nothing in all this that was wrong.

Nor was the Prince happier in his social surroundings. A shy young foreigner, awkward in ladies' company, unexpansive and self-opinionated, it was improbable that, in any circumstances, he would have been a society success. His appearance, too, was against him. Though in the eyes of Victoria he was the mirror of manly beauty, her subjects, whose eyes were of a less Teutonic cast, did not agree with her. To them—and particularly to the high-born ladies and gentlemen who naturally saw him most—what was immediately and distressingly striking in Albert's face and figure and whole demeanor was his un-English look. His features were regular, no doubt, but there was something smooth and smug about them, he was tall, but he was clumsily put together, and he walked with a slight slouch. Really, they thought, this youth was more like some kind of foreign tenor than anything else. These were serious disadvantages, but the line of conduct which the Prince adopted from the first moment of his arrival was far from calculated to dispel them. Owing partly to a natural awkwardness, partly to a fear of undue familiarity, and partly to a desire

to be absolutely correct, his manners were infused with an extraordinary stiffness and formality. Whenever he appeared in company, he seemed to be surrounded by a thick hedge of prickly etiquette. He never went out into ordinary society, he never walked in the streets of London, he was invariably accompanied by an equerry when he rode or drove. He wanted to be irrepachable and, if that involved friendlessness, it could not be helped. Besides, he had no very high opinion of the English. So far as he could see, they cared for nothing but fox-hunting and Sunday observances, they oscillated between an undue frivolity and an undue gloom, if you spoke to them of friendly joyousness they stared, and they did not understand either the Laws of Thought or the wit of a German University. Since it was clear that with such people he could have very little in common, there was no reason whatever for relaxing in their favor the rules of etiquette. In strict privacy, he could be natural and charming, Seymour and Anson were devoted to him, and he returned their affection, but they were subordinates—the receivers of his confidences and the agents of his will. From the support and the solace of true companionship he was utterly cut off.

A friend, indeed, he had—or rather, a mentor. The Baron, established once more in the royal residence, was determined to work with as whole-hearted a detachment for the Prince's benefit as, more than twenty years before, he had worked for his uncle's. The situations then and now, similar in many respects, were yet full of differences. Perhaps in either case the difficulties to be encountered were equally great, but the present problem was the more complex and the more interesting. The young doctor who, unknown and insignificant, had nothing at the back of him but his own wits and the friendship of an unimportant Prince, had been replaced by the accomplished confidant of kings and ministers, ripe in years, in reputation, and in the wisdom of a vast experience. It was possible for him to treat Albert with something of the affectionate authority of a father, but, on the other hand, Albert was no Leopold. As the Baron was very well aware, he had none of his uncle's rigidity of ambition, none of his over-weening impulse to be personally great. He was virtuous and well-intentioned, he was clever and well-informed, but he took no interest in politics, and there were no signs that he possessed any commanding force of character. Left to himself, he would almost certainly have subsided into a high-minded nonentity, an aimless dilettante busy over culture, a palace appendage without influence or power. But he was not left to himself. Stockmar saw to that. For ever at his pupil's elbow, the hidden Baron pushed him forward, with tireless pressure, along the path which had been trod by Leopold so many years ago. But, this time, the goal at the end of it was something more than the mediocre royalty that Leopold had reached. The prize which Stockmar, with all the energy of disinterested devotion, had determined should be Albert's was a tremendous prize indeed.

The beginning of the undertaking proved to be the most arduous part of it. Albert was easily dispirited: what was the use of struggling to perform in a rôle which bored him and which, it was quite clear, nobody but the dear good Baron had any desire that he should take up? It was simpler, and it saved a great deal of trouble, to let things slide. But Stockmar would not have it. In

cessantly, he harped upon two strings—Albert's sense of duty and his personal pride. Had the Prince forgotten the noble aims to which his life was to be devoted? And was he going to allow himself, his wife, his family, his whole existence, to be governed by Baroness Lehzen? The latter consideration was a potent one. Albert had never been accustomed to giving way, and now, more than ever before, it would be humiliating to do so. Not only was he constantly exasperated by the position of the Baroness in the royal household, there was another and a still more serious cause of complaint. He was, he knew very well, his wife's intellectual superior, and yet he found, to his intense annoyance, that there were parts of her mind over which he exercised no influence. When, urged on by the Baron, he attempted to discuss politics with Victoria, she eluded the subject, drifted into generalities, and then began to talk of something else. She was treating him as she had once treated their uncle Leopold. When at last he protested, she replied that her conduct was merely the result of indolence, that when she was with *him* she could not bear to bother her head with anything so dull as politics. The excuse was worse than the fault: was he the wife and she the husband? It almost seemed so. But the Baron declared that the root of the mischief was Lehzen—that it was she who encouraged the Queen to have secrets, who did worse—undermined the natural ingenuousness of Victoria, and induced her to give, unconsciously no doubt, false reasons to explain away her conduct.

Minor disagreements made matters worse. The royal couple differed in their tastes. Albert, brought up in a régime of Spartan simplicity and early hours, found the great Court functions intolerably wearisome, and was invariably observed to be nodding on the sofa at half-past ten, while the Queen's favorite form of enjoyment was to dance through the night, and then, going out into the portico of the Palace, watch the sun rise behind St. Paul's and the towers of Westminster. She loved London and he detested it. It was only in Windsor that he felt he could really breathe, but Windsor too had its terrors: though during the day there he could paint and walk and play on the piano, after dinner black tedium descended like a pall. He would have liked to summon distinguished scientific and literary men to his presence, and after ascertaining their views upon various points of art and learning, to set forth his own, but unfortunately Victoria "had no fancy to encourage such people", knowing that she was unequal to taking a part in their conversation, she insisted that the evening routine should remain unaltered, the regulation interchange of platitudes with official persons was followed as usual by the round table and the books of engravings, while the Prince, with one of his attendants, played game after game of double chess.

It was only natural that in so peculiar a situation, in which the elements of power, passion, and pride were so strangely apportioned, there should have been occasionally something more than mere irritation—a struggle of angry wills. Victoria, no more than Albert, was in the habit of playing second fiddle. Her arbitrary temper flashed out. Her vitality, her obstinacy, her overweening sense of her own position, might well have beaten down before them his superiorities and his rights. But she fought at a disadvantage, she was, in very truth, no longer her own mistress, a profound preoccupation dominated her,

seizing upon her inmost purposes for its own extraordinary ends. She was madly in love. The details of those curious battles are unknown to us, but Prince Ernest, who remained in England with his brother for some months, noted them with a friendly and startled eye. One story, indeed, survives, ill-authenticated and perhaps mythical, yet summing up, as such stories often do, the central facts of the case. When, in wrath, the Prince one day had locked himself into his room, Victoria, no less furious, knocked on the door to be admitted. "Who is there?" he asked. "The Queen of England" was the answer. He did not move, and again there was a hail of knocks. The question and the answer were repeated many times, but at last there was a pause, and then a gentler knocking. "Who is there?" came once more the relentless question. But this time the reply was different. "Your wife, Albert." And the door was immediately opened.

Very gradually the Prince's position changed. He began to find the study of politics less uninteresting than he had supposed, he read Blackstone, and took lessons in English Law, he was occasionally present when the Queen interviewed her Ministers, and at Lord Melbourne's suggestion he was shown all the despatches relating to Foreign Affairs. Sometimes he would commit his views to paper, and read them aloud to the Prime Minister, who, infinitely kind and courteous, listened with attention, but seldom made any reply. An important step was taken when, before the birth of the Princess Royal, the Prince, without any opposition in Parliament, was appointed Regent in case of the death of the Queen. Stockmar, owing to whose intervention with the Tories this happy result had been brought about, now felt himself at liberty to take a holiday with his family in Coburg, but his solicitude, poured out in innumerable letters, still watched over his pupil from afar. "Dear Prince," he wrote, "I am satisfied with the news you have sent me. Mistakes, misunderstandings, obstructions, which come in vexatious opposition to one's views, are always to be taken for just what they are—namely, natural phenomena of life, which represent one of its sides, and that the shady one. In overcoming them with dignity, your mind has to exercise, to train, to enlighten itself, and your character to gain force, endurance, and the necessary hardness." The Prince had done well so far, but he must continue in the right path, above all, he was "never to relax"—"Never to relax in putting your magnanimity to the proof, never to relax in logical separation of what is great and essential from what is trivial and of no moment, never to relax in keeping yourself up to a high standard—in the determination, daily renewed, to be consistent, patient, courageous." It was a hard program, perhaps, for a young man of twenty-one, and yet there was something in it which touched the very depths of Albert's soul. He sighed, but he listened—listened as to the voice of a spiritual director inspired with divine truth. "The stars which are needful to you now," the voice continued, "and perhaps for some time to come, are *Love, Honesty, Truth*. All those whose minds are warped, or who are destitute of true feeling, will *be apt to mistake you*, and to persuade themselves and the world that you are not the man you are—or, at least, may become. . . Do you, therefore, be on the alert betimes, with your eyes open in every direction. . . I wish for my Prince a great, noble, warm, and true heart, such as shall serve as the richest and surest basis

for the noblest views of human nature, and the firmest resolve to give them development”

Before long, the decisive moment came. There was a General Election, and it became certain that the Tories, at last, must come into power. The Queen disliked them as much as ever, but, with a large majority in the House of Commons, they would now be in a position to insist upon their wishes being attended to. Lord Melbourne himself was the first to realize the importance of carrying out the inevitable transition with as little friction as possible, and with his consent, the Prince, following up the *rapprochement* which had begun over the Regency Act, opened, through Anson, a negotiation with Sir Robert Peel. In a series of secret interviews, a complete understanding was reached upon the difficult and complex question of the Bedchamber. It was agreed that the constitutional point should not be raised, but that on the formation of the Tory Government, the principal Whig ladies should retire, and their places be filled by others appointed by Sir Robert. Thus, in effect, though not in form, the Crown abandoned the claims of 1839, and they have never been subsequently put forward. The transaction was a turning point in the Prince's career. He had conducted an important negotiation with skill and tact, he had been brought into close and friendly relations with the new Prime Minister, it was obvious that a great political future lay before him. Victoria was much impressed and deeply grateful. “My dearest Angel,” she told King Leopold, “is indeed a great comfort to me. He takes the greatest interest in what goes on, feeling with and for me, and yet abstaining as he ought from biasing me either way, though we talk much on the subject, and his judgment is, as you say, good and mild.” She was in need of all the comfort and assistance he could give her. Lord M. was going, and she could hardly bring herself to speak to Peel. Yes, she would discuss everything with Albert now!

Stockmar, who had returned to England, watched the departure of Lord Melbourne with satisfaction. If all went well, the Prince should now wield a supreme political influence over Victoria. But would all go well? An unexpected development put the Baron into a serious fright. When the dreadful moment finally came, and the Queen, in anguish, bade adieu to her beloved Minister, it was settled between them that, though it would be inadvisable to meet very often, they could continue to correspond. Never were the inconsistencies of Lord Melbourne's character shown more clearly than in what followed. So long as he was in office, his attitude towards Peel had been irreproachable, he had done all he could to facilitate the change of government, he had even, through more than one channel, transmitted privately to his successful rival advice as to the best means of winning the Queen's good graces. Yet, no sooner was he in opposition than his heart failed him. He could not bear the thought of surrendering altogether the privilege and the pleasure of giving counsel to Victoria—of being cut off completely from the power and the intimacy which had been his for so long and in such abundant measure. Though he had declared that he would be perfectly discreet in his letters, he could not resist taking advantage of the opening they afforded. He discussed in detail various public questions, and, in particular, gave the Queen a great deal of advice in the matter of appointments. This advice was followed. Lord Mel-

bourne recommended that Lord Heytesbury, who, he said, was an able man should be made Ambassador at Vienna, and a week later the Queen wrote to the Foreign Secretary urging that Lord Heytesbury, whom she believed to be a very able man, should be employed "on some important mission." Stockmar was very much alarmed. He wrote a memorandum, pointing out the unconstitutional nature of Lord Melbourne's proceedings and the unpleasant position in which the Queen might find herself if they were discovered by Peel, and he instructed Anson to take this memorandum to the ex-Minister. Lord Melbourne, lounging on a sofa, read it through with compressed lips. "This is quite an apple-pie opinion," he said. When Anson ventured to expostulate further, suggesting that it was unseemly in the leader of the Opposition to maintain an intimate relationship with the Sovereign, the old man lost his temper. "God eternally damn it!" he exclaimed, leaping up from his sofa, and dashing about the room. "Flesh and blood cannot stand this!" He continued to write to the Queen, as before, and two more violent bombardments from the Baron were needed before he was brought to reason. Then, gradually, his letters grew less and less frequent, with fewer and fewer references to public concerns, at last, they were entirely innocuous. The Baron smiled, Lord M. had accepted the inevitable.

The Whig Ministry resigned in September, 1841, but more than a year was to elapse before another and an equally momentous change was effected—the removal of Lehzen. For, in the end, the mysterious governess was conquered. The steps are unknown by which Victoria was at last led to accept her with drawal with composure—perhaps with relief, but it is clear that Albert's domestic position must have been greatly strengthened by the appearance of children. The birth of the Princess Royal had been followed in November, 1841, by that of the Prince of Wales, and before very long another baby was expected. The Baroness, with all her affection, could have but a remote share in such family delights. She lost ground perceptibly. It was noticed as a phenomenon that, once or twice, when the Court traveled, she was left behind at Windsor. The Prince was very cautious, at the change of Ministry, Lord Melbourne had advised him to choose that moment for decisive action, but he judged it wiser to wait. Time and the pressure of inevitable circumstances were for him, every day his predominance grew more assured—and every night. At length he perceived that he need hesitate no longer—that every wish, every velleity of his had only to be expressed to be at once Victoria's. He spoke, and Lehzen vanished for ever. No more would she reign in that royal heart and those royal halls. No more, watching from a window at Windsor, would she follow her pupil and her sovereign walking on the terrace among the obsequious multitude, with the eye of triumphant love. Returning to her native Hanover she established herself at Buckeburg in a small but comfortable house, the walls of which were entirely covered by portraits of Her Majesty. The Baron, in spite of his dyspepsia, smiled again. Albert was supreme.

IV

The early discords had passed away completely—resolved into the absolute harmony of married life. Victoria, overcome by a new, an unimagined revela

tion, had surrendered her whole soul to her husband. The beauty and the charm which so suddenly had made her his at first were, she now saw, no more than but the outward manifestation of the true Albert. There was an inward beauty, an inward glory which, blind that she was, she had then but dimly apprehended, but of which now she was aware in every fiber of her being—he was good—he was great! How could she ever have dreamt of setting up her will against his wisdom, her ignorance against his knowledge, her fancies against his perfect taste? Had she really once loved London and late hours and dissipation? She who now was only happy in the country, she who jumped out of bed every morning—oh, so early!—with Albert, to take a walk, before breakfast, with Albert alone! How wonderful it was to be taught by him! To be told by him which trees were which, and to learn all about the bees! And then to sit doing cross-stitch while he read aloud to her Hallam's *Constitutional History of England*! Or to listen to him playing on his new organ ("The organ is the first of instruments," he said), or to sing to him a song by Mendelssohn, with a great deal of care over the time and the breathing, and only a very occasional false note! And, after dinner, too—oh, how good of him! He had given up his double chess! And so there could be round games at the round table, or every one could spend the evening in the most amusing way imaginable—spinning counters and rings. When the babies came it was still more wonderful. Pussy was such a clever little girl ("I am not Pussy! I am the Princess Royal!" she had angrily exclaimed on one occasion), and Bertie—well, she could only pray *most* fervently that the little Prince of Wales would grow up to "resemble his angelic dearest Father in *every, every* respect, both in body and mind." Her dear Mamma, too, had been drawn once more into the family circle, for Albert had brought about a reconciliation, and the departure of Lehzen had helped to obliterate the past. In Victoria's eyes, life had become an idyll, and, if the essential elements of an idyll are happiness, love and simplicity, an idyll it was, though, indeed, it was of a kind that might have disconcerted Theocritus. "Albert brought in dearest little Pussy," wrote Her Majesty in her journal, "in such a smart white merino dress trimmed with blue, which Mamma had given her, and a pretty cap, and placed her on my bed, seating himself next to her, and she was very dear and good. And, as my precious, invaluable Albert sat there, and our little Love between us, I felt quite moved with happiness and gratitude to God."

The past—the past of only three years since—when she looked back upon it, seemed a thing so remote and alien that she could explain it to herself in no other way than as some kind of delusion—an unfortunate mistake. Turning over an old volume of her diary, she came upon this sentence—"As for 'the confidence of the Crown,' God knows! No *Minister*, no *friend* EVER possessed it so entirely as this truly excellent Lord Melbourne possesses mine!" A pang shot through her—she seized a pen, and wrote upon the margin—"Reading this again, I cannot forbear remarking what an artificial sort of happiness *mine* was *then*, and what a blessing it is I have now in my beloved Husband *real* and solid happiness, which no Politics, no worldly reverses *can* change, it could not have lasted long as it was then, for after all, kind and excellent as Lord M is, and kind as he was to me, it was but in Society that I had amuse

ment, and I was only living on that superficial resource, which I *then fancied* was happiness! Thank God! for *me* and others, this is changed, and I *know what REAL happiness is*—V R” How did she know? What is the distinction between happiness that is real and happiness that is felt? So a philosopher—Lord M himself perhaps—might have inquired. But she was no philosopher, and Lord M was a phantom, and Albert was beside her, and that was enough.

Happy, certainly, she was, and she wanted every one to know it. Her letters to King Leopold are sprinkled thick with raptures. “Oh! my dearest uncle, I am sure if you knew *how* happy, how blessed I feel, and how *proud* I feel in possessing *such* a perfect being as my husband” such ecstasies seemed to gush from her pen unceasingly and almost of their own accord. When, one day, without thinking, Lady Lyttelton described some one to her as being “as happy as a queen,” and then grew a little confused, “Don’t correct yourself, Lady Lyttelton,” said Her Majesty. “A queen *is* a very happy woman.”

But this new happiness was no lotus dream. On the contrary, it was bracing, rather than relaxing. Never before had she felt so acutely the necessity for doing her duty. She worked more methodically than ever at the business of State, she watched over her children with untiring vigilance. She carried on a large correspondence, she was occupied with her farm—her dairy—a whole multitude of household avocations—from morning till night. Her active, eager little body hurrying with quick steps after the long strides of Albert down the corridors and avenues of Windsor, seemed the very expression of her spirit. Amid all the softness, the deliciousness of unmixed joy, all the liquescence, the overflowings of inexhaustible sentiment, her native rigidity remained. “A vein of iron,” said Lady Lyttelton, who, as royal governess, had good means of observation, “runs through her most extraordinary character.”

Sometimes the delightful routine of domestic existence had to be interrupted. It was necessary to exchange Windsor for Buckingham Palace, to open Parliament, or to interview official personages, or, occasionally, to entertain foreign visitors at the Castle. Then the quiet Court put on a sudden magnificence, and sovereigns from over the seas—Louis Philippe, or the King of Prussia, or the King of Saxony—found at Windsor an entertainment that was indeed a royal one. Few spectacles in Europe, it was agreed, produced an effect so imposing as the great Waterloo banqueting hall, crowded with guests in sparkling diamonds and blazing uniforms, the long walls hung with the stately portraits of heroes, and the tables loaded with the gorgeous gold plate of the kings of England. But, in that wealth of splendor, the most imposing spectacle of all was the Queen. The little *hausfrau*, who had spent the day before walking out with her children, inspecting her livestock, practicing shakes at the piano, and filling up her journal with adoring descriptions of her husband, suddenly shone forth, without art, without effort, by a spontaneous and natural transition, the very culmination of Majesty. The Tsar of Russia himself was deeply impressed. Victoria on her side viewed with secret awe the tremendous Nicholas. “A great event and a great compliment *his* visit certainly is,” she told her uncle, “and the people *here* are extremely flattered at it. He is certainly a *very striking* man, still very handsome. His profile is *beautiful*, and his manners *most* dignified and graceful, extremely civil—quite alarmingly so, as he is so full of

attentions and *politeness*. But the expression of the *eyes* is *formidable*, and unlike anything I ever saw before." She and Albert and "the good King of Saxony," who happened to be there at the same time, and whom, she said, "we like much—he is *so* unassuming"—drew together like tame villatic fowl in the presence of that awful eagle. When he was gone, they compared notes about his face, his unhappiness, and his despotic power over millions. Well! She for her part could not help pitying him, and she thanked God she was Queen of England.

When the time came for returning some of these visits, the royal pair set forth in their yacht, much to Victoria's satisfaction. "I do love a ship!" she exclaimed, ran up and down ladders with the greatest agility, and cracked jokes with the sailors. The Prince was more aloof. They visited Louis Philippe at the Château d'Eu, they visited King Leopold in Brussels. It happened that a still more remarkable Englishwoman was in the Belgian capital, but she was not remarked, and Queen Victoria passed unknowing before the steady gaze of one of the mistresses in M. Héger's *pensionnat*. "A little stout, vivacious lady, very plainly dressed—not much dignity or pretension about her," was Charlotte Brontë's comment as the royal carriage and six flashed by her, making her wait on the pavement for a moment, and interrupting the train of her reflections. Victoria was in high spirits, and even succeeded in instilling a little cheerfulness into her uncle's somber Court. King Leopold, indeed, was perfectly contented. His dearest hopes had been fulfilled, all his ambitions were satisfied, and for the rest of his life he had only to enjoy, in undisturbed decorum, his throne, his respectability, the table of precedence, and the punctual discharge of his irksome duties. But unfortunately the felicity of those who surrounded him was less complete. His Court, it was murmured, was as gloomy as a conventicle, and the most dismal of all the sufferers was his wife. "Pas de plaisanteries, madame!" he had exclaimed to the unfortunate successor of the Princess Charlotte, when, in the early days of their marriage, she had attempted a feeble joke. Did she not understand that the consort of a constitutional sovereign must not be frivolous? She understood, at last, only too well, and when the startled walls of the state apartments reechoed to the chattering and the laughter of Victoria, the poor lady found that she had almost forgotten how to smile.

Another year, Germany was visited, and Albert displayed the beauties of his home. When Victoria crossed the frontier, she was much excited—and she was astonished as well. "To hear the people speak German," she noted in her diary, "and to see the German soldiers, etc., seemed to me so singular." Having recovered from this slight shock, she found the country charming. She was fêted everywhere, crowds of the surrounding royalties swooped down to welcome her, and the prettiest groups of peasant children, dressed in their best clothes, presented her with bunches of flowers. The principality of Coburg, with its romantic scenery and its well-behaved inhabitants, particularly delighted her, and when she woke up one morning to find herself in "dear Rosenau, my Albert's birthplace," it was "like a beautiful dream." On her return home, she expatiated, in a letter to King Leopold, upon the pleasures of the trip, dwelling especially upon the intensity of her affection for Albert's native land. "I have

a feeling," she said, "for our dear little Germany, which I cannot describe I felt it at Rosenau so much. It is a something which touches me, and which goes to my heart, and makes me inclined to cry. I never felt at any other place that sort of pensive pleasure and peace which I felt there. I fear I almost like it too much."

V

The husband was not so happy as the wife. In spite of the great improvement in his situation, in spite of a growing family and the adoration of Victoria, Albert was still a stranger in a strange land, and the serenity of spiritual satisfaction was denied him. It was something, no doubt, to have dominated his immediate environment, but it was not enough, and, besides, in the very completeness of his success, there was a bitterness. Victoria idolized him, but it was understanding that he craved for, not idolatry, and how much did Victoria, filled to the brim though she was with him, understand him? How much does the bucket understand the well? He was lonely. He went to his organ and improvised with learned modulations until the sounds, swelling and subsiding through elaborate cadences, brought some solace to his heart. Then, with the elasticity of youth, he hurried off to play with the babies, or to design a new pigsty, or to read aloud the *Church History of Scotland* to Victoria, or to pirouette before her on one toe, like a ballet-dancer, with a fixed smile, to show her how she ought to behave when she appeared in public places. Thus did he amuse himself, but there was one distraction in which he did not indulge. He never flirted—no, not with the prettiest ladies of the Court. When, during their engagement, the Queen had remarked with pride to Lord Melbourne that the Prince paid no attention to any other woman, the cynic had answered, "No, that sort of thing is apt to come later", upon which she had scolded him severely, and then hurried off to Stockmar to repeat what Lord M. had said. But the Baron had reassured her, though in other cases, he had replied, that might happen, he did not think it would in Albert's. And the Baron was right. Throughout their married life no rival female charms ever had cause to give Victoria one moment's pang of jealousy.

What more and more absorbed him—bringing with it a curious comfort of its own—was his work. With the advent of Peel, he began to intervene actively in the affairs of the State. In more ways than one—in the cast of their intelligence, in their moral earnestness, even in the uneasy formalism of their manners—the two men resembled each other, there was a sympathy between them, and thus Peel was ready enough to listen to the advice of Stockmar, and to urge the Prince forward into public life. A royal commission was about to be formed to enquire whether advantage might not be taken of the rebuilding of the Houses of Parliament to encourage the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom, and Peel, with great perspicacity, asked the Prince to preside over it. The work was of a kind which precisely suited Albert: his love of art, his love of method, his love of coming into contact—close yet dignified—with distinguished men—it satisfied them all, and he threw himself into it *con amore*. Some of the members of the commission were somewhat alarmed when, in his opening speech, he pointed out the necessity of dividing the subjects to be considered

into "categories"—the word, they thought, smacked dangerously of German metaphysics, but their confidence returned when they observed His Royal Highness's extraordinary technical acquaintance with the processes of fresco painting. When the question arose as to whether the decorations upon the walls of the new buildings should, or should not, have a moral purpose, the Prince spoke strongly for the affirmative. Although many, he observed, would give but a passing glance to the works, the painter was not therefore to forget that others might view them with more thoughtful eyes. This argument convinced the commission, and it was decided that the subjects to be depicted should be of an improving nature. The frescoes were carried out in accordance with the commission's instructions, but unfortunately before very long they had become, even to the most thoughtful eyes, totally invisible. It seems that His Royal Highness's technical acquaintance with the processes of fresco painting was incomplete.

The next task upon which the Prince embarked was a more arduous one: he determined to reform the organization of the royal household. This reform had been long overdue. For years past the confusion, discomfort, and extravagance in the royal residences, and in Buckingham Palace particularly, had been scandalous; no reform had been practicable under the rule of the Baroness, but her functions had now devolved upon the Prince, and in 1844, he boldly attacked the problem. Three years earlier, Stockmar, after careful enquiry, had revealed in an elaborate memorandum an extraordinary state of affairs. The control of the household, it appeared, was divided in the strangest manner between a number of authorities, each independent of the other, each possessed of vague and fluctuating powers, without responsibility, and without coordination. Of these authorities, the most prominent were the Lord Steward and the Lord Chamberlain—noblemen of high rank and political importance, who changed office with every administration, who did not reside with the Court, and had no effective representatives attached to it. The distribution of their respective functions was uncertain and peculiar. In Buckingham Palace, it was believed that the Lord Chamberlain had charge of the whole of the rooms, with the exception of the kitchen, sculleries, and pantries, which were claimed by the Lord Steward. At the same time, the outside of the Palace was under the control of neither of these functionaries—but of the Office of Woods and Forests, and thus, while the insides of the windows were cleaned by the Department of the Lord Chamberlain—or possibly, in certain cases, of the Lord Steward—the Office of Woods and Forests cleaned their outsides. Of the servants, the housekeepers, the pages, and the housemaids were under the authority of the Lord Chamberlain, the clerk of the kitchen, the cooks, and the porters were under that of the Lord Steward, but the footmen, the livery-porters, and the under-butlers took their orders from yet another official—the Master of the Horse. Naturally, in these circumstances the service was extremely defective and the lack of discipline among the servants disgraceful. They absented themselves for as long as they pleased and whenever the fancy took them, "and if," as the Baron put it, "smoking, drinking, and other irregularities occur in the dormitories, where footmen, etc., sleep ten and twelve in each room, no one can help it." As for Her Majesty's guests, there was nobody to show them to their

rooms, and they were often left, having utterly lost their way in the complicated passages, to wander helpless by the hour. The strange divisions of authority extended not only to persons but to things. The Queen observed that there was never a fire in the dining-room. She enquired why. The answer was "the Lord Steward lays the fire, and the Lord Chamberlain lights it", the underlings of those two great noblemen having failed to come to an accommodation, there was no help for it—the Queen must eat in the cold.

A surprising incident opened every one's eyes to the confusion and negligence that reigned in the Palace. A fortnight after the birth of the Princess Royal the nurse heard a suspicious noise in the room next to the Queen's bedroom. She called to one of the pages, who, looking under a large sofa, perceived there a crouching figure "with a most repulsive appearance." It was "the boy Jones." This enigmatical personage, whose escapades dominated the newspapers for several ensuing months, and whose motives and character remained to the end ambiguous, was an undersized lad of 17, the son of a tailor, who had apparently gained admittance to the Palace by climbing over the garden wall and walking in through an open window. Two years before he had paid a similar visit in the guise of a chimney-sweep. He now declared that he had spent three days in the Palace, hiding under various beds, that he had "helped himself to soup and other eatables," and that he had "sat upon the throne, seen the Queen, and heard the Princess Royal squall." Every detail of the strange affair was eagerly canvassed. *The Times* reported that the boy Jones had "from his infancy been fond of reading," but that "his countenance is exceedingly sullen." It added "The sofa under which the boy Jones was discovered, we understand, is one of the most costly and magnificent material and workmanship, and ordered expressly for the accommodation of the royal and illustrious visitors who call to pay their respects to Her Majesty." The culprit was sent for three months to the "House of Correction." When he emerged, he immediately returned to Buckingham Palace. He was discovered, and sent back to the "House of Correction" for another three months, after which he was offered £4 a week by a music hall to appear upon the stage. He refused this offer, and shortly afterwards was found by the police loitering round Buckingham Palace. The authorities acted vigorously, and, without any trial or process of law, shipped the boy Jones off to sea. A year later his ship put into Portsmouth to refit, and he at once disembarked and walked to London. He was re-arrested before he reached the Palace, and sent back to his ship, the *Warspite*. On this occasion it was noticed that he had "much improved in personal appearance and grown quite corpulent", and so the boy Jones passed out of history, though we catch one last glimpse of him in 1844 falling overboard in the night between Tunis and Algiers. He was fished up again, but it was conjectured—as one of the *Warspite's* officers explained in a letter to *The Times*—that his fall had not been accidental, but that he had deliberately jumped into the Mediterranean in order to "see the life-buoy light burning." Of a boy with such a record, what else could be supposed?

But discomfort and alarm were not the only results of the mismanagement of the household, the waste, extravagance, and peculation that also flowed from it were immeasurable. There were preposterous perquisites and malpractices

of every kind. It was, for instance, an ancient and immutable rule that a candle that had once been lighted should never be lighted again, what happened to the old candles, nobody knew. Again, the Prince, examining the accounts, was puzzled by a weekly expenditure of thirty five shillings on "Red Room Wine." He enquired into the matter, and after great difficulty discovered that in the time of George III a room in Windsor Castle with red hangings had once been used as a guard-room, and that five shillings a day had been allowed to provide wine for the officers. The guard had long since been moved elsewhere, but the payment for wine in the Red Room continued, the money being received by a half pay officer who held the sinecure position of under-butler.

After much laborious investigation, and a stiff struggle with the multitude of vested interests which had been brought into being by long years of neglect, the Prince succeeded in effecting a complete reform. The various conflicting authorities were induced to resign their powers into the hands of a single official, the Master of the Household, who became responsible for the entire management of the royal palaces. Great economies were made, and the whole crowd of venerable abuses was swept away. Among others, the unlucky half pay officer of the Red Room was, much to his surprise, given the choice of relinquishing his weekly emolument or of performing the duties of an under-butler. Even the irregularities among the footmen, etc., were greatly diminished. There were outcries and complaints, the Prince was accused of meddling, of injustice, and of saving candle-ends, but he held on his course, and before long the admirable administration of the royal household was recognized as a convincing proof of his perseverance and capacity.

At the same time his activity was increasing enormously in a more important sphere. He had become the Queen's Private Secretary, her confidential adviser, her second self. He was now always present at her interviews with Ministers. He took, like the Queen, a special interest in foreign policy, but there was no public question in which his influence was not felt. A double process was at work, while Victoria fell more and more absolutely under his intellectual predominance, he, simultaneously, grew more and more completely absorbed by the machinery of high politics—the incessant and multifarious business of a great State. Nobody any more could call him a dilettante, he was a worker, a public personage, a man of affairs. Stockmar noted the change with exultation. "The Prince," he wrote, "has improved very much lately. He has evidently a head for politics. He has become, too, far more independent. His mental activity is constantly on the increase, and he gives the greater part of his time to business, without complaining." "The relations between husband and wife," added the Baron, "are all one could desire."

Long before Peel's ministry came to an end, there had been a complete change in Victoria's attitude towards him. His appreciation of the Prince had softened her heart, the sincerity and warmth of his nature, which, in private intercourse with those whom he wished to please, had the power of gradually dissipating the awkwardness of his manners, did the rest. She came in time to regard him with intense feelings of respect and attachment. She spoke of "our worthy Peel," for whom, she said, she had "an *extreme* admiration" and who had shown himself "a man of unbounded *loyalty, courage, patriotism, and*

high-mindedness, and his conduct towards me has been *chivalrous* almost, I might say" She dreaded his removal from office almost as frantically as she had once dreaded that of Lord M. It would be, she declared, a *great calamity*. Six years before, what would she have said, if a prophet had told her that the day would come when she would be horrified by the triumph of the Whigs? Yet there was no escaping it, she had to face the return of her old friends. In the ministerial crises of 1845 and 1846, the Prince played a dominating part. Everybody recognized that he was the real center of the negotiations—the actual controller of the forces and the functions of the Crown. The process by which this result was reached had been so gradual as to be almost imperceptible, but it may be said with certainty that, by the close of Peel's administration, Albert had become, in effect, the King of England.

VI

With the final emergence of the Prince came the final extinction of Lord Melbourne. A year after his loss of office, he had been struck down by a paralytic seizure, he had apparently recovered, but his old elasticity had gone for ever. Moody, restless, and unhappy, he wandered like a ghost about the town, bursting into soliloquies in public places, or asking odd questions, suddenly, *a propos de bottes*. "I'll be hanged if I'll do it for you, my Lord," he was heard to say in the hall at Brooks's, standing by himself, and addressing the air after much thought. "Don't you consider," he abruptly asked a fellow-guest at Lady Holland's, leaning across the dinner-table in a pause of the conversation, "that it was a most damnable act of Henri Quatre to change his religion with a view to securing the Crown?" He sat at home, brooding for hours in miserable solitude. He turned over his books—his classics and his Testaments—but they brought him no comfort at all. He longed for the return of the past, for the impossible, for he knew not what, for the devilries of Caro, for the happy platitudes of Windsor. His friends had left him, and no wonder, he said in bitterness—the fire was out. He secretly hoped for a return to power, scanning the newspapers with solicitude, and occasionally making a speech in the House of Lords. His correspondence with the Queen continued, and he appeared from time to time at Court, but he was a mere simulacrum of his former self, "the dream," wrote Victoria, "is *past*." As for his political views, they could no longer be tolerated. The Prince was an ardent Free Trader, and so, of course, was the Queen, and when, dining at Windsor at the time of the repeal of the Corn Laws, Lord Melbourne suddenly exclaimed, "Ma'am, it's a damned dishonest act!" every one was extremely embarrassed. Her Majesty laughed and tried to change the conversation, but without avail, Lord Melbourne returned to the charge again and again with—"I say, Ma'am, it's damned dishonest!"—until the Queen said, "Lord Melbourne, I must beg you not to say anything more on this subject now", and then he held his tongue. She was kind to him, writing him long letters, and always remembering his birthday, but it was kindness at a distance, and he knew it. He had become "poor Lord Melbourne." A profound disquietude devoured him. He tried to fix his mind on the condition of Agriculture and the Oxford Movement. He wrote long memoranda

in utterly undecipherable handwriting. He was convinced that he had lost all his money, and could not possibly afford to be a Knight of the Garter. He had run through everything, and yet—if Peel went out, he might be sent for—why not? He was never sent for. The Whigs ignored him in their consultations, and the leadership of the party passed to Lord John Russell. When Lord John became Prime Minister, there was much politeness, but Lord Melbourne was not asked to join the Cabinet. He bore the blow with perfect amenity, but he understood, at last, that that was the end.

For two years more he lingered, sinking slowly into unconsciousness and imbecility. Sometimes, propped up in his chair, he would be heard to murmur, with unexpected appositeness, the words of Samson

So much I feel my genial spirits droop,
My hopes all flat, nature within me seems
In all her functions weary of herself,
My race of glory run, and race of shame,
And I shall shortly be with them that rest

A few days before his death, Victoria, learning that there was no hope of his recovery, turned her mind for a little towards that which had once been Lord M. "You will grieve to hear," she told King Leopold, "that our good, dear, old friend Melbourne is dying. One cannot forget how good and kind and amiable he was, and it brings back so many recollections to my mind, though, God knows! I never wish that time back again."

She was in little danger. The tide of circumstance was flowing now with irresistible fullness towards a very different consummation. The seriousness of Albert, the claims of her children, her own inmost inclinations, and the movement of the whole surrounding world, combined to urge her forward along the narrow way of public and domestic duty. Her family steadily increased. Within eighteen months of the birth of the Prince of Wales the Princess Alice appeared, and a year later the Prince Alfred, and then the Princess Helena, and, two years afterwards, the Princess Louise, and still there were signs that the pretty row of royal infants was not complete. The parents, more and more involved in family cares and family happiness, found the pomp of Windsor galling, and longed for some more intimate and remote retreat. On the advice of Peel they purchased the estate of Osborne, in the Isle of Wight. Their skill and economy in financial matters had enabled them to lay aside a substantial sum of money, and they could afford, out of their savings, not merely to buy the property but to build a new house for themselves and to furnish it at a cost of £200,000. At Osborne, by the sea-shore, and among the woods, which Albert, with memories of Rosenau in his mind, had so carefully planted, the royal family spent every hour that could be snatched from Windsor and London—delightful hours of deep retirement and peaceful work. The public looked on with approval. A few aristocrats might sniff or titter, but with the nation at large the Queen was now once more extremely popular. The middle-classes, in particular, were pleased. They liked a love-match, they liked a household which combined the advantages of royalty and virtue, and in which they seemed to see, reflected as in some resplendent looking-glass, the ideal image of the

very lives they led themselves Their own existences, less exalted, but oh! so soothingly similar, acquired an added excellence, an added succulence, from the early hours, the regularity, the plain tuckers, the round games, the roast beef and Yorkshire pudding of Osborne It was indeed a model Court Not only were its central personages the patterns of propriety, but no breath of scandal, no shadow of indecorum, might approach its utmost boundaries For Victoria, with all the zeal of a convert, upheld now the standard of moral purity with an inflexibility surpassing, if that were possible, Albert's own She blushed to think how she had once believed—how she had once actually told *him*—that one might be too strict and particular in such matters, and that one ought to be indulgent towards other people's dreadful sins But she was no longer Lord M's pupil she was Albert's wife She was more—the embodiment, the living apex of a new era in the generations of mankind The last vestige of the eighteenth century had disappeared, cynicism and subtlety were shriveled into powder, and duty, industry, morality, and domesticity triumphed over them Even the very chairs and tables had assumed, with a singular responsiveness, the forms of prim solidity The Victorian Age was in full swing

VII

Only one thing more was needed material expression must be given to the new ideals and the new forces so that they might stand revealed, in visible glory, before the eyes of an astonished world It was for Albert to supply this want He mused, and was inspired the Great Exhibition came into his head

Without consulting any one, he thought out the details of his conception with the minutest care There had been exhibitions before in the world, but this should surpass them all It should contain specimens of what every country could produce in raw materials, in machinery and mechanical inventions, in manufactures, and in the applied and plastic arts It should not be merely useful and ornamental, it should teach a high moral lesson It should be an international monument to those supreme blessings of civilization—peace, progress, and prosperity For some time past the Prince had been devoting much of his attention to the problems of commerce and industry He had a taste for machinery of every kind, and his sharp eye had more than once detected, with the precision of an expert, a missing cog-wheel in some vast and complicated engine A visit to Liverpool, where he opened the Albert Dock, impressed upon his mind the immensity of modern industrial forces, though in a letter to Victoria describing his experiences, he was careful to retain his customary lightness of touch "As I write," he playfully remarked, "you will be making your evening toilette, and not be ready in time for dinner I must set about the same task, and not, let me hope, with the same result The loyalty and enthusiasm of the inhabitants are great, but the heat is greater still I am satisfied that if the population of Liverpool had been weighed this morning, and were to be weighed again now, they would be found many degrees lighter The docks are wonderful, and the mass of shipping incredible" In art and science he had been deeply interested since boyhood, his reform of the household had put his talent for organization beyond a doubt, and thus from every

point of view the Prince was well qualified for his task. Having matured his plans, he summoned a small committee and laid an outline of his scheme before it. The committee approved, and the great undertaking was set on foot without delay.

Two years, however, passed before it was completed. For two years the Prince labored with extraordinary and incessant energy. At first all went smoothly. The leading manufacturers warmly took up the idea, the colonies and the East India Company were sympathetic, the great foreign nations were eager to send in their contributions, the powerful support of Sir Robert Peel was obtained, and the use of a site in Hyde Park, selected by the Prince, was sanctioned by the Government. Out of 234 plans for the exhibition building, the Prince chose that of Joseph Paxton, famous as a designer of gigantic conservatories, and the work was on the point of being put in hand when a series of unexpected difficulties arose. Opposition to the whole scheme, which had long been smoldering in various quarters suddenly burst forth. There was an outcry, headed by *The Times*, against the use of the Park for the exhibition, for a moment it seemed as if the building would be relegated to a suburb, but, after a fierce debate in the House, the supporters of the site in the Park won the day. Then it appeared that the project lacked a sufficient financial backing, but this obstacle, too, was surmounted, and eventually £200,000 was subscribed as a guarantee fund. The enormous glass edifice rose higher and higher, covering acres and enclosing towering elm trees beneath its roof, and then the fury of its enemies reached a climax. The fashionable, the cautious, the Protectionists, the pious, all joined in the hue and cry. It was pointed out that the Exhibition would serve as a rallying point for all the ruffians in England, for all the malcontents in Europe, and that on the day of its opening there would certainly be a riot and probably a revolution. It was asserted that the glass roof was porous, and that the droppings of fifty million sparrows would utterly destroy every object beneath it. Agitated nonconformists declared that the Exhibition was an arrogant and wicked enterprise which would infallibly bring down God's punishment upon the nation. Colonel Sibthorpe, in the debate on the Address, prayed that hail and lightning might descend from heaven on the accursed thing. The Prince, with unyielding perseverance and infinite patience, pressed on to his goal. His health was seriously affected, he suffered from constant sleeplessness, his strength was almost worn out. But he remembered the injunctions of Stockmar and never relaxed. The volume of his labors grew more prodigious every day, he toiled at committees, presided over public meetings, made speeches, and carried on communications with every corner of the civilized world—and his efforts were rewarded. On May 1, 1851, the Great Exhibition was opened by the Queen before an enormous concourse of persons, amid scenes of dazzling brilliancy and triumphant enthusiasm.

Victoria herself was in a state of excitement which bordered on delirium. She performed her duties in a trance of joy, gratitude, and amazement, and, when it was all over, her feelings poured themselves out into her journal in a torrential flood. The day had been nothing but an endless succession of glories—or rather one vast glory—one vast radiation of Albert. Everything she had seen, everything she had felt or heard, had been so beautiful, so wonderful

that even the royal underlinings broke down under the burden of emphasis while her remembering pen rushed on, regardless, from splendor to splendor—the huge crowds, so well behaved and loyal—flags of all the nations floating—the inside of the building, so immense, with myriads of people and the sun shining through the roof—a little side room, where we left our shawls—palm trees and machinery—dear Albert—the place so big that we could hardly hear the organ—thankfulness to God—a curious assemblage of political and distinguished men—the March from *Athalie*—God bless my dearest Albert, God bless my dearest country!—a glass fountain—the Duke and Lord Anglesey walking arm in arm—a beautiful Amazon, in bronze, by Kiss—Mr Paxton, who might be justly proud, and rose from being a common gardener's boy—Sir George Grey in tears, and everybody astonished and delighted

A striking incident occurred when, after a short prayer by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the choir of 600 voices burst into the "Hallelujah Chorus" At that moment a Chinaman, dressed in full national costume, stepped out into the middle of the central nave, and, advancing slowly towards the royal group, did obeisance to Her Majesty The Queen, much impressed, had no doubt that he was an eminent mandarin, and, when the final procession was formed, orders were given that, as no representative of the Celestial Empire was present, he should be included in the diplomatic cortege He accordingly, with the utmost gravity, followed immediately behind the Ambassadors He subsequently disappeared, and it was rumored, among ill-natured people, that, far from being a mandarin, the fellow was a mere impostor But nobody ever really discovered the nature of the comments that had been lurking behind the matchless impassivity of that yellow face

A few days later Victoria poured out her heart to her uncle The first of May, she said, was "the *greatest* day in our history, the most *beautiful* and *imposing* and *touching* spectacle ever seen, and the triumph of my beloved Albert It was the *happiest*, *proudest* day in my life, and I can think of nothing else Albert's dearest name is immortalized with this *great* conception, *his* own, and my *own* dear country *showed* she was *worthy* of it The triumph is *immense*"

It was The enthusiasm was universal, even the bitterest scoffers were converted, and joined in the chorus of praise Congratulations from public bodies poured in, the City of Paris gave a great *fête* to the Exhibition committee, and the Queen and the Prince made a triumphal progress through the North of England The financial results were equally remarkable The total profit made by the Exhibition amounted to a sum of £165,000, which was employed in the purchase of land for the erection of a permanent National Museum in South Kensington During the six months of its existence in Hyde Park over six million persons visited it, and not a single accident occurred But there is an end to all things, and the time had come for the Crystal Palace to be removed to the salubrious seclusion of Sydenham Victoria, sad but resigned, paid her final visit "It looked so beautiful," she said "I could not believe it was the last time I was to see it An organ, accompanied by a fine and powerful wind instrument called the *sommerophone*, was being played, and it nearly upset me The canvas is very dirty, the red curtains are faded and many things are very much soiled, still the effect is fresh and new as ever and most beautiful The glass fountain

was already removed and the sippers and miners were rolling about the little boxes just as they did at the beginning. It made us all very melancholy." But more cheerful thoughts followed. When all was over, she expressed her boundless satisfaction in a dithyrambic letter to the Prime Minister. Her beloved husband's name, she said, was for ever immortalized, and that this was universally recognized by the country was a source to her of immense happiness and gratitude. "She feels grateful to Providence," Her Majesty concluded, "to have permitted her to be united to so great, so noble, so excellent a Prince, and this year will ever remain the proudest and happiest of her life. The day of the closing of the Exhibition (which the Queen regretted much she could not witness) was the twelfth anniversary of her betrothal to the Prince, which is a curious coincidence."

V LORD PALMERSTON

IN 1851 the Prince's fortunes reached their high-water mark. The success of the Great Exhibition enormously increased his reputation and seemed to assure him henceforward a leading place in the national life. But before the year was out another triumph, in a very different sphere of action, was also his. This triumph, big with fateful consequences, was itself the outcome of a series of complicated circumstances which had been gathering to a climax for many years.

The unpopularity of Albert in high society had not diminished with time. Aristocratic persons continued to regard him with disfavor, and he, on his side, withdrew further and further into a contemptuous reserve. For a moment, indeed, it appeared as if the dislike of the upper classes was about to be suddenly converted into cordiality, for they learnt with amazement that the Prince, during a country visit, had ridden to hounds and acquitted himself remarkably well. They had always taken it for granted that his horsemanship was of some second-rate foreign quality, and here he was jumping five-barred gates and tearing after the fox as if he had been born and bred in Leicestershire. They could hardly believe it, was it possible that they had made a mistake, and that Albert was a good fellow after all? Had he wished to be thought so he would certainly have seized this opportunity, purchased several hunters, and used them constantly. But he had no such desire, hunting bored him, and made Victoria nervous. He continued, as before, to ride, as he himself put it, for exercise or convenience, not for amusement, and it was agreed that though the Prince, no doubt, could keep in his saddle well enough, he was no sportsman.

This was a serious matter. It was not merely that Albert was laughed at by fine ladies and sneered at by fine gentlemen, it was not merely that Victoria, who before her marriage had cut some figure in society, had, under her husband's influence, almost completely given it up. Since Charles the Second the sovereigns of England had, with a single exception, always been unfashionable, and the fact that the exception was George the Fourth seemed to give an added significance to the rule. What was grave was not the lack of fashion, but the

lack of other and more important qualities. The hostility of the upper classes was symptomatic of an antagonism more profound than one of manners or even of tastes. The Prince, in a word, was un-English. What that word precisely meant it was difficult to say, but the fact was patent to every eye. Lord Palmerston, also, was not fashionable, the great Whig aristocrats looked askance at him, and only tolerated him as an unpleasant necessity thrust upon them by fate. But Lord Palmerston was English through and through, there was something in him that expressed, with extraordinary vigor, the fundamental qualities of the English race. And he was the very antithesis of the Prince. By a curious chance it so happened that this typical Englishman was brought into closer contact than any other of his countrymen with the alien from over the sea. It thus fell out that differences which, in more fortunate circumstances, might have been smoothed away and obliterated, became accentuated to the highest pitch. All the mysterious forces in Albert's soul leapt out to do battle with his adversary, and, in the long and violent conflict that followed, it almost seemed as if he was struggling with England herself.

Palmerston's whole life had been spent in the government of the country. At twenty-two he had been a Minister, at twenty-five he had been offered the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, which, with that prudence which formed so unexpected a part of his character, he had declined to accept. His first spell of office had lasted uninterruptedly for twenty-one years. When Lord Grey came into power he received the Foreign Secretaryship, a post which he continued to occupy, with two intervals, for another twenty-one years. Throughout this period his reputation with the public had steadily grown, and when, in 1846, he became Foreign Secretary for the third time, his position in the country was almost, if not quite, on an equality with that of the Prime Minister, Lord John Russell. He was a tall, big man of sixty-two, with a jaunty air, a large face, dyed whiskers, and a long sardonic upper lip. His private life was far from respectable, but he had greatly strengthened his position in society by marrying, late in life, Lady Cowper, the sister of Lord Melbourne, and one of the most influential of the Whig hostesses. Powerful, experienced, and supremely self-confident, he naturally paid very little attention to Albert. Why should he? The Prince was interested in foreign affairs? Very well, then, let the Prince pay attention to *him*—to him, who had been a Cabinet Minister when Albert was in the cradle, who was the chosen leader of a great nation, and who had never failed in anything he had undertaken in the whole course of his life. Not that he wanted the Prince's attention—far from it. So far as he could see, Albert was merely a young foreigner, who suffered from having no vices, and whose only claim to distinction was that he had happened to marry the Queen of England. This estimate, as he found out to his cost, was a mistaken one. Albert was by no means insignificant, and, behind Albert, there was another figure by no means insignificant either—there was Stockmar.

But Palmerston, busy with his plans, his ambitions, and the management of a great department, brushed all such considerations on one side, it was his favorite method of action. He lived by instinct—by a quick eye and a strong hand, a dexterous management of every crisis as it arose, a half-unconscious sense of the vital elements in a situation. He was very bold, and nothing gave

him more exhilaration than to steer the ship of state in a high wind, on a rough sea, with every stitch of canvas on her that she could carry. But there is a point beyond which boldness becomes rashness—a point perceptible only to intuition and not to reason, and beyond that point Palmerston never went. When he saw that the case demanded it, he could go slow—very slow indeed, in fact, his whole career, so full of vigorous adventure, was nevertheless a masterly example of the proverb, “tout vient à point à qui sait attendre.” But when he decided to go quick, nobody went quicker. One day, returning from Osborne, he found that he had missed the train to London, he ordered a special, but the station master told him that to put a special train upon the line at that time of day would be dangerous, and he could not allow it. Palmerston insisted, declaring that he had important business in London, which could not wait. The station-master, supported by all the officials, continued to demur, the company, he said, could not possibly take the responsibility. “On my responsibility, then!” said Palmerston, in his off-hand, peremptory way, whereupon the station-master ordered up the train, and the Foreign Secretary reached London in time for his work, without an accident. The story is typical of the happy valiance with which he conducted both his own affairs and those of the nation. “England,” he used to say, “is strong enough to brave consequences.” Apparently, under Palmerston’s guidance, she was. While the officials protested and shook in their shoes, he would wave them away with his airy “My responsibility!” and carry the country swiftly along the line of his choice, to a triumphant destination,—without an accident. His immense popularity was the result partly of his diplomatic successes, partly of his extraordinary personal affability, but chiefly of the genuine intensity with which he responded to the feelings and supported the interests of his countrymen. The public knew that it had in Lord Palmerston not only a high-mettled master, but also a devoted servant—that he was, in every sense of the word, a public man. When he was Prime Minister, he noticed that iron hurdles had been put up on the grass in the Green Park, he immediately wrote to the Minister responsible, ordering, in the severest language, their instant removal, declaring that they were “an intolerable nuisance,” and that the purpose of the grass was “to be walked upon freely and without restraint by the people, old and young, for whose enjoyment the parks are maintained.” It was in this spirit that, as Foreign Secretary, he watched over the interests of Englishmen abroad. Nothing could be more agreeable for Englishmen, but foreign governments were less pleased. They found Lord Palmerston interfering, exasperating, and alarming. In Paris they spoke with bated breath of “ce terrible milord Palmerston”, and in Germany they made a little song about him—

Hat der Teufel einen Sohn,
So ist er sicher Palmerston

But their complaints, their threats, and their agitations were all in vain. Palmerston, with his upper lip sardonically curving, braved consequences, and held on his course.

The first diplomatic crisis which arose after his return to office, though the Prince and the Queen were closely concerned with it, passed off without serious

disagreement between the Court and the Minister. For some years past a curious problem had been perplexing the chanceries of Europe. Spain, ever since the time of Napoleon a prey to civil convulsions, had settled down for a short interval to a state of comparative quiet under the rule of Christina, the Queen Mother, and her daughter Isabella, the young Queen. In 1846, the question of Isabella's marriage, which had for long been the subject of diplomatic speculations, suddenly became acute. Various candidates for her hand were proposed—among others, two cousins of her own, another Spanish prince, and Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, a first cousin of Victoria's and Albert's, for different reasons, however, none of these young men seemed altogether satisfactory. Isabella was not yet sixteen, and it might have been supposed that her marriage could be put off for a few years more, but this was considered to be out of the question. "Vous ne savez pas," said a high authority, "ce que c'est que ces princesses espagnoles, elles ont le diable au corps, et on a toujours dit que si nous ne nous hâtons pas, l'héritier viendrait avant le mari." It might also have been supposed that the young Queen's marriage was a matter to be settled by herself, her mother, and the Spanish Government, but this again was far from being the case. It had become, by one of those periodical reversions to the ways of the eighteenth century, which, it is rumored, are still not unknown in diplomacy, a question of dominating importance in the foreign policies both of France and England. For several years, Louis Philippe and his Prime Minister Guizot had been privately maturing a very subtle plan. It was the object of the French King to repeat the glorious *coup* of Louis XIV, and to abolish the Pyrenees by placing one of his grandsons on the throne of Spain. In order to bring this about, he did not venture to suggest that his younger son, the Duc de Montpensier, should marry Isabella, that would have been too obvious a move, which would have raised immediate and insurmountable opposition. He therefore proposed that Isabella should marry her cousin, the Duke of Cadiz, while Montpensier married Isabella's younger sister, the Infanta Fernanda, and pray, what possible objection could there be to that? The wily old King whispered into the chaste ears of Guizot the key to the secret, he had good reason to believe that the Duke of Cadiz was incapable of having children, and therefore the offspring of Fernanda would inherit the Spanish crown. Guizot rubbed his hands, and began at once to set the necessary springs in motion, but, of course, the whole scheme was very soon divulged and understood. The English Government took an extremely serious view of the matter, the balance of power was clearly at stake, and the French intrigue must be frustrated at all hazards. A diplomatic struggle of great intensity followed, and it occasionally appeared that a second War of the Spanish Succession was about to break out. This was avoided, but the consequences of this strange imbroglio were far-reaching and completely different from what any of the parties concerned could have guessed.

In the course of the long and intricate negotiations there was one point upon which Louis Philippe laid a special stress—the candidature of Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg. The prospect of a marriage between a Coburg Prince and the Queen of Spain was, he declared, at least as threatening to the balance of power in Europe as that of a marriage between the Duc de Montpensier and

the Infanta, and, indeed, there was much to be said for this contention. The ruin which had fallen upon the House of Coburg during the Napoleonic wars had apparently only served to multiply its vitality, for that princely family had by now extended itself over Europe in an extraordinary manner. King Leopold was firmly fixed in Belgium, his niece was Queen of England, one of his nephews was the husband of the Queen of England, and another the husband of the Queen of Portugal, yet another was Duke of Württemberg. Where was this to end? There seemed to be a Coburg Trust ready to send out one of its members at any moment to fill up any vacant place among the ruling families of Europe. And even beyond Europe there were signs of this infection spreading. An American who had arrived in Brussels had assured King Leopold that there was a strong feeling in the United States in favor of monarchy instead of the misrule of mobs, and had suggested, to the delight of His Majesty, that some branch of the Coburg family might be available for the position. That danger might, perhaps, be remote, but the Spanish danger was close at hand, and if Prince Leopold were to marry Queen Isabella the position of France would be one of humiliation, if not of positive danger. Such were the asseverations of Louis Philippe. The English Government had no wish to support Prince Leopold, and though Albert and Victoria had some hankerings for the match, the wisdom of Stockmar had induced them to give up all thoughts of it. The way thus seemed open for a settlement. England would be reasonable about Leopold, if France would be reasonable about Montpensier. At the Château d'Eu the agreement was made, in a series of conversations between the King and Guizot on the one side, and the Queen, the Prince, and Lord Aberdeen on the other. Aberdeen, as Foreign Minister, declared that England would neither recognize nor support Prince Leopold as a candidate for the hand of the Queen of Spain, while Louis Philippe solemnly promised, both to Aberdeen and to Victoria, that the Duc de Montpensier should not marry the Infanta Fernanda until after the Queen was married and had issue. All went well, and the crisis seemed to be over, when the whole question was suddenly reopened by Palmerston, who had succeeded Aberdeen at the Foreign Office. In a despatch to the English Minister at Madrid, he mentioned, in a list of possible candidates for Queen Isabella's hand, Prince Leopold of Coburg, and at the same time he took occasion to denounce in violent language the tyranny and incompetence of the Spanish Government. This despatch, indiscreet in any case, was rendered infinitely more so by being communicated to Guizot. Louis Philippe saw his opportunity and pounced on it. Though there was nothing in Palmerston's language to show that he either recognized or supported Prince Leopold, the King at once assumed that the English had broken their engagement, and that he was therefore free to do likewise. He then sent the despatch to the Queen Mother, declared that the English were intriguing for the Coburg marriage, bade her mark the animosity of Palmerston against the Spanish Government, and urged her to escape from her difficulties and ensure the friendship of France by marrying Isabella to the Duke of Cadiz and Fernanda to Montpensier. The Queen Mother, alarmed and furious, was easily convinced. There was only one difficulty. Isabella loathed the very sight of her cousin. But this was soon surmounted, there was a wild

supper-party at the Palace, and in the course of it the young girl was induced to consent to anything that was asked of her. Shortly after, and on the same day, both the marriages took place.

The news burst like a bomb on the English Government, who saw with rage and mortification that they had been completely outmaneuvered by the crafty King Victoria, in particular, was outraged. Not only had she been the personal recipient of Louis Philippe's pledge, but he had won his way to her heart by presenting the Prince of Wales with a box of soldiers and sending the Princess Royal a beautiful Parisian doll with eyes that opened and shut. And now insult was added to injury. The Queen of the French wrote her a formal letter, calmly announcing, as a family event in which she was sure Victoria would be interested, the marriage of her son, Montpensier—"qui ajoutera a notre bonheur intérieur, le seul vrai dans ce monde, et que vous, madame, savez si bien apprécier." But the English Queen had not long to wait for her revenge. Within eighteen months the monarchy of Louis Philippe, discredited, unpopular, and fatally weakened by the withdrawal of English support, was swept into limbo, while he and his family threw themselves as suppliant fugitives at the feet of Victoria.

II

In this affair both the Queen and the Prince had been too much occupied with the delinquencies of Louis Philippe to have any wrath to spare for those of Palmerston, and, indeed, on the main issue, Palmerston's attitude and their own had been in complete agreement. But in this the case was unique. In every other foreign complication—and they were many and serious—during the ensuing years, the differences between the royal couple and the Foreign Secretary were constant and profound. There was a sharp quarrel over Portugal, where violently hostile parties were flying at each other's throats. The royal sympathy was naturally enlisted on behalf of the Queen and her Coburg husband, while Palmerston gave his support to the progressive elements in the country. It was not until 1848, however, that the strain became really serious. In that year of revolutions, when, in all directions and with alarming frequency, crowns kept rolling off royal heads, Albert and Victoria were appalled to find that the policy of England was persistently directed—in Germany, in Switzerland, in Austria, in Italy, in Sicily—so as to favor the insurgent forces. The situation, indeed, was just such an one as the soul of Palmerston loved. There was danger and excitement, the necessity of decision, the opportunity for action, on every hand. A disciple of Canning, with an English gentleman's contempt and dislike of foreign potentates deep in his heart, the spectacle of the popular uprisings, and of the oppressors bundled ignominiously out of the palaces they had disgraced, gave him unbounded pleasure, and he was determined that there should be no doubt whatever, all over the Continent, on which side in the great struggle England stood. It was not that he had the slightest tincture in him of philosophical radicalism, he had no philosophical tinctures of any kind, he was quite content to be inconsistent—to be a Conservative at home and a Liberal abroad. There were very good reasons for keeping the Irish in their places, but what had that to do with it? The point

was this—when any decent man read an account of the political prisons in Naples his gorge rose. He did not want war, but he saw that without war a skillful and determined use of England's power might do much to further the cause of the Liberals in Europe. It was a difficult and a hazardous game to play, but he set about playing it with delighted alacrity. And then, to his intense annoyance, just as he needed all his nerve and all possible freedom of action, he found himself being hampered and distracted at every turn by those people at Osborne. He saw what it was, the opposition was systematic and informed, and the Queen alone would have been incapable of it, the Prince was at the bottom of the whole thing. It was exceedingly vexatious but Palmerston was in a hurry, and could not wait, the Prince, if he would insist upon interfering, must be brushed on one side.

Albert was very angry. He highly disapproved both of Palmerston's policy and of his methods of action. He was opposed to absolutism but in his opinion Palmerston's proceedings were simply calculated to substitute for absolutism, all over Europe, something no better and very possibly worse—the anarchy of faction and mob violence. The dangers of this revolutionary ferment were grave, even in England Chartism was rampant—a sinister movement, which might at any moment upset the Constitution and abolish the Monarchy. Surely, with such dangers at home, this was a very bad time to choose for encouraging lawlessness abroad. He naturally took a particular interest in Germany. His instincts, his affections, his prepossessions, were ineradicably German. Stockholm was deeply involved in German politics, and he had a multitude of relatives among the ruling German families, who, from the midst of the hurly burly of revolution, wrote him long and agitated letters once a week. Having considered the question of Germany's future from every point of view, he came to the conclusion, under Stockholm's guidance, that the great aim for every lover of Germany should be her unification under the sovereignty of Prussia. The intricacy of the situation was extreme, and the possibilities of good or evil which every hour might bring forth were incalculable, yet he saw with horror that Palmerston neither understood nor cared to understand the niceties of this momentous problem, but rushed on blindly, dealing blows to right and left, quite—so far as he could see—without system, and even without motive—except, indeed, a totally unreasonable distrust of the Prussian State.

But his disagreement with the details of Palmerston's policy was in reality merely a symptom of the fundamental differences between the characters of the two men. In Albert's eyes Palmerston was a coarse, reckless egotist, whose combined arrogance and ignorance must inevitably have their issue in folly and disaster. Nothing could be more antipathetic to him than a mind so strangely lacking in patience, in reflection, in principle, and in the habits of ratiocination. For to him it was intolerable to think in a hurry, to jump to slapdash decisions, to act on instincts that could not be explained. Everything must be done in due order, with careful premeditation, the premises of the position must first be firmly established, and he must reach the correct conclusion by a regular series of rational steps. In complicated questions—and what questions, rightly looked at, were not complicated?—to commit one's thoughts to paper was the wisest course, and it was the course which Albert, laborious

though it might be, invariably adopted. It was as well, too, to draw up a reasoned statement after an event, as well as before it, and accordingly, whatever happened, it was always found that the Prince had made a memorandum. On one occasion he reduced to six pages of foolscap the substance of a confidential conversation with Sir Robert Peel, and, having read them aloud to him, asked him to append his signature. Sir Robert, who never liked to commit himself, became extremely uneasy, upon which the Prince, understanding that it was necessary to humor the singular susceptibilities of Englishmen, with great tact dropped that particular memorandum into the fire. But as for Palmerston, he never even gave one so much as a chance to read him a memorandum, he positively seemed to dislike discussion, and, before one knew where one was, without any warning whatever, he would plunge into some hare-brained violent project, which, as likely as not, would logically involve a European war. Closely connected, too, with this cautious, painstaking reasonableness of Albert's, was his desire to examine questions thoroughly from every point of view, to go down to the roots of things, and to act in strict accordance with some well-defined principle. Under Stockmar's tutelage he was constantly engaged in enlarging his outlook and in endeavoring to envisage vital problems both theoretically and practically—both with precision and with depth. To one whose mind was thus habitually occupied, the empirical activities of Palmerston, who had no notion what a principle meant, resembled the incoherent vagaries of a tiresome child. What did Palmerston know of economics, of science, of history? What did he care for morality and education? How much consideration had he devoted in the whole course of his life to the improvement of the condition of the working-classes and to the general amelioration of the human race? The answers to such questions were all too obvious, and yet it is easy to imagine, also, what might have been Palmerston's jaunty comment "Ah! your Royal Highness is busy with fine schemes and beneficent calculations—exactly! Well, as for me, I must say I'm quite satisfied with my morning's work—I've had the iron hurdles taken out of the Green Park."

The exasperating man, however, preferred to make no comment, and to proceed in smiling silence on his inexcusable way. The process of "brushing on one side" very soon came into operation. Important Foreign Office despatches were either submitted to the Queen so late that there was no time to correct them, or they were not submitted to her at all, or, having been submitted, and some passage in them being objected to and an alteration suggested, they were after all sent off in their original form. The Queen complained, the Prince complained, both complained together. It was quite useless. Palmerston was most apologetic—could not understand how it had occurred—must give the clerks a wiggling—certainly Her Majesty's wishes should be attended to, and such a thing should never happen again. But, of course, it very soon happened again, and the royal remonstrances redoubled. Victoria, her partisan passions thoroughly aroused, imported into her protests a personal vehemence which those of Albert lacked. Did Lord Palmerston forget that she was Queen of England? How could she tolerate a state of affairs in which despatches written in her name were sent abroad without her approval or even her knowledge? What could be more derogatory to her position than

to be obliged to receive indignant letters from the crowned heads to whom those despatches were addressed—letters which she did not know how to answer, since she so thoroughly agreed with them? She addressed herself to the Prime Minister ‘No remonstrance has any effect with Lord Palmerston,’ she said ‘Lord Palmerston,’ she told him on another occasion, “has as usual pretended not to have had time to submit the draft to the Queen before he had sent it off’ She summoned Lord John to her presence, poured out her indignation, and afterwards, on the advice of Albert, noted down what had passed in a memorandum ‘I said that I thought that Lord Palmerston often endangered the honor of England by taking a very prejudiced and one sided view of a question, that his writings were always as bitter as gall and did great harm, which Lord John entirely assented to, and that I often felt quite ill from anxiety’ Then she turned to her uncle “The state of Germany,” she wrote in a comprehensive and despairing review of the European situation, “is dreadful, and one does feel quite ashamed about that once really so peaceful and happy country That there are still good people there I am sure, but they allow themselves to be worked upon in a frightful and shameful way In France a crisis seems at hand *What* a very bad figure we cut in this mediation! Really it is quite immoral, with Ireland quivering in our grasp and ready to throw off her allegiance at any moment, for us to force Austria to give up her lawful possessions What shall we say if Canada Malta, etc, begin to trouble us? It hurts me terribly” But what did Lord Palmerston care?

Lord John’s position grew more and more irksome He did not approve of his colleague’s treatment of the Queen When he begged him to be more careful, he was met with the reply that 28,000 despatches passed through the Foreign Office in a single year, that, if every one of these were to be subjected to the royal criticism, the delay would be most serious, that, as it was, the waste of time and the worry involved in submitting drafts to the meticulous examination of Prince Albert was almost too much for an overworked Minister, and that, as a matter of fact, the postponement of important decisions owing to this cause had already produced very unpleasant diplomatic consequences These excuses would have impressed Lord John more favorably if he had not himself had to suffer from a similar neglect As often as not Palmerston failed to communicate even to him the most important despatches The Foreign Secretary was becoming an almost independent power, acting on his own initiative, and swaying the policy of England on his own responsibility On one occasion, in 1847, he had actually been upon the point of threatening to break off diplomatic relations with France without consulting either the Cabinet or the Prime Minister And such incidents were constantly recurring When this became known to the Prince, he saw that his opportunity had come If he could only drive in to the utmost the wedge between the two statesmen, if he could only secure the alliance of Lord John, then the suppression or the removal of Lord Palmerston would be almost certain to follow He set about the business with all the pertinacity of his nature Both he and the Queen put every kind of pressure upon the Prime Minister They wrote, they harangued, they relapsed into awful silence It occurred to them that Lord Clarendon, an important member of the Cabinet, would be a useful channel for

their griefs. They commanded him to dine at the Palace, and, directly the meal was over, "the Queen," as he described it afterwards, "exploded, and went with the utmost vehemence and bitterness into the whole of Palmerston's conduct, all the effects produced all over the world, and all her own feelings and sentiments about it." When she had finished, the Prince took up the tale, with less excitement, but with equal force. Lord Clarendon found himself in an awkward situation, he disliked Palmerston's policy, but he was his colleague, and he disapproved of the attitude of his royal hosts. In his opinion, they were "wrong in wishing that courtiers rather than Ministers should conduct the affairs of the country," and he thought that they "labored under the curious mistake that the Foreign Office was their peculiar department, and that they had the right to control, if not to direct, the foreign policy of England." He, therefore, with extreme politeness, gave it to be understood that he would not commit himself in any way. But Lord John, in reality, needed no pressure. Attacked by his Sovereign, ignored by his Foreign Secretary, he led a miserable life. With the advent of the dreadful Schleswig-Holstein question—the most complex in the whole diplomatic history of Europe—his position, crushed between the upper and the nether mill-stones, grew positively unbearable. He became anxious above all things to get Palmerston out of the Foreign Office. But then—supposing Palmerston refused to go?

In a memorandum made by the Prince, at about this time, of an interview between himself, the Queen, and the Prime Minister, we catch a curious glimpse of the states of mind of those three high personages—the anxiety and irritation of Lord John, the vehement acrimony of Victoria, and the reasonable animosity of Albert—drawn together, as it were, under the shadow of an unseen Presence, the cause of that celestial anger—the gay, portentous Palmerston. At one point in the conversation Lord John observed that he believed the Foreign Secretary would consent to a change of offices, Lord Palmerston, he said, realized that he had lost the Queen's confidence—though only on public, and not on personal, grounds. But on that, the Prince noted, "the Queen interrupted Lord John by remarking that she distrusted him on *personal* grounds also, but I remarked that Lord Palmerston had so far at least seen rightly, that he had become disagreeable to the Queen, not on account of his person, but of his political doings—to which the Queen assented." Then the Prince suggested that there was a danger of the Cabinet breaking up, and of Lord Palmerston returning to office as Prime Minister. But on that point Lord John was reassuring. He "thought Lord Palmerston too old to do much in the future (having passed his sixty-fifth year)." Eventually it was decided that nothing could be done for the present, but that the *utmost secrecy* must be observed, and so the conclave ended.

At last, in 1850, deliverance seemed to be at hand. There were signs that the public were growing weary of the alarums and excursions of Palmerston's diplomacy, and when his support of Don Pacifico, a British subject, in a quarrel with the Greek Government, seemed to be upon the point of involving the country in a war not only with Greece but also with France, and possibly with Russia into the bargain, a heavy cloud of distrust and displeasure appeared to be gathering and about to burst over his head. A motion directed

against him in the House of Lords was passed by a substantial majority. The question was next to be discussed in the House of Commons, where another adverse vote was not improbable, and would seal the doom of the Minister. Palmerston received the attack with complete nonchalance, and then, at the last possible moment, he struck. In a speech of over four hours, in which exposition, invective, argument, declamation, plain talk and resounding eloquence were mingled together with consummate art and extraordinary felicity, he annihilated his enemies. The hostile motion was defeated, and Palmerston was once more the hero of the hour. Simultaneously, Atropos herself conspired to favor him. Sir Robert Peel was thrown from his horse and killed. By this tragic chance, Palmerston saw the one rival great enough to cope with him removed from his path. He judged—and judged rightly—that he was the most popular man in England, and when Lord John revived the project of his exchanging the Foreign Office for some other position in the Cabinet he absolutely refused to stir.

Great was the disappointment of Albert, great was the indignation of Victoria. "The House of Commons," she wrote, "is becoming very unmanageable and troublesome." The Prince, perceiving that Palmerston was more firmly fixed in the saddle than ever, decided that something drastic must be done. Five months before, the prescient Baion had drawn up, in case of emergency, a memorandum, which had been carefully docketed, and placed in a pigeon hole ready to hand. The emergency had now arisen, and the memorandum must be used. The Queen copied out the words of Stockmar, and sent them to the Prime Minister, requesting him to show her letter to Palmerston. "She thinks it right," she wrote, "*in order to prevent any mistake for the future*, shortly to explain *what it is she expects from her Foreign Secretary*. She requires (1) That he will distinctly state what he proposes in a given case, in order that the Queen may know as distinctly to *what* she has given her Royal sanction, (2) Having *once given* her sanction to a measure, that it be not arbitrarily altered or modified by the Minister, such an act she must consider as failing in sincerity towards the Crown, and justly to be visited by the exercise of her Constitutional right of dismissing that Minister." Lord John Russell did as he was bid, and forwarded the Queen's letter to Lord Palmerston. This transaction, which was of grave constitutional significance, was entirely unknown to the outside world.

If Palmerston had been a sensitive man, he would probably have resigned on the receipt of the Queen's missive. But he was far from sensitive, he loved power, and his power was greater than ever, an unerring instinct told him that this was not the time to go. Nevertheless, he was seriously perturbed. He understood at last that he was struggling with a formidable adversary, whose skill and strength, unless they were mollified, might do irreparable injury to his career. He therefore wrote to Lord John, briefly acquiescing in the Queen's requirements—"I have taken a copy of this memorandum of the Queen and will not fail to attend to the directions which it contains"—and at the same time, he asked for an interview with the Prince. Albert at once summoned him to the Palace, and was astonished to observe, as he noted in a memorandum, that when Palmerston entered the room "he was very much agitated, shook,

and had tears in his eyes, so as quite to move me, who never under any circumstances had known him otherwise than with a bland smile on his face' The old statesman was profuse in protestations and excuses, the young one was coldly polite At last, after a long and inconclusive conversation, the Prince, drawing himself up, said that, in order to give Lord Palmerston "an example of what the Queen wanted," he would "ask him a question point-blank" Lord Palmerston waited in respectful silence, while the Prince proceeded as follows—"You are aware that the Queen has objected to the Protocol about Schleswig, and of the grounds on which she has done so Her opinion has been overruled, the Protocol stating the desire of the Great Powers to see the integrity of the Danish monarchy preserved has been signed, and upon this the King of Denmark has invaded Schleswig, where the war is raging If Holstein is attacked also, which is likely, the Germans will not be restrained from flying to her assistance, Russia has menaced to interfere with arms, if the Schleswigers are successful What will you do, if this emergency arises (provoking most likely an European war), and which will arise very probably when we shall be a Balmoral and Lord John in another part of Scotland? The Queen expects from your foresight that you have contemplated this possibility, and requires a categorical answer as to what you would do in the event supposed" Strangely enough, to this point-blank question, the Foreign Secretary appeared to be unable to reply The whole matter, he said, was extremely complicated, and the contingencies mentioned by His Royal Highness were very unlikely to arise The Prince persisted, but it was useless, for a full hour he struggled to extract a categorical answer, until at length Palmerston bowed himself out of the room Albert threw up his hands in shocked amazement what could one do with such a man?

What indeed? For, in spite of all his apologies and all his promises, within a few weeks the incorrigible reprobate was at his tricks again The Austrian General Haynau, notorious as a rigorous suppressor of rebellion in Hungary and Italy, and in particular as a flogger of women, came to England and took it into his head to pay a visit to Messrs Barclay and Perkins's brewery The features of "General Hyæna," as he was everywhere called—his grim thin face, his enormous pepper-and salt mustaches—had gained a horrid celebrity, and it so happened that among the clerks at the brewery there was a refugee from Vienna, who had given his fellow-workers a first-hand account of the General's characteristics The Austrian Ambassador, scenting danger, begged his friend not to appear in public, or, if he must do so, to cut off his mustaches first But the General would take no advice He went to the brewery, was immediately recognized, surrounded by a crowd of angry draymen, pushed about, shouted at, punched in the ribs, and pulled by the mustaches until, bolting down an alley with the mob at his heels brandishing brooms and roaring "Hyæna!" he managed to take refuge in a public house, whence he was removed under the protection of several policemen The Austrian Government was angry and demanded explanations Palmerston, who, of course, was privately delighted by the incident, replied regretting what had occurred, but adding that in his opinion the General had "evinced a want of propriety in coming to England at the present moment", and he delivered his note to

the Ambassador without having previously submitted it to the Queen or to the Prime Minister. Naturally, when this was discovered, there was a serious storm. The Prince was especially incignant, the conduct of the draymen he regarded, with disgust and alarm, as 'a slight foretaste of what an unregulated mass of illiterate people is capable', and Palmerston was requested by Lord John to withdraw his note, and to substitute for it another from which all censure of the General had been omitted. On this the Foreign Secretary threatened resignation, but the Prime Minister was firm. For a moment the royal hopes rose high, only to be dashed to the ground again by the cruel compliance of the enemy. Palmerston, suddenly humblelike, agreed to everything, the note was withdrawn and altered, and peace was patched up once more.

It lasted for a year, and then, in October, 1851, the arrival of Kossuth in England brought on another crisis. Palmerston's desire to receive the Hungarian patriot at his house in London was vetoed by Lord John, once more there was a sharp struggle, once more Palmerston, after threatening resignation, yielded. But still the insubordinate man could not keep quiet. A few weeks later a deputation of Radicals from Finsbury and Islington waited on him at the Foreign Office and presented him with an address, in which the Emperors of Austria and Russia were stigmatized as "odious and detestable assassins" and "merciless tyrants and despots." The Foreign Secretary in his reply, while mildly deprecating these expressions, allowed his real sentiments to appear with a most undiplomatic *insouciance*. There was an immediate scandal, and the Court flowed over with rage and vituperation. "I think," said the Baron, "the man has been for some time insane." Victoria, in an agitated letter, urged Lord John to assert his authority. But Lord John perceived that on this matter the Foreign Secretary had the support of public opinion, and he judged it wiser to bide his time.

He had not long to wait. The culmination of the long series of conflicts, threats, and exacerbations came before the year was out. On December 2, Louis Napoleon's *coup d'état* took place in Paris, and on the following day Palmerston, without consulting anybody, expressed in a conversation with the French Ambassador his approval of Napoleon's act. Two days later, he was instructed by the Prime Minister, in accordance with a letter from the Queen, that it was the policy of the English Government to maintain an attitude of strict neutrality towards the affairs of France. Nevertheless, in an official despatch to the British Ambassador in Paris, he repeated the approval of the *coup d'état* which he had already given verbally to the French Ambassador in London. This despatch was submitted neither to the Queen nor to the Prime Minister. Lord John's patience, as he himself said, "was drained to the last drop." He dismissed Lord Palmerston.

Victoria was in ecstasies, and Albert knew that the triumph was his even more than Lord John's. It was his wish that Lord Granville, a young man whom he believed to be pliant to his influence, should be Palmerston's successor, and Lord Granville was appointed. Henceforward, it seemed that the Prince would have his way in foreign affairs. After years of struggle and mortification, success greeted him on every hand. In his family, he was an adored master, in the country, the Great Exhibition had brought him respect and

glory, and now in the secret seats of power he had gained a new supremacy. He had wrestled with the terrible Lord Palmerston, the embodiment of all that was most hostile to him in the spirit of England, and his redoubtable opponent had been overthrown. Was England herself at his feet? It might be so, and yet it is said that the sons of England have a certain tiresome quality they never know when they are beaten. It was odd, but Palmerston was positively still jaunty. Was it possible? Could he believe, in his blinc arrogance, that even his ignominious dismissal from office was something that could be brushed aside?

III

The Prince's triumph was short-lived. A few weeks later, owing to Palmerston's influence, the Government was defeated in the House, and Lord John resigned. Then, after a short interval, a coalition between the Whigs and the followers of Peel came into power, under the premiership of Lord Aberdeen. Once more, Palmerston was in the Cabinet. It was true that he did not return to the Foreign Office, that was something to the good, in the Home Department it might be hoped that his activities would be less dangerous and disagreeable. But the Foreign Secretary was no longer the complacent Granville, and in Lord Clarendon the Prince knew that he had a Minister to deal with, who, discreet and courteous as he was, had a mind of his own.

These changes, however, were merely the preliminaries of a far more serious development. Events, on every side, were moving towards a catastrophe. Suddenly the nation found itself under the awful shadow of imminent war. For several months, amid the shifting mysteries of diplomacy and the perplexed agitations of politics, the issue grew more doubtful and more dark, while the national temper was strained to the breaking point. At the very crisis of the long and ominous negotiations, it was announced that Lord Palmerston had resigned. Then the pent-up fury of the people burst forth. They had felt that in the terrible complexity of events they were being guided by weak and embarrassed counsels, but they had been reassured by the knowledge that at the center of power there was one man with strength, with courage, with determination, in whom they could put their trust. They now learnt that that man was no longer among their leaders. Why? In their rage, anxiety, and nervous exhaustion, they looked round desperately for some hidden and horrible explanation of what had occurred. They suspected plots, they smelt treachery in the air. It was easy to guess the object upon which their frenzy would vent itself. Was there not a foreigner in the highest of high places, a foreigner whose hostility to their own adored champion was unrelenting and unceasing? The moment that Palmerston's resignation was known, there was a universal outcry and an extraordinary tempest of anger and hatred burst, with unparalleled violence, upon the head of the Prince.

It was everywhere asserted and believed that the Queen's husband was a traitor to the country, that he was a tool of the Russian Court, that in obedience to Russian influences he had forced Palmerston out of the Government, and that he was directing the foreign policy of England in the interests of Eng-

land's enemies. For many weeks these accusations filled the whole of the press, repeated at public meetings, elaborated in private talk, they flew over the country, growing every moment more extreme and more improbable. While respectable newspapers thundered out their grave invectives, halfpenny broadsides, hawked through the streets of London, echoed in doggerel vulgarity the same sentiments and the same suspicions. At last the wildest rumors began to spread.

In January, 1854, it was whispered that the Prince had been seized, that he had been found guilty of high treason, that he was to be committed to the Tower. The Queen herself, some declared, had been arrested, and large crowds actually collected round the Tower to watch the incarceration of the royal miscreants.

These fantastic hallucinations, the result of the fevered atmosphere of approaching war, were devoid of any basis in actual fact. Palmerston's resignation had been in all probability totally disconnected with foreign policy, it had certainly been entirely spontaneous, and had surprised the Court as much as the nation. Nor had Albert's influence been used in any way to favor the interests of Russia. As often happens in such cases, the Government had been swinging backwards and forwards between two incompatible policies—that of non interference and that of threats supported by force—either of which, if consistently followed, might well have had a successful and peaceful issue, but which, mingled together, could only lead to war. Albert, with characteristic scrupulosity, attempted to thread his way through the complicated labyrinth of European diplomacy, and eventually was lost in the maze. But so was the whole of the Cabinet, and, when war came, his anti-Russian feelings were quite as vehement as those of the most bellicose of Englishmen.

Nevertheless, though the specific charges leveled against the Prince were without foundation, there were underlying elements in the situation which explained, if they did not justify, the popular state of mind. It was true that the Queen's husband was a foreigner, who had been brought up in a foreign Court, was impregnated with foreign ideas, and was closely related to a multitude of foreign princes. Clearly this, though perhaps an unavoidable, was an undesirable, state of affairs, nor were the objections to it merely theoretical, it had in fact produced unpleasant consequences of a serious kind. The Prince's German proclivities were perpetually lamented by English Ministers, Lord Palmerston, Lord Clarendon, Lord Aberdeen, all told the same tale, and it was constantly necessary, in grave questions of national policy, to combat the prepossessions of a Court in which German views and German sentiments held a disproportionate place. As for Palmerston, his language on this topic was apt to be unbridled. At the height of his annoyance over his resignation, he roundly declared that he had been made a victim to foreign intrigue. He afterwards toned down this accusation, but the mere fact that such a suggestion from such a quarter was possible at all showed to what unfortunate consequences Albert's foreign birth and foreign upbringing might lead.

But this was not all. A constitutional question of the most profound importance was raised by the position of the Prince in England. His presence gave a new prominence to an old problem—the precise definition of the functions

and the powers of the Crown Those functions and powers had become, in effect, his, and what sort of use was he making of them? His views as to the place of the Crown in the Constitution are easily ascertainable, for they were Stockmar's, and it happens that we possess a detailed account of Stockmar's opinions upon the subject in a long letter addressed by him to the Prince at the time of this very crisis, just before the outbreak of the Crimean War Constitutional Monarchy, according to the Baron, had suffered an eclipse since the passing of the Reform Bill It was now "constantly in danger of becoming a pure Ministerial Government" The old race of Tories, who "had a direct interest in upholding the prerogatives of the Crown," had died out, and the Whigs were "nothing but partly conscious, partly unconscious Republicans, who stand in the same relation to the Throne as the wolf does to the lamb." There was a rule that it was unconstitutional to introduce "the name and person of the irresponsible Sovereign" into parliamentary debates on constitutional matters, this was "a constitutional fiction, which, although undoubtedly of old standing, was fraught with danger", and the Baron warned the Prince that "if the English Crown permit a Whig Ministry to follow this rule in practice, without exception, you must not wonder if in a little time you find the majority of the people impressed with the belief that the King, in the view of the law, is nothing but a mandarin figure, which has to nod its head in assent, or shake it in denial, as his Minister pleases" To prevent this from happening, it was of extreme importance, said the Baron, "that no opportunity should be let slip of vindicating the legitimate position of the Crown" "And this is not hard to do," he added, "and can never embarrass a Minister where such straightforward loyal personages as the Queen and the Prince are concerned" In his opinion, the very lowest claim of the Royal Prerogative should include "a right on the part of the King to be the permanent President of his Ministerial Council" The Sovereign ought to be "in the position of a permanent Premier, who takes rank above the temporary head of the Cabinet, and in matters of discipline exercises supreme authority" The Sovereign "may even take a part in the initiation and the maturing of the Government measures, for it would be unreasonable to expect that a king, himself as able, as accomplished, and as patriotic as the best of his Ministers, should be prevented from making use of these qualities at the deliberations of his Council" "The judicious exercise of this right," concluded the Baron, "which certainly requires a master mind, would not only be the best guarantee for Constitutional Monarchy, but would raise it to a height of power, stability, and symmetry, which has never been attained"

Now it may be that this reading of the Constitution is a possible one, though indeed it is hard to see how it can be made compatible with the fundamental doctrine of ministerial responsibility William III presided over his Council, and he was a constitutional monarch, and it seems that Stockmar had in his mind a conception of the Crown which would have given it a place in the Constitution analogous to that which it filled at the time of William III But it is clear that such a theory, which would invest the Crown with more power than it possessed even under George III, runs counter to the whole development of English public life since the Revolution, and the fact that it was held

by Stockmar, and instilled by him into Albert, was of very serious importance. For there was good reason to believe not only that these doctrines were held by Albert in theory, but that he was making a deliberate and sustained attempt to give them practical validity. The history of the struggle between the Crown and Palmerston provided striking evidence that this was the case. That struggle reached its culmination when, in Stockmar's memorandum of 1850, the Queen asserted her "constitutional right" to dismiss the Foreign Secretary if he altered a despatch which had received her sanction. The memorandum was, in fact, a plain declaration that the Crown intended to act independently of the Prime Minister. Lord John Russell, anxious at all costs to strengthen himself against Palmerston, accepted the memorandum, and thereby implicitly allowed the claim of the Crown. More than that, after the dismissal of Palmerston among the grounds on which Lord John justified that dismissal in the House of Commons he gave a prominent place to the memorandum of 1850. It became apparent that the displeasure of the Sovereign might be a reason for the removal of a powerful and popular Minister. It seemed indeed as if, under the guidance of Stockmar and Albert, the "Constitutional Monarchy" might in very truth be rising "to a height of power, stability, and symmetry, which had never been attained."

But this new development in the position of the Crown, grave as it was in itself, was rendered peculiarly disquieting by the unusual circumstances which surrounded it. For the functions of the Crown were now, in effect, being exercised by a person unknown to the Constitution, who wielded over the Sovereign an undefined and unbounded influence. The fact that this person was the Sovereign's husband, while it explained his influence and even made it inevitable, by no means diminished its strange and momentous import. An ambiguous, prepotent figure had come to disturb the ancient, subtle, and jealously guarded balance of the English Constitution. Such had been the unexpected outcome of the tentative and faint-hearted opening of Albert's political life. He himself made no attempt to minimize either the multiplicity or the significance of the functions he performed. He considered that it was his duty, he told the Duke of Wellington in 1850, to "sink his *own individual* existence in that of his wife — assume no separate responsibility before the public, but make his position entirely a part of hers—fill up every gap which, as a woman, she would naturally leave in the exercise of her regal functions—continually and anxiously watch every part of the public business, in order to be able to advise and assist her at any moment in any of the multifarious and difficult questions or duties brought before her, sometimes international, sometimes political, or social, or personal. As the natural head of her family superintendent of her household, manager of her private affairs, sole *confidential* adviser in politics, and only assistant in her communications with the officers of the Government, he is, besides, the husband of the Queen, the tutor of the royal children, the private secretary of the Sovereign, and her permanent minister." Stockmar's pupil had assuredly gone far and learnt well. Stockmar's pupil—precisely, the public, painfully aware of Albert's predominance, had grown, too, uneasily conscious that Victoria's master had a master of his own. Deep in the darkness the Baron loomed. Another foreigner! Decidedly, there

were elements in the situation which went far to justify the popular alarm. A foreign Baron controlled a foreign Prince, and the foreign Prince controlled the Crown of England. And the Crown itself was creeping forward ominously, and when, from under its shadow, the Baron and the Prince had frowned, a great Minister, beloved of the people, had fallen. Where was all this to end?

Within a few weeks Palmerston withdrew his resignation, and the public frenzy subsided as quickly as it had arisen. When Parliament met, the leaders of both the parties in both the Houses made speeches in favor of the Prince, asserting his unimpeachable loyalty to the country and vindicating his right to advise the Sovereign in all matters of State. Victoria was delighted. "The position of my beloved lord and master," she told the Baron, "has been defined for *once and all* and his merits have been acknowledged on all sides most duly. There was an immense concourse of people assembled when we went to the House of Lords, and the people were very friendly." Immediately afterwards, the country finally plunged into the Crimean War. In the struggle that followed, Albert's patriotism was put beyond a doubt, and the animosities of the past were forgotten. But the war had another consequence, less gratifying to the royal couple: it crowned the ambition of Lord Palmerston. In 1855, the man who five years before had been pronounced by Lord John Russell to be "too old to do much in the future," became Prime Minister of England, and, with one short interval, remained in that position for ten years.

VI LAST YEARS OF PRINCE CONSORT

THE WEAK-WILLED youth who took no interest in politics and never read a newspaper had grown into a man of unbending determination whose tireless energies were incessantly concentrated upon the laborious business of government and the highest questions of State. He was busy now from morning till night. In the winter, before the dawn, he was to be seen, seated at his writing-table, working by the light of the green reading-lamp which he had brought over with him from Germany, and the construction of which he had much improved by an ingenious device. Victoria was early too, but she was not so early as Albert, and when, in the chill darkness, she took her seat at her own writing-table, placed side by side with his, she invariably found upon it a neat pile of papers arranged for her inspection and her signature. The day, thus begun, continued in unremitting industry. At breakfast, the newspapers—the once hated newspapers—made their appearance, and the Prince, absorbed in their perusal, would answer no questions, or, if an article struck him, would read it aloud. After that there were ministers and secretaries to interview, there was a vast correspondence to be carried on, there were numerous memoranda to be made. Victoria, treasuring every word, preserving every letter, was all breathless attention and eager obedience. Sometimes Albert would actually ask her advice. He consulted her about his English. "Lese recht aufmerksam, und sage wenn irgend ein Fehler ist," he would say, or, as he handed her a draft for her signature, he would observe, "Ich hab' Dir hier ein Draft gemacht, lese es mal! Ich dachte es ware recht so." Thus the diligent,

scrupulous, absorbing hours passed by Fewer and fewer grew the moments of recreation and of exercise The demands of society were narrowed down to the smallest limits, and even then but grudgingly attended to It was no longer a mere pleasure, it was a positive necessity, to go to bed as early as possible in order to be up and at work on the morrow betimes

The important and exacting business of government, which became at last the dominating preoccupation in Albert's mind, still left unimpaired his old tastes and interests, he remained devoted to art, to science, to philosophy, and a multitude of subsidiary activities showed how his energies increased as the demands upon them grew For whenever duty called, the Prince was all alertness With indefatigable perseverance he opened museums, laid the foundation stones of hospitals, made speeches to the Royal Agricultural Society, and attended meetings of the British Association The National Gallery particularly interested him he drew up careful regulations for the arrangement of the pictures according to schools, and he attempted—though in vain—to have the whole collection transported to South Kensington Feodora, now the Princess Hohenlohe, after a visit to England, expressed in a letter to Victoria her admiration of Albert both as a private and a public character Nor did she rely only on her own opinion "I must just copy out," she said, "what Mr Klumpp wrote to me some little time ago, and which is quite true—'Prince Albert is one of the few Royal personages who can sacrifice to any principle (as soon as it has become evident to them to be good and noble) all those notions (or sentiments) to which others, owing to their narrow-mindedness, or to the prejudices of their rank, are so thoroughly inclined strongly to cling'—There is something so truly religious in this," the Princess added, "as well as humane and just, most soothing to my feelings which are so often hurt and disturbed by what I hear and see"

VICTORIA, from the depth of her heart, subscribed to all the eulogies of Feodora and Mr Klumpp She only found that they were insufficient As she watched her beloved Albert, after toiling with state documents and public functions, devoting every spare moment of his time to domestic duties, to artistic appreciation, and to intellectual improvements, as she listened to him cracking his jokes at the luncheon table, or playing Mendelssohn on the organ, or pointing out the merits of Sir Edwin Landseer's pictures, as she followed him round while he gave instructions about the breeding of cattle, or decided that the Gainsboroughs must be hung higher up so that the Winterhalters might be properly seen—she felt perfectly certain that no other wife had ever had such a husband His mind was apparently capable of everything, and she was hardly surprised to learn that he had made an important discovery for the conversion of sewage into agricultural manure Filtration from below upwards, he explained, through some appropriate medium, which retained the solids and set free the fluid sewage for irrigation, was the principle of the scheme "All previous plans," he said, "would have cost millions, mine costs next to nothing" Unfortunately, owing to a slight miscalculation, the invention proved to be impracticable, but Albert's intelligence was unrebuffed, and he passed on, to plunge with all his accustomed ardor into a prolonged study of the rudiments of lithography

But naturally it was upon his children that his private interests and those of Victoria were concentrated most vigorously. The royal nurseries showed no sign of emptying. The birth of the Prince Arthur in 1850 was followed, three years later, by that of the Prince Leopold, and in 1857 the Princess Beatrice was born. A family of nine must be, in any circumstances, a grave responsibility, and the Prince realized to the full how much the high destinies of his offspring intensified the need of parental care. It was inevitable that he should believe profoundly in the importance of education, he himself had been the product of education, Stockmar had made him what he was, it was for him, in his turn, to be a Stockmar—to be even more than a Stockmar—to the young creatures he had brought into the world. Victoria would assist him, a Stockmar, no doubt, she could hardly be, but she could be perpetually vigilant, she could mingle strictness with her affection, and she could always set a good example. These considerations, of course, applied preeminently to the education of the Prince of Wales. How tremendous was the significance of every particle of influence which went to the making of the future King of England! Albert set to work with a will. But, watching with Victoria the minutest details of the physical, intellectual, and moral training of his children, he soon perceived, to his distress, that there was something unsatisfactory in the development of his eldest son. The Princess Royal was an extremely intelligent child, but Bertie, though he was good-humored and gentle, seemed to display a deep-seated repugnance to every form of mental exertion. This was most regrettable, but the remedy was obvious: the parental efforts must be redoubled, instruction must be multiplied, not for a single instant must the educational pressure be allowed to relax. Accordingly, more tutors were selected, the curriculum was revised, the time-table of studies was rearranged, elaborate memoranda dealing with every possible contingency were drawn up. It was above all essential that there should be no slackness. "work," said the Prince, "must be work." And work indeed it was. The boy grew up amid a ceaseless round of paradigms, syntactical exercises, dates, genealogical tables, and lists of capes. Constant notes flew backwards and forwards between the Prince, the Queen, and the tutors, with inquiries, with reports of progress, with detailed recommendations, and these notes were all carefully preserved for future reference. It was, besides, vital that the heir to the throne should be protected from the slightest possibility of contamination from the outside world. The Prince of Wales was not as other boys, he might, occasionally, be allowed to invite some sons of the nobility, boys of good character, to play with him in the garden of Buckingham Palace, but his father presided, with alarming precision, over their sports. In short, every possible precaution was taken, every conceivable effort was made. Yet, strange to say, the object of all this vigilance and solicitude continued to be unsatisfactory—appeared, in fact, to be positively growing worse. It was certainly very odd: the more lessons that Bertie had to do, the less he did them, and the more carefully he was guarded against excitements and frivolities, the more desirous of mere amusement he seemed to become. Albert was deeply grieved and Victoria was sometimes very angry, but grief and anger produced no more effect than supervision and time-tables. The Prince of Wales, in spite of everything, grew up into manhood without the faintest

sign of "adherence to and perseverance in the plan both of studies and life"—as one of the Royal memoranda put it—which had been laid down with such extraordinary forethought by his father

II

Against the insidious worries of politics, the boredom of society functions, and the pompous publicity of state ceremonies, Osborne had afforded a welcome refuge, but it soon appeared that even Osborne was too little removed from the world. After all, the Solent was a feeble barrier. Oh, for some distant, some almost inaccessible sanctuary, where, in true domestic privacy, one could make happy holiday, just as if—or at least very, very nearly—one were anybody else! Victoria, ever since, together with Albert, she had visited Scotland in the early years of her marriage, had felt that her heart was in the Highlands. She had returned to them a few years later, and her passion had grown. How romantic they were! And how Albert enjoyed them too! His spirits rose quite wonderfully as soon as he found himself among the hills and the conifers. "It is a happiness to see him," she wrote. "Oh! What can equal the beauties of nature!" she exclaimed in her journal, during one of these visits. "What enjoyment there is in them! Albert enjoys it so much, he is in ecstasies here." "Albert said," she noted next day, "that the chief beauty of mountain scenery consists in its frequent changes. We came home at six o'clock." Then she went on a longer expedition—up to the very top of a high hill. "It was quite romantic. Here we were with only this Highlander behind us holding the ponies (for we got off twice and walked about). We came home at half past eleven,—the most delightful, most romantic ride and walk I ever had. I had never been up such a mountain, and then the day was so fine." The Highlanders, too, were such astonishing people. They "never make difficulties," she noted, "but are cheerful, and happy, and merry, and ready to walk, and run, and do anything." As for Albert he "highly appreciated the good breeding, simplicity, and intelligence, which make it so pleasant and even instructive to talk to them." "We were always in the habit," wrote Her Majesty, "of conversing with the Highlanders—with whom one comes so much in contact in the Highlands." She loved everything about them—their customs, their dress, their dances, even their musical instruments. "There were nine pipers at the castle," she wrote, after staying with Lord Breadalbane, "sometimes one and sometimes three played. They always played about breakfast time, again during the morning, at luncheon, and also whenever we went in and out, again before dinner and during most of dinner-time. We both have become quite fond of the bagpipes."

It was quite impossible not to wish to return to such pleasures again and again, and in 1848 the Queen took a lease of Balmoral House, a small residence near Braemar in the wilds of Aberdeenshire. Four years later she bought the place outright. Now she could be really happy every summer, now she could be simple and at her ease, now she could be romantic every evening, and dole upon Albert, without a single distraction, all day long. The diminutive scale of the house was in itself a charm. Nothing was more amusing than to find

oneself living in two or three little sitting-rooms, with the children crammed away upstairs, and the minister in attendance with only a tiny bedroom to do all his work in. And then to be able to run in and out of doors as one liked, and to sketch, and to walk, and to watch the red deer coming so surprisingly close, and to pay visits to the cottagers! And occasionally one could be more adventurous still—one could go and stay for a night or two at the Bothie at Alt na-giuthasach—a mere couple of huts with “a wooden addition”—and only eleven people in the whole party! And there were mountains to be climbed and cairns to be built in solemn pomp. “At last, when the cairn, which is, I think, seven or eight feet high, was nearly completed, Albert climbed up to the top of it, and placed the last stone, after which three cheers were given. It was a gay, pretty, and touching sight, and I felt almost inclined to cry. The view was so beautiful over the dear hills, the day so fine, the whole so *gemuthlich*.” And in the evening there were sword-dances and reels.

But Albert had determined to pull down the little old house, and to build in its place a castle of his own designing. With great ceremony, in accordance with a memorandum drawn up by the Prince for the occasion, the foundation stone of the new edifice was laid, and by 1855 it was habitable. Spacious, built of granite in the Scotch baronial style, with a tower 100 feet high, and minor turrets and castellated gables, the castle was skillfully arranged to command the finest views of the surrounding mountains and of the neighboring river Dee. Upon the interior decorations Albert and Victoria lavished all their care. The wall and the floors were of pitch-pine, and covered with specially manufactured tartans. The Balmoral tartan, in red and gray, designed by the Prince, and the Victoria tartan, with a white stripe, designed by the Queen, were to be seen in every room. There were tartan curtains, and tartan chair-covers, and even tartan linoleums. Occasionally the Royal Stuart tartan appeared, for Her Majesty always maintained that she was an ardent Jacobite. Water-color sketches by Victoria hung upon the walls, together with innumerable stags antlers, and the head of a boar, which had been shot by Albert in Germany. In an alcove in the hall stood a life-sized statue of Albert in Highland dress.

Victoria declared that it was perfection. “Every year,” she wrote, “my heart becomes more fixed in this dear paradise, and so much more so now, that *all* has become my dear Albert’s *own* creation, own work, own building, own lay-out, and his great taste, and the impress of his dear hand, have been stamped everywhere.”

And here, in very truth, her happiest days were passed. In after years, when she looked back upon them, a kind of glory, a radiance as of an unearthly holiness, seemed to glow about these golden hours. Each hallowed moment stood out clear, beautiful, eternally significant. For, at the time, every experience there, sentimental, or grave, or trivial, had come upon her with a peculiar vividness, like a flashing of marvelous lights. Albert’s stalkings—an evening walk when she lost her way—Vicky sitting down on a wasps’ nest—a torch-light dance—with what intensity such things, and ten thousand like them, impressed themselves upon her eager consciousness! And how she flew to her journal to note them down! The news of the Duke’s death! What a moment!—when, as she sat sketching after a picnic by a loch in the lonely hills, Lord

Derby's letter had been brought to her, and she had learnt that "*England's*, or rather *Britann's* pride, her glory, her hero, the greatest man she had ever produced, was no more!" For such were her reflections upon the "old rebel" of former days. But that past had been utterly obliterated—no faintest memory of it remained. For years she had looked up to the Duke as a figure almost superhuman. Had he not been a supporter of good Sir Robert? Had he not asked Albert to succeed him as commander-in-chief? And what a proud moment it had been when he stood as sponsor to her son Arthur, who was born on his eighty-first birthday! So now she filled a whole page of her diary with panegyrical regrets. "His position was the highest a subject ever had—above party,—looked up to by all—revered by the whole nation,—the friend of the Sovereign. The Crown never possessed—and I fear never *will*—so *devoted* loyal, and faithful a subject, so staunch a supporter! To *us* his loss is *irreparable*. To Albert he showed the greatest kindness and the utmost confidence. Not an eye will be dry in the whole country." These were serious thoughts, but they were soon succeeded by others hardly less moving—by events as impossible to forget—by Mr. MacLeod's sermon on Nicodemus,—by the gift of a red flannel petticoat to Mrs. P. Farquharson, and another to old Kitty Kear.

But, without doubt, most memorable, most delightful of all were the expeditions—the rare, exciting expeditions up distant mountains, across broad rivers, through strange country, and lasting several days. With only two gillies—Grant and Brown—for servants, and with assumed names—it was more like something in a story than real life. "We had decided to call ourselves *Lord and Lady Churchill and party*—Lady Churchill passing as *Miss Spencer* and General Grev as *Dr. Grey*! Brown once forgot this and called me 'Your Majesty' as I was getting into the carriage, and Grant on the box once called Albert 'Your Royal Highness,' which set us off laughing, but no one observed it." Strong, vigorous, enthusiastic, bringing, so it seemed, good fortune with her—the Highlanders declared she had "a lucky foot"—she relished everything—the scrambles and the views and the contretemps and the rough inns with their coarse fare and Brown and Grant waiting at table. She could have gone on for ever and ever, absolutely happy with Albert beside her and Brown at her pony's head. But the time came for turning homewards, alas! the time came for going back to England. She could hardly bear it, she sat disconsolate in her room and watched the snow falling. The last day! Oh! If only she could be snowed up!

III

The Crimean War brought new experiences, and most of them were pleasant ones. It was pleasant to be patriotic and pugnacious, to look out appropriate prayers to be read in the churches, to have news of glorious victories, and to know oneself, more proudly than ever, the representative of England. With that spontaneity of feeling which was so peculiarly her own, Victoria poured out her emotion, her admiration, her pity, her love, upon her "dear soldiers." When she gave them their medals her exultation knew no bounds. "Noble fellows!" she wrote to the King of the Belgians. "I own I feel as if these were

my own children, my heart beats for *them* as for my *nearest and dearest*. They were so touched, so pleased, many, I hear, cried—and they won't hear of giving up their medals to have their names engraved upon them for fear they should *not* receive the *identical one* put into *their hands by me*, which is quite touching. Several came by in a sadly mutilated state." She and they were at one. They felt that she had done them a splendid honor, and she, with perfect genuineness, shared their feeling. Albert's attitude towards such things was different, there was an austerity in him which quite prohibited the expansions of emotion. When General Williams returned from the heroic defense of Kars and was presented at Court, the quick, stiff, distant bow with which the Prince received him struck like ice upon the beholders. He was a stranger still.

But he had other things to occupy him, more important, surely, than the personal impressions of military officers and people who went to Court. He was at work—ceaselessly at work—on the tremendous task of carrying through the war to a successful conclusion. State papers, despatches, memoranda, poured from him in an overwhelming stream. Between 1853 and 1857 fifty folio volumes were filled with the comments of his pen upon the Eastern question. Nothing would induce him to stop. Weary ministers staggered under the load of his advice, but his advice continued, piling itself up over their writing-tables, and flowing out upon them from red box after red box. Nor was it advice to be ignored. The talent for administration which had reorganized the royal palaces and planned the Great Exhibition asserted itself no less in the confused complexities of war. Again and again the Prince's suggestions, rejected or unheeded at first, were adopted under the stress of circumstances and found to be full of value. The enrollment of a foreign legion, the establishment of a dépôt for troops at Malta, the institution of periodical reports and tabulated returns as to the condition of the army at Sebastopol—such were the contrivances and the achievements of his indefatigable brain. He went further. In a lengthy minute he laid down the lines for a radical reform in the entire administration of the army. This was premature, but his proposal that "a camp of evolution" should be created, in which troops should be concentrated and drilled, proved to be the germ of Aldershot.

Meanwhile Victoria had made a new friend. She had suddenly been captivated by Napoleon III. Her dislike of him had been strong at first. She considered that he was a disreputable adventurer who had usurped the throne of poor old Louis Philippe, and besides he was hand in-glove with Lord Palmerston. For a long time, although he was her ally, she was unwilling to meet him, but at last a visit of the Emperor and Empress to England was arranged. Directly he appeared at Windsor her heart began to soften. She found that she was charmed by his quiet manners, his low, soft voice, and by the soothing simplicity of his conversation. The good-will of England was essential to the Emperor's position in Europe, and he had determined to fascinate the Queen. He succeeded. There was something deep within her which responded immediately and vehemently to natures that offered a romantic contrast with her own. Her adoration of Lord Melbourne was intimately interwoven with her half-unconscious appreciation of the exciting unlikeness between herself and that sophisticated, subtle, aristocratical old man. Very different was the quality

of her unlikeness to Napoleon, but its quantity was at least as great. From behind the vast solidity of her respectability, her conventionality, her established happiness, she peered out with a strange delicious pleasure at that unfamiliar, darkly-glittering foreign object, moving so meteorically before her, an ambiguous creature of willfulness and Destiny. And, to her surprise, where she had dreaded antagonisms, she discovered only sympathies. He was, she said, "so quiet, so simple, *naïf* even, so pleased to be informed about things he does not know, so gentle, so full of tact, dignity, and modesty, so full of kind attention towards us, never saying a word, or doing a thing, which could put me out. There is something fascinating, melancholy, and engaging, which draws you to him, in spite of any *prévention* you may have against him, and certainly without the assistance of any outward appearance, though I like his face." She observed that he rode "extremely well, and looks well on horseback, as he sits high." And he danced "with great dignity and spirit." Above all, he listened to Albert, listened with the most respectful attention, showed, in fact, how pleased he was "to be informed about things he did not know", and afterwards was heard to declare that he had never met the Prince's equal. On one occasion, indeed—but only on one—he had seemed to grow slightly restive. In a diplomatic conversation, "I expatiated a little on the Holstein question," wrote the Prince in a memorandum, "which appeared to bore the Emperor as '*tres-compiquée*'"

Victoria, too, became much attached to the Empress, whose looks and graces she admired without a touch of jealousy. Eugénie, indeed, in the plenitude of her beauty, exquisitely dressed in wonderful Parisian crinolines which set off to perfection her tall and willowy figure, might well have caused some heartburning in the breast of her hostess, who, very short, rather stout, quite plain, in garish middle-class garments, could hardly be expected to feel at her best in such company. But Victoria had no misgivings. To her it mattered nothing that her face turned red in the heat and that her purple pork pie hat was of last year's fashion, while Eugénie, cool and modish, floated in an infinitude of flounces by her side. She was Queen of England, and was not that enough? It certainly seemed to be, true majesty was hers, and she knew it. More than once, when the two were together in public, it was the woman to whom, as it seemed, nature and art had given so little, who, by the sheer force of an inherent grandeur, completely threw her adorned and beautiful companion into the shade.

There were tears when the moment came for parting, and Victoria felt "quite *wehmuthig*," as her guests went away from Windsor. But before long she and Albert paid a return visit to France, where everything was very delightful, and she drove incognito through the streets of Paris in a "common bonnet," and saw a play in the theatre at St. Cloud, and, one evening, at a great party given by the Emperor in her honor at the Château of Versailles, talked a little to a distinguished-looking Prussian gentleman, whose name was Bismarck. Her rooms were furnished so much to her taste that she declared they gave her quite a home feeling—that, if her little dog were there, she should really imagine herself at home. Nothing was said, but three days later her little dog barked a welcome to her as she entered the apartments. The Em

peror himself, sparing neither trouble nor expense, had personally arranged the charming surprise. Such were his attentions. She returned to England more enchanted than ever. "Strange indeed," she exclaimed, "are the dispensations and ways of Providence!"

The alliance prospered, and the war drew towards a conclusion. Both the Queen and the Prince, it is true, were most anxious that there should not be a premature peace. When Lord Aberdeen wished to open negotiations, Albert attacked him in a "*geharnischten*" letter, while Victoria rode about on horseback reviewing the troops. At last, however, Sebastopol was captured. The news reached Balmoral late at night, and "in a few minutes Albert and all the gentlemen in every species of attire sallied forth, followed by all the servants, and gradually by all the population of the village—keepers, gillies, workmen—up to the top of the cairn." A bonfire was lighted, the pipes were played, and guns were shot off. "About three-quarters of an hour after Albert came down and said the scene had been wild and exciting beyond everything. The people had been drinking healths in whisky and were in great ecstasy." The "great ecstasy," perhaps, would be replaced by other feelings next morning, but at any rate the war was over—though, to be sure, its end seemed as difficult to account for as its beginning. The dispensations and ways of Providence continued to be strange.

IV

An unexpected consequence of the war was a complete change in the relations between the royal pair and Palmerston. The Prince and the Minister drew together over their hostility to Russia, and thus it came about that when Victoria found it necessary to summon her old enemy to form an administration she did so without reluctance. The premiership, too, had a sobering effect upon Palmerston; he grew less impatient and dictatorial, considered with attention the suggestions of the Crown, and was, besides, genuinely impressed by the Prince's ability and knowledge. Friction, no doubt, there still occasionally was, for, while the Queen and the Prince devoted themselves to foreign politics as much as ever, their views, when the war was over, became once more antagonistic to those of the Prime Minister. This was especially the case with regard to Italy. Albert, theoretically the friend of constitutional government, distrusted Cavour, was horrified by Garibaldi, and dreaded the danger of England being drawn into war with Austria. Palmerston, on the other hand, was eager for Italian independence, but he was no longer at the Foreign Office, and the brunt of the royal displeasure had now to be borne by Lord John Russell. In a few years the situation had curiously altered. It was Lord John who now filled the subordinate and the ungrateful rôle, but the Foreign Secretary, in his struggle with the Crown, was supported, instead of opposed, by the Prime Minister. Nevertheless the struggle was fierce, and the policy, by which the vigorous sympathy of England became one of the decisive factors in the final achievement of Italian unity, was only carried through in face of the violent opposition of the Court.

Towards the other European storm center, also, the Prince's attitude con-

tinued to be very different to that of Palmerston. Albert's great wish was for a united Germany under the leadership of a constitutional and virtuous Prussia, Palmerston did not think that there was much to be said for the scheme, but he took no particular interest in German politics, and was ready enough to agree to a proposal which was warmly supported by both the Prince and the Queen—that the royal Houses of England and Prussia should be united by the marriage of the Princess Royal with the Prussian Crown Prince. Accordingly, when the Princess was not yet fifteen, the Prince, a young man of twenty-four, came over on a visit to Balmoral, and the betrothal took place. Two years later, in 1857, the marriage was celebrated. At the last moment, however, it seemed that there might be a hitch. It was pointed out in Prussia that it was customary for Princes of the blood royal to be married in Berlin, and it was suggested that there was no reason why the present case should be treated as an exception. When this reached the ears of Victoria, she was speechless with indignation. In a note, emphatic even for Her Majesty, she instructed the Foreign Secretary to tell the Prussian Ambassador “not to *entertain* the *possibility* of such a question.” The Queen *never* could consent to it, both for public and for private reasons, and the assumption of its being *too much* for a Prince Royal of Prussia to *come* over to marry *the Princess Royal of Great Britain* in England is *too absurd* to say the least. Whatever may be the usual practice of Prussian princes, it is not *every* day that one marries the eldest daughter of the Queen of England. The question must therefore be considered as settled and closed.” It was, and the wedding took place in St James's Chapel. There were great festivities—illuminations, state concerts, immense crowds, and general rejoicings. At Windsor a magnificent banquet was given to the bride and bridegroom in the Waterloo room, at which, Victoria noted in her diary, “everybody was most friendly and kind about Vicky and full of the universal enthusiasm, of which the Duke of Buccleuch gave us most pleasing instances, he having been in the very thick of the crowd and among the lowest of the low.” Her feelings during several days had been growing more and more emotional, and when the time came for the young couple to depart she very nearly broke down—but not quite. “Poor dear child!” she wrote afterwards. “I clasped her in my arms and blessed her, and knew not what to say. I kissed good Fritz and pressed his hand again and again. He was unable to speak and the tears were in his eyes. I embraced them both again at the carriage door, and Albert got into the carriage, an open one, with them and Bertie. The band struck up. I wished good-by to the good Perponchers. General Schreckenstein was much affected. I pressed his hand, and the good Dean's, and then went quickly upstairs.”

Albert, as well as General Schreckenstein, was much affected. He was losing his favorite child, whose opening intelligence had already begun to display a marked resemblance to his own—an adoring pupil, who, in a few years, might have become an almost adequate companion. An ironic fate had determined that the daughter who was taken from him should be sympathetic, clever, interested in the arts and sciences, and endowed with a strong taste for memoranda, while not a single one of these qualities could be discovered in the son who remained. For certainly the Prince of Wales did not take after his

father Victoria's prayer had been unanswered, and with each succeeding year it became more obvious that Bertie was a true scion of the House of Brunswick. But these evidences of innate characteristics only served to redouble the efforts of his parents, it still might not be too late to incline the young branch, by ceaseless pressure and careful fastenings, to grow in the proper direction. Everything was tried. The boy was sent on a continental tour with a picked body of tutors, but the results were unsatisfactory. At his father's request he kept a diary which, on his return, was inspected by the Prince. It was found to be distressingly meager. What a multitude of highly interesting reflections might have been arranged under the heading "The First Prince of Wales visiting the Pope!" But there was not a single one. "Le jeune prince plait à tout le monde," old Metternich reported to Guizot, "mais avait l'air embarrassé et très triste." On his seventeenth birthday a memorandum was drawn up over the names of the Queen and the Prince informing their eldest son that he was now entering upon the period of manhood, and directing him henceforward to perform the duties of a Christian gentleman. "Life is composed of duties," said the memorandum, "and in the due, punctual and cheerful performance of them the true Christian, true soldier, and true gentleman is recognized.

A new sphere of life will open for you in which you will have to be taught what to do and what not to do, a subject requiring study more important than any in which you have hitherto been engaged." On receipt of the memorandum Bertie burst into tears. At the same time another memorandum was drawn up, headed "confidential for the guidance of the gentlemen appointed to attend on the Prince of Wales." This long and elaborate document laid down "certain principles" by which the "conduct and demeanor" of the gentlemen were to be regulated "and which it is thought may conduce to the benefit of the Prince of Wales." "The qualities which distinguish a gentleman in society," continued this remarkable paper, "are —

- (1) His appearance, his deportment and dress
- (2) The character of his relations with, and treatment of, others
- (3) His desire and power to acquit himself creditably in conversation or whatever is the occupation of the society with which he mixes."

A minute and detailed analysis of these sub-headings followed, filling several pages, and the memorandum ended with a final exhortation to the gentlemen: "If they will duly appreciate the responsibility of their position, and taking the points above laid down as the outline, will exercise their own good sense in acting *upon all occasions* upon these principles, thinking no point of detail too minute to be important, but maintaining one steady consistent line of conduct, they may render essential service to the young Prince and justify the flattering selection made by the royal parents." A year later the young Prince was sent to Oxford, where the greatest care was taken that he should not mix with the undergraduates. Yes, everything had been tried—everything with one single exception. The experiment had never been made of letting Bertie enjoy himself. But why should it have been? "Life is composed of duties." What possible place could there be for enjoyment in the existence of a Prince of Wales?

The same year which deprived Albert of the Princess Royal brought him another and a still more serious loss. The Baron had paid his last visit to Eng-

land For twenty years, as he himself said in a letter to the King of the Belgians, he had performed "the laborious and exhausting office of a paternal friend and trusted adviser" to the Prince and the Queen He was seventy, he was tired, physically and mentally, it was time to go He returned to his home in Coburg, exchanging, once for all, the momentous secrecies of European statecraft for the tittle-tattle of a provincial capital and the gossip of family life In his stiff chair by the fire he nodded now over old stories—not of emperors and generals—but of neighbors and relatives and the domestic adventures of long ago—the burning of his father's library—and the goat that ran upstairs to his sister's room and ran twice round the table and then ran down again Dyspepsia and depression still attacked him, but, looking back over his life, he was not dissatisfied His conscience was clear "I have worked as long as I had strength to work," he said, "and for a purpose no one can impugn The consciousness of this is my reward—the only one which I desired to earn "

Apparently, indeed, his "purpose" had been accomplished By his wisdom, his patience, and his example he had brought about, in the fullness of time, the miraculous metamorphosis of which he had dreamed The Prince was his creation An indefatigable toiler, presiding, for the highest ends, over a great nation—that was his achievement, and he looked upon his work and it was good But had the Baron no misgivings? Did he never wonder whether, perhaps, he might have accomplished not too little but too much? How subtle and how dangerous are the snares which fate lays for the wariest of men! Albert, certainly, seemed to be everything that Stockmar could have wished—virtuous, industrious, persevering, intelligent And yet—why was it?—all was not well with him He was sick at heart

For in spite of everything he had never reached to happiness His work, for which at last he came to crave with an almost morbid appetite, was a solace and not a cure, the dragon of his dissatisfaction devoured with dark relish that ever-growing tribute of laborious days and nights, but it was hungry still The causes of his melancholy were hidden, mysterious, unanalyzable perhaps—too deeply rooted in the innermost recesses of his temperament for the eye of reason to apprehend There were contradictions in his nature, which, to some of those who knew him best, made him seem an inexplicable enigma he was severe and gentle, he was modest and scornful, he longed for affection and he was cold He was lonely, not merely with the loneliness of exile but with the loneliness of conscious and unrecognized superiority He had the pride, at once resigned and overweening, of a doctrinaire And yet to say that he was simply a doctrinaire would be a false description, for the pure doctrinaire rejoices always in an internal contentment, and Albert was very far from doing that There was something that he wanted and that he could never get What was it? Some absolute, some ineffable sympathy? Some extraordinary, some sublime success? Possibly, it was a mixture of both To dominate and to be understood! To conquer, by the same triumphant influence, the submission and the appreciation of men—that would be worth while indeed! But, to such imaginations, he saw too clearly how faint were the responses of his actual environment Who was there who appreciated him, really and truly? Who *could* appreciate him in England? And, if the gentle virtue of an inward

excellence available so little, could he expect more from the hard ways of skill and force? The terrible land of his exile loomed before him a frigid, an impregnable mass. Doubtless he had made some slight impression—it was true that he had gained the respect of his fellow workers, that his probity, his industry, his exactitude, had been recognized, that he was a highly influential, an extremely important man. But how far, how very far, was all this from the goal of his ambitions! How feeble and futile his efforts seemed against the enormous coagulation of dullness, of folly, of slackness, of ignorance, of confusion that confronted him! He might have the strength or the ingenuity to make some small change for the better here or there—to rearrange some detail, to abolish some anomaly, to insist upon some obvious reform, but the heart of the appalling organism remained untouched. England lumbered on, impervious and self-satisfied, in her old intolerable course. He threw himself across the path of the monster with rigid purpose and set teeth, but he was brushed aside. Yes! even Palmerston was still unconquered—was still there to afflict him with his jauntiness, his muddle-headedness, his utter lack of principle. It was too much. Neither nature nor the Baron had given him a sanguine spirit, the seeds of pessimism, once lodged within him, flourished in a propitious soil. He

questioned things, and did not find
One that would answer to his mind,
And all the world appeared unkind

He believed that he was a failure and he began to despair.

Yet Stockmar had told him that he must "never relax," and he never would. He would go on, working to the utmost and striving for the highest, to the bitter end. His industry grew almost maniacal. Earlier and earlier was the green lamp lighted, more vast grew the correspondence, more searching the examination of the newspapers, the interminable memoranda more punctilious, analytical, and precise. His very recreations became duties. He enjoyed himself by time-table, went deer-stalking with meticulous gusto, and made puns at lunch—it was the right thing to do. The mechanism worked with astonishing efficiency, but it never rested and it was never oiled. In dry exactitude the innumerable cog-wheels perpetually revolved. No, whatever happened, the Prince would not relax, he had absorbed the doctrines of Stockmar too thoroughly. He knew what was right, and, at all costs, he would pursue it. That was certain. But alas! in this our life what are the certainties? "In nothing be over-zealous!" says an old Greek. "The due measure in all the works of man is best. For often one who zealously pushes towards some excellence, though he be pursuing a gain, is really being led utterly astray by the will of some Power, which makes those things that are evil seem to him good, and those things seem to him evil that are for his advantage." Surely, both the Prince and the Baron might have learnt something from the frigid wisdom of Theognis.

Victoria noticed that her husband sometimes seemed to be depressed and overworked. She tried to cheer him up. Realizing uneasily that he was still regarded as a foreigner, she hoped that by conferring upon him the title of Prince Consort (1857) she would improve his position in the country. "The Queen has a right to claim that her husband should be an Englishman," she

wrote But unfortunately, in spite of the Royal Letters Patent, Albert remained as foreign as before, and as the years passed his dejection deepened She worked with him, she watched over him, she walked with him through the woods at Osborne, while he whistled to the nightingales, as he had whistled once at Rosenau so long ago When his birthday came round, she took the greatest pains to choose him presents that he would really like In 1858, when he was thirty nine, she gave him "a picture of Beatrice, life-size, in oil, by Horsley, a complete collection of photographic views of Gotha and the country round, which I had taken by Bedford, and a paper weight of Balmoral granite and deers' teeth, designed by Vicky" Albert was of course delighted, and his merriment at the family gathering was more pronounced than ever and yet what was there that was wrong?

No doubt it was his health He was wearing himself out in the service of the country, and certainly his constitution, as Stockmar had perceived from the first, was ill-adapted to meet a serious strain He was easily upset, he constantly suffered from minor ailments His appearance in itself was enough to indicate the infirmity of his physical powers The handsome youth of twenty years since with the flashing eyes and the soft complexion had grown into a sallow, tired-looking man, whose body, in its stoop and its loose fleshiness, betrayed the sedentary laborer, and whose head was quite bald on the top Unkind critics, who had once compared Albert to an operatic tenor, might have remarked that there was something of the butler about him now Beside Victoria, he presented a painful contrast She, too, was stout, but it was with the plumpness of a vigorous matron, and an eager vitality was everywhere visible—in her energetic bearing, her protruding, enquiring glances, her small, fat, capable, and commanding hands If only, by some sympathetic magic, she could have conveyed into that portly, flabby figure, that desiccated and discouraged brain, a measure of the stamina and the self assurance which were so preeminently hers!

But suddenly she was reminded that there were other perils besides those of ill-health During a visit to Coburg in 1860, the Prince was very nearly killed in a carriage accident He escaped with a few cuts and bruises, but Victoria's alarm was extreme, though she concealed it "It is when the Queen feels most deeply," she wrote afterwards, "that she always appears calmest, and she could not and dared not allow herself to speak of what might have been, or even to admit to herself (and she cannot and dare not now) the entire danger, for her head would turn!" Her agitation, in fact, was only surpassed by her thankfulness to God She felt, she said, that she could not rest "without doing something to mark permanently her feelings," and she decided that she would endow a charity in Coburg "£1,000, or even £2,000, given either at once, or in installments yearly, would not in the Queen's opinion, be too much" Eventually, the smaller sum having been fixed upon, it was invested in a trust, called the "Victoria-Stift," in the name of the Burgomaster and chief clergyman of Coburg, who were directed to distribute the interest yearly among a certain number of young men and women of exemplary character belonging to the humbler ranks of life

Shortly afterwards the Queen underwent, for the first time in her life, the

actual experience of close personal loss Early in 1861 the Duchess of Kent was taken seriously ill, and in March she died The event overwhelmed Victoria With a morbid intensity, she filled her diary for pages with minute descriptions of her mother's last hours, her dissolution, and her corpse, interspersed with vehement apostrophes, and the agitated outpourings of emotional reflection In the grief of the present the disagreements of the past were totally forgotten It was the horror and the mystery of Death—Death, present and actual—that seized upon the imagination of the Queen Her whole being, so instinct with vitality, recoiled in agony from the grim spectacle of the triumph of that awful power Her own mother, with whom she had lived so closely and so long that she had become a part almost of her existence, had fallen into nothingness before her very eyes! She tried to forget, but she could not Her lamentations continued with a strange abundance, a strange persistency It was almost as if, by some mysterious and unconscious precognition, she realized that for her, in an especial manner, that grisly Majesty had a dreadful dart in store

For indeed, before the year was out, a far more terrible blow was to fall upon her Albert, who had for long been suffering from sleeplessness, went, on a cold and drenching day towards the end of November, to inspect the buildings for the new Military Academy at Sandhurst On his return, it was clear that the fatigue and exposure to which he had been subjected had seriously affected his health He was attacked by rheumatism, his sleeplessness continued, and he complained that he felt thoroughly unwell Three days later a painful duty obliged him to visit Cambridge The Prince of Wales, who had been placed at that University in the previous year, was behaving in such a manner that a parental visit and a parental admonition had become necessary The disappointed father, suffering in mind and body, carried through his task, but, on his return journey to Windsor, he caught a fatal chill During the next week he gradually grew weaker and more miserable Yet, depressed and enfeebled as he was, he continued to work It so happened that at that very moment a grave diplomatic crisis had arisen Civil war had broken out in America, and it seemed as if England, owing to a violent quarrel with the Northern States, was upon the point of being drawn into the conflict A severe despatch by Lord John Russell was submitted to the Queen, and the Prince perceived that, if it was sent off unaltered, war would be the almost inevitable consequence At seven o'clock on the morning of December 1, he rose from his bed, and with a quivering hand wrote a series of suggestions for the alteration of the draft, by which its language might be softened, and a way left open for a peaceful solution of the question These changes were accepted by the Government, and war was averted It was the Prince's last memorandum

He had always declared that he viewed the prospect of death with equanimity "I do not cling to life," he had once said to Victoria "You do, but I set no store by it" And then he had added "I am sure, if I had a severe illness, I should give up at once, I should not struggle for life I have no tenacity of life" He had judged correctly Before he had been ill many days, he told a friend that he was convinced he would not recover He sank and sank Nevertheless, if his case had been properly understood and skillfully treated from the

first, he might conceivably have been saved, but the doctors failed to diagnose his symptoms, and it is noteworthy that his principal physician was Sir James Clark. When it was suggested that other advice should be taken, Sir James pooh-poohed the idea "there was no cause for alarm," he said. But the strange illness grew worse. At last, after a letter of fierce remonstrance from Palmerston, Dr. Watson was sent for, and Dr. Watson saw at once that he had come too late. The Prince was in the grip of typhoid fever. "I think that everything so far is satisfactory," said Sir James Clark.

The restlessness and the acute suffering of the earlier days gave place to a settled torpor and an ever-deepening gloom. Once the failing patient asked for music—"a fine chorale at a distance", and a piano having been placed in the adjoining room, Princess Alice played on it some of Luther's hymns, after which the Prince repeated "The Rock of Ages." Sometimes his mind wandered, sometimes the distant past came rushing upon him, he heard the birds in the early morning, and was at Rosenau again, a boy. Or Victoria would come and read to him *Pevenil of the Peak*, and he showed that he could follow the story, and then she would bend over him, and he would murmur "liebes Frauchen" and "gutes Weibchen," stroking her cheek. Her distress and her agitation were great, but she was not seriously frightened. Buoyed up by her own abundant energies, she would not believe that Albert's might prove unequal to the strain. She refused to face such a hideous possibility. She declined to see Dr. Watson. Why should she? Had not Sir James Clark assured her that all would be well? Only two days before the end, which was seen now to be almost inevitable by every one about her, she wrote, full of apparent confidence, to the King of the Belgians "I do not sit up with him at night," she said, "as I could be of no use, and there is nothing to cause alarm." The Princess Alice tried to tell her the truth, but her hopefulness would not be daunted. On the morning of December 14, Albert, just as she had expected, seemed to be better, perhaps the crisis was over. But in the course of the day there was a serious relapse. Then at last she allowed herself to see that she was standing on the edge of an appalling gulf. The whole family was summoned, and, one after another, the children took a silent farewell of their father. "It was a terrible moment," Victoria wrote in her diary, "but, thank God! I was able to command myself, and to be perfectly calm, and remained sitting by his side." He murmured something, but she could not hear what it was, she thought he was speaking in French. Then all at once he began to arrange his hair, "just as he used to do when well and he was dressing." "Es ist kleines Frauchen," she whispered to him, and he seemed to understand. For a moment, towards the evening, she went into another room, but was immediately called back, she saw at a glance that a ghastly change had taken place. As she knelt by the bed, he breathed deeply, breathed gently, breathed at last no more. His features became perfectly rigid, she shrieked one long wild shriek that rang through the terror-stricken castle—and understood that she had lost him forever.

VII WIDOWHOOD

THE DEATH of the Prince Consort was the central turning-point in the history of Queen Victoria. She herself felt that her true life had ceased with her husband's, and that the remainder of her days upon earth was of a twilight nature—an epilogue to a drama that was done. Nor is it possible that her biographer should escape a similar impression. For him, too, there is a darkness over the latter half of that long career. The first forty-two years of the Queen's life are illuminated by a great and varied quantity of authentic information. With Albert's death a veil descends. Only occasionally, at fitful and disconnected intervals, does it lift for a moment or two, a few main outlines, a few remarkable details may be discerned, the rest is all conjecture and ambiguity. Thus, though the Queen survived her great bereavement for almost as many years as she had lived before it, the chronicle of those years can bear no proportion to the tale of her earlier life. We must be content in our ignorance with a brief and summary relation.

The sudden removal of the Prince was not merely a matter of overwhelming personal concern to Victoria, it was an event of national, of European importance. He was only forty two, and in the ordinary course of nature he might have been expected to live at least thirty years longer. Had he done so it can hardly be doubted that the whole development of the English polity would have been changed. Already at the time of his death he filled a unique place in English public life, already among the inner circle of politicians he was accepted as a necessary and useful part of the mechanism of the State. Lord Clarendon, for instance, spoke of his death as "a national calamity of far greater importance than the public dream of," and lamented the loss of his "sagacity and foresight," which, he declared, would have been "more than ever valuable" in the event of an American war. And, as time went on, the Prince's influence must have enormously increased. For, in addition to his intellectual and moral qualities, he enjoyed, by virtue of his position, one supreme advantage which every other holder of high office in the country was without: he was permanent. Politicians came and went, but the Prince was perpetually installed at the center of affairs. Who can doubt that, towards the end of the century, such a man, grown gray in the service of the nation, virtuous, intelligent, and with the unexampled experience of a whole life time of government, would have acquired an extraordinary prestige? If, in his youth, he had been able to pit the Crown against the mighty Palmerston and to come off with equal honors from the contest, of what might he not have been capable in his old age? What Minister, however able, however popular, could have withstood the wisdom, the irreproachability, the vast prescriptive authority, of the venerable Prince? It is easy to imagine how, under such a ruler, an attempt might have been made to convert England into a State as exactly organized, as elaborately trained, as efficiently equipped, and as autocratically controlled, as Prussia herself. Then perhaps, eventually, under some powerful leader—a Gladstone or a Bright—the democratic forces in the country might have rallied together,

and a struggle might have followed in which the Monarchy would have been shaken to its foundations. Or, on the other hand, Disraeli's hypothetical prophecy might have come true. "With Prince Albert," he said, "we have buried our sovereign. This German Prince has governed England for twenty-one years with a wisdom and energy such as none of our kings have ever shown. . . . If he had outlived some of our 'old stagers' he would have given us the blessings of absolute government."

The English Constitution—that indescribable entity—is a living thing, growing with the growth of men, and assuming ever-varying forms in accordance with the subtle and complex laws of human character. It is the child of wisdom and chance. The wise men of 1688 molded it into the shape we know, but the chance that George I could not speak English gave it one of its essential peculiarities—the system of a Cabinet independent of the Crown and subordinate to the Prime Minister. The wisdom of Lord Grey saved it from petrification and destruction, and set it upon the path of Democracy. Then chance intervened once more, a female sovereign happened to marry an able and pertinacious man, and it seemed likely that an element which had been quiescent within it for years—the element of irresponsible administrative power—was about to become its predominant characteristic and to change completely the direction of its growth. But what chance gave chance took away. The Consort perished in his prime, and the English Constitution, dropping the dead limb with hardly a tremor, continued its mysterious life as if he had never been.

One human being, and one alone, felt the full force of what had happened. The Baron, by his fireside at Coburg, suddenly saw the tremendous fabric of his creation crash down into sheer and irremediable ruin. Albert was gone, and he had lived in vain. Even his blackest hypochondria had never envisioned quite so miserable a catastrophe. Victoria wrote to him, visited him, tried to console him by declaring with passionate conviction that she would carry on her husband's work. He smiled a sad smile and looked into the fire. Then he murmured that he was going where Albert was—that he would not be long. He shrank into himself. His children clustered round him and did their best to comfort him, but it was useless. The Baron's heart was broken. He lingered for eighteen months, and then, with his pupil, explored the shadow and the dust.

II

With appalling suddenness Victoria had exchanged the serene radiance of happiness for the utter darkness of woe. In the first dreadful moments those about her had feared that she might lose her reason, but the iron strain within her held firm, and in the intervals between the intense paroxysms of grief it was observed that the Queen was calm. She remembered, too, that Albert had always disapproved of exaggerated manifestations of feeling, and her one remaining desire was to do nothing but what he would have wished. Yet there were moments when her royal anguish would brook no restraints. One day she sent for the Duchess of Sutherland, and, leading her to the Prince's room, fell prostrate before his clothes in a flood of weeping, while she adjured the Duchess to tell her whether the beauty of Albert's character had ever been surpassed.

At other times a feeling akin to indignation swept over her "The poor fatherless baby of eight months," she wrote to the King of the Belgians, "is now the utterly heartbroken and crushed widow of forty two! My *life* as a *happy* one is *ended*! The world is gone for *me*! Oh! to be cut off in the prime of life—to see our pure, happy, quiet, domestic life, which *alone* enabled me to bear my *much* disliked position, CUT OFF at forty-two—when I *had* hoped with such instinctive certainty that God never *would* part us, and would let us grow old together (though *he* always talked of the shortness of life)—is *too awful*, too cruel!" The tone of outraged Majesty seems to be discernible Did she wonder in her heart of hearts how the Deity could have dared?

But all other emotions gave way before her overmastering determination to continue, absolutely unchanged, and for the rest of her life on earth, her reverence, her obedience, her idolatry "I am anxious to repeat *one* thing," she told her uncle, "and *that one* is my *firm* resolve, my *irrevocable decision*, viz, that *his* wishes—*his* plans—about everything, *his* views about *every* thing are to be my *law*! And *no human power* will make me swerve from *what he* decided and wished" She grew fierce, she grew furious, at the thought of any possible intrusion between her and her desire Her uncle was coming to visit her, and it flashed upon her that *he* might try to interfere with her and seek to "rule the roast" as of old She would give him a hint "I am *also determined*," she wrote, "that *no one* person—may *he* be ever so good, ever so devoted among my servants—is to lead or guide or dictate *to me* I know *how he* would disapprove it Though miserably weak and utterly shattered, my spirit rises when I think *any* wish or plan of his is to be touched or changed, or I am to be *made to do* anything" She ended her letter in grief and affection She was, she said, his "ever wretched but devoted child, Victoria R" And then she looked at the date it was the 24th of December An agonizing pang assailed her, and she dashed down a postscript—"What a Xmas! I won't think of it"

At first, in the tumult of her distresses, she declared that she could not see her Ministers, and the Princess Alice, assisted by Sir Charles Phipps, the keeper of the Privy Purse, performed, to the best of her ability, the functions of an intermediary After a few weeks, however, the Cabinet, through Lord John Russell, ventured to warn the Queen that this could not continue She realized that they were right Albert would have agreed with them, and so she sent for the Prime Minister But when Lord Palmerston arrived at Osborne, in the pink of health, brisk, with his whiskers freshly dyed, and dressed in a brown overcoat, light gray trousers, green gloves, and blue studs, he did not create a very good impression

Nevertheless, she had grown attached to her old enemy, and the thought of a political change filled her with agitated apprehensions The Government, she knew, might fall at any moment, she felt she could not face such an eventuality, and therefore, six months after the death of the Prince, she took the unprecedented step of sending a private message to Lord Derby, the leader of the Opposition, to tell him that she was not in a fit state of mind or body to undergo the anxiety of a change of Government, and that if he turned the present Ministers out of office it would be at the risk of sacrificing her life—or her reason When this message reached Lord Derby he was considerably sur-

prised "Dear me!" was his cynical comment "I didn't think she was so fond of them as *that*"

Though the violence of her perturbations gradually subsided, her cheerfulness did not return For months, for years, she continued in settled gloom Her life became one of almost complete seclusion Arrayed in thickest *crepe*, she passed dolefully from Windsor to Osborne, from Osborne to Balmoral Rarely visiting the capital, refusing to take any part in the ceremonies of state, shutting herself off from the slightest intercourse with society, she became almost as unknown to her subjects as some potentate of the East They might murmur, but they did not understand What had she to do with empty shows and vain enjoyments? No! She was absorbed by very different preoccupations She was the devoted guardian of a sacred trust Her place was in the inmost shrine of the house of mourning—where she alone had the right to enter, where she could feel the effluence of a mysterious presence, and interpret, however faintly and feebly, the promptings of a still living soul That, and that only, was her glorious, her terrible duty For terrible indeed it was As the years passed her depression seemed to deepen and her loneliness to grow more intense 'I am on a dreary sad pinnacle of solitary grandeur,' she said Again and again she felt that she could bear her situation no longer—that she would sink under the strain And then, instantly, that Voice spoke and she braced herself once more to perform, with minute conscientiousness, her grim and holy task

Above all else, what she had to do was to make her own the master-impulse of Albert's life—she must work, as he had worked, in the service of the country That vast burden of toil which he had taken upon his shoulders it was now for her to bear She assumed the gigantic load, and naturally she staggered under it While he had lived, she had worked, indeed, with regularity and conscientiousness, but it was work made easy, made delicious, by his care, his forethought, his advice, and his infallibility The mere sound of his voice, asking her to sign a paper, had thrilled her, in such a presence she could have labored gladly forever But now there was a hideous change Now there were no neat piles and docketings under the green lamp, now there were no simple explanations of difficult matters, now there was nobody to tell her what was right and what was wrong She had her secretaries, no doubt there were Sir Charles Phipps, and General Grey and Sir Thomas Biddulph, and they did their best But they were mere subordinates the whole weight of initiative and responsibility rested upon her alone For so it had to be "I am *determined*"—had she not declared it?—"that *no one* person is to lead or guide or dictate to *me*", anything else would be a betrayal of her trust She would follow the Prince in all things He had refused to delegate authority, he had examined into every detail with his own eyes, he had made it a rule never to sign a paper without having first, not merely read it, but made notes on it too She would do the same She sat from morning till night surrounded by huge heaps of despatch-boxes, reading and writing at her desk—at her desk, alas! which stood alone now in the room

Within two years of Albert's death a violent disturbance in foreign politics put Victoria's faithfulness to a crucial test The fearful Schleswig-Holstein dispute, which had been smoldering for more than a decade, showed signs of

bursting out into conflagration. The complexity of the questions at issue was indescribable. "Only three people," said Palmerston, "have ever really understood the Schleswig Holstein business—the Prince Consort, who is dead—a German professor, who has gone mad—and I, who have forgotten all about it." But, though the Prince might be dead, had he not left a viceroy behind him? Victoria threw herself into the seething embroilment with the vigor of inspiration. She devoted hours daily to the study of the affair in all its windings, but she had a clew through the labyrinth whenever the question had been discussed, Albert, she recollected it perfectly, had always taken the side of Prussia. Her course was clear. She became an ardent champion of the Prussian point of view. It was a legacy from the Prince, she said. She did not realize that the Prussia of the Prince's day was dead, and that a new Prussia, the Prussia of Bismarck, was born. Perhaps Palmerston, with his queer prescience, instinctively apprehended the new danger, at any rate, he and Lord John were agreed upon the necessity of supporting Denmark against Prussia's claims. But opinion was sharply divided, not only in the country but in the Cabinet. For eighteen months the controversy raged, while the Queen, with persistent vehemence, opposed the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary. When at last the final crisis arose—when it seemed possible that England would join forces with Denmark in a war against Prussia—Victoria's agitation grew febrile in its intensity. Towards her German relatives she preserved a discreet appearance of impartiality, but she poured out upon her Ministers a flood of appeals, protests, and expostulations. She invoked the sacred cause of Peace. "The only chance of preserving peace for Europe," she wrote, "is by not assisting Denmark, who has brought this entirely upon herself. The Queen suffers much, and her nerves are more and more totally shattered. But though all this anxiety is wearing her out, it will not shake her firm purpose of resisting any attempt to involve this country in a mad and useless combat." She was, she declared, "prepared to make a stand," even if the resignation of the Foreign Secretary should follow. "The Queen," she told Lord Granville, "is completely exhausted by the anxiety and suspense, and misses her beloved husband's help, advice, support, and love in an overwhelming manner." She was so worn out by her efforts for peace that she could "hardly hold up her head or hold her pen." England did not go to war, and Denmark was left to her fate, but how far the attitude of the Queen contributed to this result it is impossible, with our present knowledge, to say. On the whole, however, it seems probable that the determining factor in the situation was the powerful peace party in the Cabinet rather than the imperious and pathetic pressure of Victoria.

It is, at any rate, certain that the Queen's enthusiasm for the sacred cause of peace was short-lived. Within a few months her mind had completely altered. Her eyes were opened to the true nature of Prussia, whose designs upon Austria were about to culminate in the Seven Weeks' War. Veering precipitately from one extreme to the other, she now urged her Ministers to interfere by force of arms in support of Austria. But she urged in vain.

Her political activity, no more than her social seclusion, was approved by the public. As the years passed, and the royal mourning remained as unrelieved as ever, the animadversions grew more general and more severe. It was observed

that the Queen's protracted privacy not only cast a gloom over high society, not only deprived the populace of its pageantry, but also exercised a highly deleterious effect upon the dressmaking, millinery, and hosiery trades. This latter consideration carried great weight. At last, early in 1864, the rumor spread that Her Majesty was about to go out of mourning, and there was much rejoicing in the newspapers, but unfortunately it turned out that the rumor was quite without foundation. Victoria, with her own hand, wrote a letter to *The Times* to say so. "This idea," she declared, "cannot be too explicitly contradicted." "The Queen," the letter continued, "heartily appreciates the desire of her subjects to see her, and whatever she *can* do to gratify them in this loyal and affectionate wish, she *will* do."

But there are other and higher duties than those of mere representation which are now thrown upon the Queen, alone and unassisted—duties which she cannot neglect without injury to the public service, which weigh unceasingly upon her, overwhelming her with work and anxiety." The justification might have been considered more cogent had it not been known that those "other and higher duties" emphasized by the Queen consisted for the most part of an attempt to counteract the foreign policy of Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell. A large section—perhaps a majority—of the nation were violent partisans of Denmark in the Schleswig-Holstein quarrel, and Victoria's support of Prussia was widely denounced. A wave of unpopularity, which reminded old observers of the period preceding the Queen's marriage more than twenty-five years before, was beginning to rise. The press was rude, Lord Ellenborough attacked the Queen in the House of Lords, there were curious whispers in high quarters that she had had thoughts of abdicating—whispers followed by regrets that she had not done so. Victoria, outraged and injured, felt that she was misunderstood. She was profoundly unhappy. After Lord Ellenborough's speech, General Grey declared that he "had never seen the Queen so completely upset." "Oh, how fearful it is," she herself wrote to Lord Granville, "to be suspected—uncheered—unguided and unadvised—and how alone the poor Queen feels!" Nevertheless, suffer as she might, she was as resolute as ever, she would not move by a hair's breadth from the course that a supreme obligation marked out for her, she would be faithful to the end.

And so, when Schleswig-Holstein was forgotten, and even the image of the Prince had begun to grow dim in the fickle memories of men, the solitary watcher remained immutably concentrated at her peculiar task. The world's hostility, steadily increasing, was confronted and outfaced by the impenetrable weeds of Victoria. Would the world never understand? It was not mere sorrow that kept her so strangely sequestered, it was devotion, it was self-immolation, it was the laborious legacy of love. Unceasingly the pen moved over the black-edged paper. The flesh might be weak, but that vast burden must be borne. And fortunately, if the world would not understand, there were faithful friends who did. There was Lord Granville, and there was kind Mr. Theodore Martin. Perhaps Mr. Martin, who was so clever, would find means to make people realize the facts. She would send him a letter, pointing out her arduous labors and the difficulties under which she struggled, and then he might write an article for one of the magazines. It is not, she told him in 1863, "the Queen's sorrow that keeps her secluded. It is her *overwhelming work* and her

health, which is greatly shaken by her sorrow, and the totally overwhelming amount of work and responsibility—work which she feels really wears her out Alice Helps was wonderfully struck at the Queen's room, and if Mrs Martin will look at it, she can tell Mr Martin what surrounds her From the hour she gets out of bed till she gets into it again there is work, work, work,—letter boxes, questions, &c, which are dreadfully exhausting—and if she had not comparative rest and quiet in the evening she would most likely not be *alive* Her brain is constantly overtaxed” It was too true

III

To carry on Albert's work—that was her first duty, but there was another, second only to that, and yet nearer, if possible, to her heart—to impress the true nature of his genius and character upon the minds of her subjects She realized that during his life he had not been properly appreciated, the full extent of his powers, the supreme quality of his goodness, had been necessarily concealed, but death had removed the need of barriers, and now her husband, in his magnificent entirety, should stand revealed to all She set to work methodically She directed Sir Arthur Helps to bring out a collection of the Prince's speeches and addresses, and the weighty tome appeared in 1862 Then she commanded General Grey to write an account of the Prince's early years—from his birth to his marriage, she herself laid down the design of the book, contributed a number of confidential documents, and added numerous notes, General Grey obeyed, and the work was completed in 1866 But the principal part of the story was still untold, and Mr Martin was forthwith instructed to write a complete biography of the Prince Consort Mr Martin labored for fourteen years The mass of material with which he had to deal was almost incredible, but he was extremely industrious, and he enjoyed throughout the gracious assistance of Her Majesty The first bulky volume was published in 1874, four others slowly followed, so that it was not until 1880 that the monumental work was finished

Mr Martin was rewarded by a knighthood, and yet it was sadly evident that neither Sir Theodore nor his predecessors had achieved the purpose which the Queen had in view Perhaps she was unfortunate in her coadjutors, but, in reality, the responsibility for the failure must lie with Victoria herself Sir Theodore and the others faithfully carried out the task which she had set them—faithfully put before the public the very image of Albert that filled her own mind The fatal drawback was that the public did not find that image attractive Victoria's emotional nature, far more remarkable for vigor than for subtlety, rejecting utterly the qualifications which perspicuity, or humor, might suggest, could be satisfied with nothing but the absolute and the categorical When she disliked she did so with an unequivocal emphasis which swept the object of her repugnance at once and finally outside the pale of consideration, and her feelings of affection were equally unmitigated In the case of Albert her passion for superlatives reached its height To have conceived of him as anything short of perfect—perfect in virtue, in wisdom, in beauty, in all the glories and graces of man—would have been an unthinkable blasphemy per-

fect he was, and perfect he must be shown to have been And so, Sir Arthur Sir Theodore, and the General painted him In the circumstances, and under such supervision, to have done anything else would have required talents considerably more distinguished than any that those gentlemen possessed But that was not all By a curious mischance Victoria was also able to press into her service another writer, the distinction of whose talents was this time beyond a doubt The Poet Laureate, adopting, either from complaisance or conviction, the tone of his sovereign, joined in the chorus, and endowed the royal formula with the magical resonance of verse This settled the matter Henceforward it was impossible to forget that Albert had worn the white flower of a blameless life

The result was doubly unfortunate Victoria, disappointed and chagrined, bore a grudge against her people for their refusal, in spite of all her efforts, to rate her husband at his true worth She did not understand that the picture of an embodied perfection is distasteful to the majority of mankind The cause of this is not so much an envy of the perfect being as a suspicion that he must be inhuman, and thus it happened that the public, when it saw displayed for its admiration a figure resembling the sugary hero of a moral story-book rather than a fellow man of flesh and blood, turned away with a shrug, a smile, and a flippant ejaculation But in this the public was the loser as well as Victoria For in truth Albert was a far more interesting personage than the public dreamed By a curious irony an impeccable waxwork had been fixed by the Queen's love in the popular imagination, while the creature whom it represented—the real creature, so full of energy and stress and torment, so mysterious and so unhappy, and so fallible and so very human—had altogether disappeared

IV

Words and books may be ambiguous memorials, but who can misinterpret the visible solidity of bronze and stone? At Frogmore, near Windsor, where her mother was buried, Victoria constructed, at the cost of £200,000, a vast and elaborate mausoleum for herself and her husband But that was a private and domestic monument, and the Queen desired that wherever her subjects might be gathered together they should be reminded of the Prince Her desire was gratified, all over the country—at Aberdeen, at Perth, and at Wolverhampton—statues of the Prince were erected, and the Queen, making an exception to her rule of retirement, unveiled them herself Nor did the capital lag behind A month after the Prince's death a meeting was called together at the Mansion House to discuss schemes for honoring his memory Opinions, however, were divided upon the subject Was a statue or an institution to be preferred? Meanwhile a subscription was opened, an influential committee was appointed, and the Queen was consulted as to her wishes in the matter Her Majesty replied that she would prefer a granite obelisk, with sculptures at the base, to an institution But the committee hesitated an obelisk, to be worthy of the name, must clearly be a monolith, and where was the quarry in England capable of furnishing a granite block of the required size? It was true that there was granite in Russian Finland, but the committee were advised that it was not

adapted to resist exposure to the open air. On the whole, therefore, they suggested that a Memorial Hall should be erected, together with a statue of the Prince. Her Majesty assented, but then another difficulty arose. It was found that not more than £60,000 had been subscribed—a sum insufficient to defray the double expense. The Hall, therefore, was abandoned; a statue alone was to be erected, and certain eminent architects were asked to prepare designs. Eventually the committee had at their disposal a total sum of £120,000, since the public subscribed another £10,000, while £50,000 was voted by Parliament. Some years later a joint stock company was formed and built, as a private speculation, the Albert Hall.

The architect whose design was selected, both by the committee and by the Queen, was Mr. Gilbert Scott, whose industry, conscientiousness, and genuine piety had brought him to the head of his profession. His lifelong zeal for the Gothic style having given him a special prominence, his handiwork was strikingly visible, not only in a multitude of original buildings, but in most of the cathedrals of England. Protests, indeed, were occasionally raised against his renovations, but Mr. Scott replied with such vigor and unction in articles and pamphlets that not a Dean was unconvinced, and he was permitted to continue his labors without interruption. On one occasion, however, his devotion to Gothic had placed him in an unpleasant situation. The Government offices in Whitehall were to be rebuilt, Mr. Scott competed, and his designs were successful. Naturally, they were in the Gothic style, combining “a certain squareness and horizontality of outline” with pillar-mullions, gables, high-pitched roofs, and dormers, and the drawings, as Mr. Scott himself observed, “were, perhaps, the best ever sent in to a competition, or nearly so.” After the usual difficulties and delays the work was at last to be put in hand, when there was a change of Government and Lord Palmerston became Prime Minister. Lord Palmerston at once sent for Mr. Scott. “Well, Mr. Scott,” he said, in his jaunty way, “I can’t have anything to do with this Gothic style. I must insist on your making a design in the Italian manner, which I am sure you can do very cleverly.” Mr. Scott was appalled, the style of the Italian renaissance was not only unsightly, it was positively immoral, and he sternly refused to have anything to do with it. Thereupon Lord Palmerston assumed a fatherly tone. “Quite true, a Gothic architect can’t be expected to put up a Classical building, I must find some one else.” This was intolerable, and Mr. Scott, on his return home, addressed to the Prime Minister a strongly-worded letter, in which he dwelt upon his position as an architect, upon his having won two European competitions, his being an A.R.A., a gold medalist of the Institute, and a lecturer on architecture at the Royal Academy, but it was useless—Lord Palmerston did not even reply. It then occurred to Mr. Scott that, by a judicious mixture, he might, while preserving the essential character of the Gothic, produce a design which would give a superficial impression of the Classical style. He did so, but no effect was produced upon Lord Palmerston. The new design, he said, was “neither one thing nor t’other—a regular mongrel affair—and he would have nothing to do with it either.” After that Mr. Scott found it necessary to recruit for two months at Scarborough, “with a course of quinine.” He recovered his tone at last, but only at the cost of his convictions. For the sake of his family

he felt that it was his unfortunate duty to obey the Prime Minister, and, shuddering with horror, he constructed the Government offices in a strictly Renaissance style

Shortly afterwards Mr Scott found some consolation in building the St Pancras Hotel in a style of his own

And now another and yet more satisfactory task was his "My idea in designing the Memorial," he wrote, "was to erect a kind of ciborium to protect a statue of the Prince, and its special characteristic was that the ciborium was designed in some degree on the principles of the ancient shrines. These shrines were models of imaginary buildings, such as had never in reality been erected, and my idea was to realize one of these imaginary structures with its precious materials, its inlaying, its enamels, &c &c." His idea was particularly appropriate since it chanced that a similar conception, though in the reverse order of magnitude, had occurred to the Prince himself, who had designed and executed several silver cruet-stands upon the same model. At the Queen's request a site was chosen in Kensington Gardens as near as possible to that of the Great Exhibition, and in May, 1864, the first sod was turned. The work was long, complicated, and difficult, a great number of workmen were employed, besides several subsidiary sculptors and metal workers under Mr Scott's direction, while at every stage sketches and models were submitted to Her Majesty, who criticized all the details with minute care, and constantly suggested improvements. The frieze, which encircled the base of the monument, was in itself a very serious piece of work. "This," said Mr Scott, "taken as a whole, is perhaps one of the most laborious works of sculpture ever undertaken, consisting, as it does, of a continuous range of figure sculpture of the most elaborate description, in the highest *alto-relievo* of life-size, of more than 200 feet in length, containing about 170 figures, and executed in the hardest marble which could be procured." After three years of toil the memorial was still far from completion, and Mr Scott thought it advisable to give a dinner to the workmen, "as a substantial recognition of his appreciation of their skill and energy." "Two long tables," we are told, "constructed of scaffold planks, were arranged in the workshops, and covered with newspapers, for want of table-cloths. Upwards of eighty men sat down. Beef and mutton, plum pudding and cheese were supplied in abundance, and each man who desired it had three pints of beer, gingerbeer and lemonade being provided for the teetotalers, who formed a very considerable proportion.

Several toasts were given and many of the workmen spoke, almost all of them commencing by 'Thanking God that they enjoyed good health', some alluded to the temperance that prevailed amongst them, others observed how little swearing was ever heard, whilst all said how pleased and proud they were to be engaged on so great a work."

Gradually the edifice approached completion. The one hundred and seventieth life-size figure in the frieze was chiseled, the granite pillars arose, the mosaics were inserted in the allegorical pediments, the four colossal statues representing the greater Christian virtues, the four other colossal statues representing the greater moral virtues, were hoisted into their positions, the eight bronzes representing the greater sciences—Astronomy, Chemistry, Geology, Geometry, Rhetoric, Medicine, Philosophy, and Physiology—were fixed on their glittering

pinnacles, high in air The statue of Physiology was particularly admired "On her left arm," the official description informs us, "she bears a new born infant, as a representation of the development of the highest and most perfect of physiological forms, her hand points towards a microscope, the instrument which lends its assistance for the investigation of the minuter forms of animal and vegetable organisms" At last the gilded cross crowned the dwindling galaxies of superimposed angels, the four continents in white marble stood at the four corners of the base, and, seven years after its inception, in July, 1872, the monument was thrown open to the public

But four more years were to elapse before the central figure was ready to be placed under its starry canopy It was designed by Mr Foley, though in one particular the sculptor's freedom was restricted by Mr Scott "I have chosen the sitting posture," Mr Scott said, "as best conveying the idea of dignity befitting a royal personage" Mr Foley ably carried out the conception of his principle "In the attitude and expression," he said, "the aim has been, with the individuality of portraiture, to embody rank, character, and enlightenment, and to convey a sense of that responsive intelligence indicating an active, rather than a passive, interest in those pursuits of civilization illustrated in the surrounding figures, groups, and reliefs"

To identify the figure with one of the most memorable undertakings of the public life of the Prince—the International Exhibition of 1851—a catalogue of the works collected in that first gathering of the industry of all nations, is placed in the right hand" The statue was of bronze gilt and weighed nearly ten tons It was rightly supposed that the simple word "Albert," cast on the base, would be a sufficient means of identification

VIII. MR GLADSTONE AND LORD BEACONSFIELD

LORD PALMERSTON's laugh—a queer metallic "Ha! ha! ha!" with reverberations in it from the days of Pitt and the Congress of Vienna—was heard no more in Piccadilly, Lord John Russell dwindled into senility, Lord Derby tottered from the stage A new scene opened, and new protagonists—Mr Gladstone and Mr Disraeli—struggled together in the limelight Victoria, from her post of vantage, watched these developments with that passionate and personal interest which she invariably imported into politics Her prepossessions were of an unexpected kind Mr Gladstone had been the disciple of her revered Peel, and had won the approval of Albert, Mr Disraeli had hounded Sir Robert to his fall with hideous virulence, and the Prince had pronounced that he "had not one single element of a gentleman in his composition" Yet she regarded Mr Gladstone with a distrust and dislike which steadily deepened, while upon his rival she lavished an abundance of confidence, esteem, and affection such as Lord Melbourne himself had hardly known

Her attitude towards the Tory Minister had suddenly changed when she found that he alone among public men had divined her feelings at Albert's death Of the others she might have said "they pity me and not my grief".

but Mr Disraeli had understood, and all his condolences had taken the form of reverential eulogies of the departed. The Queen declared that he was "the only person who appreciated the Prince." She began to show him special favor, gave him and his wife two of the coveted seats in St. George's Chapel at the Prince of Wales's wedding, and invited him to stay a night at Windsor. When the grant for the Albert Memorial came before the House of Commons, Disraeli, as leader of the Opposition, eloquently supported the project. He was rewarded by a copy of the Prince's speeches, bound in white morocco, with an inscription in the royal hand. In his letter of thanks he "ventured to touch upon a sacred theme," and, in a strain which reechoed with masterly fidelity the sentiments of his correspondent, dwelt at length upon the absolute perfection of Albert. "The Prince," he said, "is the only person whom Mr Disraeli has ever known who realized the Ideal. None with whom he is acquainted have ever approached it. There was in him an union of the manly grace and sublime simplicity, of chivalry with the intellectual splendor of the Attic Academe. The only character in English history that would, in some respects, draw near to him is Sir Philip Sidney: the same high tone, the same universal accomplishments, the same blended tenderness and vigor, the same rare combination of romantic energy and classic repose." As for his own acquaintance with the Prince, it had been, he said, "one of the most satisfactory incidents of his life: full of refined and beautiful memories, and exercising, as he hopes, over his remaining existence, a soothing and exalting influence." Victoria was much affected by "the depth and delicacy of these touches," and henceforward Disraeli's place in her affections was assured. When, in 1866, the Conservatives came into office, Disraeli's position as Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the House necessarily brought him into a closer relation with the Sovereign. Two years later Lord Derby resigned, and Victoria, with intense delight and peculiar graciousness, welcomed Disraeli as her First Minister.

But only for nine agitated months did he remain in power. The Ministry, in a minority in the Commons, was swept out of existence by a general election. Yet by the end of that short period the ties which bound together the Queen and her Premier had grown far stronger than ever before, the relationship between them was now no longer merely that between a grateful mistress and a devoted servant: they were friends. His official letters, in which the personal element had always been perceptible, developed into racy records of political news and social gossip, written, as Lord Clarendon said, "in his best novel style." Victoria was delighted, she had never, she declared, had such letters in her life, and had never before known *everything*. In return, she sent him, when the spring came, several bunches of flowers, picked by her own hands. He despatched to her a set of his novels, for which, she said, she was "most grateful, and which she values much." She herself had lately published her *Leaves from the Journal of our Life in the Highlands*, and it was observed that the Prime Minister, in conversing with Her Majesty at this period, constantly used the words "we authors, ma'am." Upon political questions, she was his staunch supporter. "Really there never was such conduct as that of the Opposition," she wrote. And when the Government was defeated in the House she was "really shocked at the way in which the House of Commons go on, they

really bring discredit on Constitutional Government" She dreaded the prospect of a change, she feared that if the Liberals insisted upon disestablishing the Irish Church, her Coronation Oath might stand in the way But a change there had to be, and Victoria vainly tried to console herself for the loss of her favorite Minister by bestowing a peerage upon Mrs Disraeli

Mr Gladstone was in his shirt-sleeves at Hawarden, cutting down a tree, when the royal message was brought to him "Very significant," he remarked, when he had read the letter, and went on cutting down his tree His secret thoughts on the occasion were more explicit, and were committed to his diary "The Almighty," he wrote, "seems to sustain and spare me for some purpose of His own, deeply unworthy as I know myself to be Glory be to His name"

The Queen, however, did not share her new Minister's view of the Almighty's intentions She could not believe that there was any divine purpose to be detected in the program of sweeping changes which Mr Gladstone was determined to carry out But what could she do? Mr Gladstone, with his demonic energy and his powerful majority in the House of Commons, was irresistible, and for five years (1869-74) Victoria found herself condemned to live in an agitating atmosphere of interminable reform—reform in the Irish Church and the Irish land system, reform in education, reform in parliamentary elections, reform in the organization of the Army and the Navy, reform in the administration of justice She disapproved, she struggled, she grew very angry, she felt that if Albert had been living things would never have happened so, but her protests and her complaints were alike unavailing The mere effort of grappling with the mass of documents which poured in upon her in an ever-growing flood was terribly exhausting When the draft of the lengthy and intricate Irish Church Bill came before her, accompanied by an explanatory letter from Mr Gladstone covering a dozen closely-written quarto pages, she almost despaired She turned from the Bill to the explanation, and from the explanation back again to the Bill, and she could not decide which was the most confusing But she had to do her duty she had not only to read, but to make notes At last she handed the whole heap of papers to Mr Martin, who happened to be staying at Osborne, and requested him to make a précis of them When he had done so, her disapproval of the measure became more marked than ever, but, such was the strength of the Government, she actually found herself obliged to urge moderation upon the Opposition, lest worse should ensue

In the midst of this crisis, when the future of the Irish Church was hanging in the balance, Victoria's attention was drawn to another proposed reform It was suggested that the sailors in the Navy should henceforward be allowed to wear beards "Has Mr Childers ascertained anything on the subject of the beards?" the Queen wrote anxiously to the First Lord of the Admiralty On the whole, Her Majesty was in favor of the change "Her own personal feeling," she wrote, "would be for the beards without the mustache, as the latter have rather a soldierlike appearance, but then the object in view would not be obtained, viz, to prevent the necessity of shaving Therefore it had better be as proposed, the entire beard, only it should be kept short and very clean" After thinking over the question for another week, the Queen wrote a final

letter She wished, she said, "to make one additional observation respecting the beards, viz, that on no account should mustaches be allowed without beards That must be clearly understood"

Changes in the Navy might be tolerated, to lay hands upon the Army was a more serious matter From time immemorial there had been a particularly close connection between the Army and the Crown, and Albert had devoted even more time and attention to the details of military business than to the processes of fresco painting or the planning of sanitary cottages for the deserving poor But now there was to be a great alteration Mr Gladstone's fiat had gone forth, and the Commander-in Chief was to be removed from his direct dependence upon the Sovereign, and made subordinate to Parliament and the Secretary of State for War Of all the liberal reforms this was the one which aroused the bitterest resentment in Victoria She considered that the change was an attack upon her personal position—almost an attack upon the personal position of Albert But she was helpless, and the Prime Minister had his way When she heard that the dreadful man had yet another reform in contemplation—that he was about to abolish the purchase of military commissions—she could only feel that it was just what might have been expected For a moment she hoped that the House of Lords would come to the rescue, the Peers opposed the change with unexpected vigor, but Mr Gladstone, more conscious than ever of the support of the Almighty, was ready with an ingenious device The purchase of commissions had been originally allowed by Royal Warrant, it should now be disallowed by the same agency Victoria was faced by a curious dilemma she abominated the abolition of purchase, but she was asked to abolish it by an exercise of sovereign power which was very much to her taste She did not hesitate for long, and when the Cabinet, in a formal minute, advised her to sign the Warrant, she did so with a good grace

Unacceptable as Mr Gladstone's policy was, there was something else about him which was even more displeasing to Victoria She disliked his personal demeanor towards herself It was not that Mr Gladstone, in his intercourse with her, was in any degree lacking in courtesy or respect On the contrary, an extraordinary reverence impregnated his manner, both in his conversation and his correspondence with the Sovereign Indeed, with that deep and passionate conservatism which, to the very end of his incredible career, gave such an unexpected coloring to his inexplicable character, Mr Gladstone viewed Victoria through a haze of awe which was almost religious—as a sacrosanct embodiment of venerable traditions—a vital element in the British Constitution—a Queen by Act of Parliament But unfortunately the lady did not appreciate the compliment The well known complaint—"He speaks to me as if I were a public meeting"—whether authentic or no—and the turn of the sentence is surely a little too epigrammatic to be genuinely Victorian—undoubtedly expresses the essential element of her antipathy She had no objection to being considered as an institution, she was one, and she knew it But she was a woman too, and to be considered *only* as an institution—that was unbearable And thus all Mr Gladstone's zeal and devotion, his ceremonious phrases, his low bows, his punctilious correctitudes, were utterly wasted, and when, in the excess of his loyalty, he went further, and imputed to the object of his veneration

tion, with obsequious blindness, the subtlety of intellect, the wide reading, the grave enthusiasm, which he himself possessed, the misunderstanding became complete. The discordance between the actual Victoria and this strange Divinity made in Mr Gladstone's image produced disastrous results. Her discomfort and dislike turned at last into positive animosity, and, though her manners continued to be perfect, she never for a moment unbent, while he on his side was overcome with disappointment, perplexity, and mortification.

Yet his fidelity remained unshaken. When the Cabinet met, the Prime Minister, filled with his beatific vision, would open the proceedings by reading aloud the letters which he had received from the Queen upon the questions of the hour. The assembly sat in absolute silence while, one after another, the royal missives, with their emphases, their ejaculations, and their grammatical peculiarities, boomed forth in all the deep solemnity of Mr Gladstone's utterance. Not a single comment, of any kind, was ever hazarded, and, after a fitting pause, the Cabinet proceeded with the business of the day.

II

Little as Victoria appreciated her Prime Minister's attitude towards her, she found that it had its uses. The popular discontent at her uninterrupted seclusion had been gathering force for many years, and now burst out in a new and alarming shape. Republicanism was in the air. Radical opinion in England, stimulated by the fall of Napoleon III and the establishment of a republican government in France, suddenly grew more extreme than it ever had been since 1848. It also became for the first time almost respectable. Chartism had been entirely an affair of the lower classes, but now Members of Parliament, learned professors, and ladies of title openly avowed the most subversive views. The monarchy was attacked both in theory and in practice. And it was attacked at a vital point: it was declared to be too expensive. What benefits, it was asked, did the nation reap to counterbalance the enormous sums which were expended upon the Sovereign? Victoria's retirement gave an unpleasant handle to the argument. It was pointed out that the ceremonial functions of the Crown had virtually lapsed, and the awkward question remained whether any of the other functions which it did continue to perform were really worth £385,000 per annum. The royal balance sheet was curiously examined. An anonymous pamphlet entitled "What does she do with it?" appeared, setting forth the financial position with malicious clarity. The Queen, it stated, was granted by the Civil List £60,000 a year for her private use, but the rest of her vast annuity was given, as the Act declared, to enable her "to defray the expenses of her royal household and to support the honor and dignity of the Crown." Now it was obvious that, since the death of the Prince, the expenditure for both these purposes must have been very considerably diminished, and it was difficult to resist the conclusion that a large sum of money was diverted annually from the uses for which it had been designed by Parliament, to swell the private fortune of Victoria. The precise amount of that private fortune it was impossible to discover, but there was reason to suppose that it was gigantic, perhaps it reached a total of five million pounds. The

pamphlet protested against such a state of affairs, and its protests were repeated vigorously in newspapers and at public meetings. Though it is certain that the estimate of Victoria's riches was much exaggerated, it is equally certain that she was an exceedingly wealthy woman. She probably saved £20,000 a year from the Civil List, the revenues of the Duchy of Lancaster were steadily increasing, she had inherited a considerable property from the Prince Consort, and she had been left, in 1852, an estate of half a million by Mr John Neild, an eccentric miser. In these circumstances it was not surprising that when, in 1871, Parliament was asked to vote a dowry of £30,000 to the Princess Louise on her marriage with the eldest son of the Duke of Argyle, together with an annuity of £6,000, there should have been a serious outcry.

In order to conciliate public opinion, the Queen opened Parliament in person, and the vote was passed almost unanimously. But a few months later another demand was made: the Prince Arthur had come of age, and the nation was asked to grant him an annuity of £15,000. The outcry was redoubled. The newspapers were filled with angry articles, Bradlaugh thundered against "princely paupers" to one of the largest crowds that had ever been seen in Trafalgar Square, and Sir Charles Dilke expounded the case for a republic in a speech to his constituents at Newcastle. The Prince's annuity was ultimately sanctioned in the House of Commons by a large majority, but a minority of fifty members voted in favor of reducing the sum to £10,000.

Towards every aspect of this distasteful question, Mr Gladstone presented an iron front. He absolutely discountenanced the extreme section of his followers. He declared that the whole of the Queen's income was justly at her personal disposal, argued that to complain of royal savings was merely to encourage royal extravagance, and successfully convoyed through Parliament the unpopular annuities, which, he pointed out, were strictly in accordance with precedent. When, in 1872, Sir Charles Dilke once more returned to the charge in the House of Commons, introducing a motion for a full enquiry into the Queen's expenditure with a view to a root and branch reform of the Civil List, the Prime Minister brought all the resources of his powerful and ingenious eloquence to the support of the Crown. He was completely successful, and amid a scene of great disorder the motion was ignominiously dismissed. Victoria was relieved, but she grew no fonder of Mr Gladstone.

It was perhaps the most miserable moment of her life. The Ministers, the press, the public, all conspired to vex her, to blame her, to misinterpret her actions, to be unsympathetic and disrespectful in every way. She was "a cruelly misunderstood woman," she told Mr Martin, complaining to him bitterly of the unjust attacks which were made upon her, and declaring that "the great worry and anxiety and hard work for ten years, alone, unaided, with increasing age and never very strong health" were breaking her down, and "almost drove her to despair." The situation was indeed deplorable. It seemed as if her whole existence had gone awry, as if an irremediable antagonism had grown up between the Queen and the nation. If Victoria had died in the early seventies, there can be little doubt that the voice of the world would have pronounced her a failure.

III

But she was reserved for a very different fate. The outburst of republicanism had been in fact the last flicker of an expiring cause. The liberal tide, which had been flowing steadily ever since the Reform Bill, reached its height with Mr Gladstone's first administration, and towards the end of that administration the inevitable ebb began. The reaction, when it came, was sudden and complete. The General Election of 1874 changed the whole face of politics. Mr Gladstone and the Liberals were routed, and the Tory party, for the first time for over forty years, attained an unquestioned supremacy in England. It was obvious that their surprising triumph was preeminently due to the skill and vigor of Disraeli. He returned to office, no longer the dubious commander of an insufficient host, but with drums beating and flags flying, a conquering hero. And as a conquering hero Victoria welcomed her new Prime Minister.

Then there followed six years of excitement, of enchantment, of felicity, of glory, of romance. The amazing being, who now at last, at the age of seventy, after a lifetime of extraordinary struggles, had turned into reality the absurdest of his boyhood's dreams, knew well enough how to make his own, with absolute completeness, the heart of the Sovereign Lady whose servant, and whose master, he had so miraculously become. In women's hearts he had always read as in an open book. His whole career had turned upon those curious entities, and the more curious they were, the more intimately at home with them he seemed to be. But Lady Beaconsfield, with her cracked idolatry, and Mrs Brydges-Williams, with her clogs, her corpulence, and her legacy, were gone. An even more remarkable phenomenon stood in their place. He surveyed what was before him with the eye of a past-master, and he was not for a moment at a loss. He realized everything—the interacting complexities of circumstance and character, the pride of place mingled so inextricably with personal arrogance, the superabundant emotionalism, the ingenuousness of outlook, the solid, the laborious respectability, shot through so incongruously by temperamental cravings for the colored and the strange, the singular intellectual limitations, and the mysteriously essential female elements impregnating every particle of the whole. A smile hovered over his impassive features, and he dubbed Victoria "the Faery." The name delighted him, for, with that epigrammatic ambiguity so dear to his heart, it precisely expressed his vision of the Queen. The Spenserian allusion was very pleasant—the elegant evocations of Gloriana, but there was more in it than that: there was the suggestion of a diminutive creature, endowed with magical—and mythical—properties, and a portentousness almost ridiculously out of keeping with the rest of her make-up. The Faery, he determined, should henceforward wave her wand for him alone. Detachment is always a rare quality, and rarest of all, perhaps, among politicians, but that veteran egotist possessed it in a supreme degree. Not only did he know what he had to do, not only did he do it, he was in the audience as well as on the stage, and he took in with the rich relish of a connoisseur every feature of the entertaining situation, every phase of the delicate drama, and every detail of his own consummate performance.

The smile hovered and vanished, and, bowing low with Oriental gravity

and Oriental submissiveness, he set himself to his task. He had understood from the first that in dealing with the Faery the appropriate method of approach was the very antithesis of the Gladstonian, and such a method was naturally his. It was not his habit to harangue and exhort and expatiate in official conscientiousness, he liked to scatter flowers along the path of business, to compress a weighty argument into a happy phrase, to insinuate what was in his mind with an air of friendship and confidential courtesy. He was nothing if not personal, and he had perceived that personality was the key that opened the Faery's heart. Accordingly, he never for a moment allowed his intercourse with her to lose the personal tone, he invested all the transactions of State with the charms of familiar conversation, she was always the royal lady, the adored and revered mistress, he the devoted and respectful friend. When once the personal relation was firmly established, every difficulty disappeared. But to maintain that relation uninterruptedly in a smooth and even course a particular care was necessary: the bearings had to be most assiduously oiled. Nor was Disraeli in any doubt as to the nature of the lubricant. "You have heard me called a flatterer," he said to Matthew Arnold, "and it is true. Every one likes flattery, and when you come to royalty you should lay it on with a trowel." He practiced what he preached. His adulation was incessant, and he applied it in the very thickest slabs. "There is no honor and no reward," he declared, "that with him can ever equal the possession of your Majesty's kind thoughts. All his own thoughts and feelings and duties and affections are now concentrated in your Majesty, and he desires nothing more for his remaining years than to serve your Majesty, or, if that service ceases, to live still on its memory as a period of his existence most interesting and fascinating." "In life," he told her, "one must have for one's thoughts a sacred depository, and Lord Beaconsfield ever presumes to seek that in his Sovereign Mistress." She was not only his own solitary support, she was the one prop of the State. "If your Majesty is ill," he wrote during a grave political crisis, "he is sure he will himself break down. All, really, depends upon your Majesty." "He lives only for Her," he asseverated, "and works only for Her, and without Her all is lost." When her birthday came he produced an elaborate confection of hyperbolic compliment. "Today Lord Beaconsfield ought fitly, perhaps, to congratulate a powerful Sovereign on her imperial sway, the vastness of her Empire, and the success and strength of her fleets and armies. But he cannot, his mind is in another mood. He can only think of the strangeness of his destiny that it has come to pass that he should be the servant of one so great, and whose infinite kindness, the brightness of whose intelligence and the firmness of whose will, have enabled him to undertake labors to which he otherwise would be quite unequal, and supported him in all things by a condescending sympathy, which in the hour of difficulty alike charms and inspires. Upon the Sovereign of many lands and many hearts may an omnipotent Providence shed every blessing that the wise can desire and the virtuous deserve!" In those expert hands the trowel seemed to assume the qualities of some lofty masonic symbol—to be the ornate and glittering vehicle of verities unrealized by the profane.

Such tributes were delightful, but they remained in the nebulous region of

words, and Disraeli had determined to give his blandishments a more significant solidity. He deliberately encouraged those high views of her own position which had always been native to Victoria's mind and had been reenforced by the principles of Albert and the doctrines of Stockmar. He professed to a belief in a theory of the Constitution which gave the Sovereign a leading place in the councils of government, but his pronouncements upon the subject were indistinct, and when he emphatically declared that there ought to be "a real Throne," it was probably with the mental addition that that throne would be a very unreal one indeed whose occupant was unamenable to his cajoleries. But the vagueness of his language was in itself an added stimulant to Victoria. Skillfully confusing the woman and the Queen, he threw, with a grandiose gesture, the government of England at her feet, as if in doing so he were performing an act of personal homage. In his first audience after returning to power, he assured her that "whatever she wished should be done." When the intricate Public Worship Regulation Bill was being discussed by the Cabinet, he told the Faery that his "only object" was "to further your Majesty's wishes in this matter." When he brought off his great *coup* over the Suez Canal, he used expressions which implied that the only gainer by the transaction was Victoria. "It is just settled," he wrote in triumph, "you have it, Madam. Four millions sterling! and almost immediately. There was only one firm that could do it—Rothschilds. They behaved admirably, advanced the money at a low rate, and the entire interest of the Khedive is now yours, Madam." Nor did he limit himself to highly spiced insinuations. Writing with all the authority of his office, he advised the Queen that she had the constitutional right to dismiss a Ministry which was supported by a large majority in the House of Commons, he even urged her to do so, if, in her opinion, "your Majesty's Government have from willfulness, or even from weakness, deceived your Majesty." To the horror of Mr Gladstone, he not only kept the Queen informed as to the general course of business in the Cabinet, but revealed to her the part taken in its discussions by individual members of it. Lord Derby, the son of the late Prime Minister and Disraeli's Foreign Secretary, viewed these developments with grave mistrust. "Is there not," he ventured to write to his Chief, "just a risk of encouraging her in too large ideas of her personal power, and too great indifference to what the public expects? I only ask, it is for you to judge."

As for Victoria, she accepted everything—compliments, flatteries, Elizabethan prerogatives—without a single qualm. After the long gloom of her bereavement, after the chill of the Gladstonian discipline, she expanded to the rays of Disraeli's devotion like a flower in the sun. The change in her situation was indeed miraculous. No longer was she obliged to puzzle for hours over the complicated details of business, for now she had only to ask Mr Disraeli for an explanation, and he would give it her in the most concise, in the most amusing, way. No longer was she worried by alarming novelties, no longer was she put out at finding herself treated, by a reverential gentleman in high collars, as if she were some embodied precedent, with a recondite knowledge of Greek. And her deliverer was surely the most fascinating of men. The strain of charlatanism, which had unconsciously captivated her in Napoleon

III, exercised the same enchanting effect in the case of Disraeli. Like a dram drinker, whose ordinary life is passed in dull sobriety, her unsophisticated intelligence gulped down his rococo allurements with peculiar zest. She became intoxicated, entranced. Believing all that he told her of herself, she completely regained the self confidence which had been slipping away from her throughout the dark period that followed Albert's death. She swelled with a new elation, while he, conjuring up before her wonderful Oriental visions, dazzled her eyes with an imperial grandeur of which she had only dimly dreamed. Under the compelling influence, her very demeanor altered. Her short, stout figure, with its folds of black velvet, its muslin streamers, its heavy pearls at the heavy neck, assumed an almost menacing air. In her countenance, from which the charm of youth had long since vanished, and which had not yet been softened by age, the traces of grief, of disappointment, and of displeasure were still visible, but they were overlaid by looks of arrogance and sharp lines of peremptory hauteur. Only, when Mr. Disraeli appeared, the expression changed in an instant, and the forbidding visage became charged with smiles. For him she would do anything. Yielding to his encouragements, she began to emerge from her seclusion, she appeared in London in semi state, at hospitals and concerts, she opened Parliament, she reviewed troops and distributed medals at Aldershot. But such public signs of favor were trivial in comparison with her private attentions. During his hours of audience, she could hardly restrain her excitement and delight. "I can only describe my reception," he wrote to a friend on one occasion, "by telling you that I really thought she was going to embrace me. She was wreathed with smiles, and, as she tattled, glided about the room like a bird." In his absence, she talked of him perpetually, and there was a note of unusual vehemence in her solicitude for his health. "John Manners," Disraeli told Lady Bradford, "who has just come from Osborne, says that the Faery only talked of one subject, and that was her *Primo*. According to him, it was her gracious opinion that the Government should make my health a Cabinet question. Dear John seemed quite surprised at what she said, but you are more used to these ebullitions." She often sent him presents, an illustrated album arrived for him regularly from Windsor on Christmas Day. But her most valued gifts were the bunches of spring flowers which, gathered by herself and her ladies in the woods at Osborne, marked in an especial manner the warmth and tenderness of her sentiments. Among these it was, he declared, the primroses that he loved the best. They were, he said, "the ambassadors of Spring," "the gems and jewels of Nature." He liked them, he assured her, "so much better for their being wild, they seem an offering from the Fauns and Dryads of Osborne." "They show," he told her, "that your Majesty's scepter has touched the enchanted Isle." He sat at dinner with heaped-up bowls of them on every side, and told his guests that "they were all sent to me this morning by the Queen from Osborne, as she knows it is my favorite flower."

As time went on, and as it became clearer and clearer that the Faery's thralldom was complete, his protestations grew steadily more highly-colored and more unabashed. At last he ventured to import into his blandishments a strain of adoration that was almost avowedly romantic. In phrases of baroque convolu-

tion, he conveyed the message of his heart. The pressure of business, he wrote, had "so absorbed and exhausted him, that towards the hour of post he has not had clearness of mind, and vigor of pen, adequate to convey his thoughts and facts to the most loved and illustrious being, who deigns to consider them." She sent him some primroses, and he replied that he could "truly say they are 'more precious than rubies,' coming, as they do, and at such a moment, from a Sovereign whom he adores." She sent him snowdrops, and his sentiment overflowed into poetry. "Yesterday eve," he wrote, "there appeared, in Whitehall Gardens, a delicate-looking case, with a royal superscription, which, when he opened, he thought, at first, that your Majesty had graciously bestowed upon him the stars of your Majesty's principal orders. And, indeed, he was so impressed with this graceful illusion, that, having a banquet, where there were many stars and ribbons, he could not resist the temptation, by placing some snowdrops on his heart, of showing that, he, too, was decorated by a gracious Sovereign."

"Then, in the middle of the night, it occurred to him, that it might all be an enchantment, and that, perhaps, it was a Faery gift and came from another monarch. Queen Titania, gathering flowers, with her Court, in a soft and sea-girt isle, and sending magic blossoms, which, they say, turn the heads of those who receive them."

A Faery gift! Did he smile as he wrote the words? Perhaps, and yet it would be rash to conclude that his perfervid declarations were altogether without sincerity. Actor and spectator both, the two characters were so intimately blended together in that odd composition that they formed an inseparable unity, and it was impossible to say that one of them was less genuine than the other. With one element, he could coldly appraise the Faery's intellectual capacity, note with some surprise that she could be on occasion "most interesting and amusing," and then continue his use of the trowel with an ironical solemnity, while, with the other, he could be overwhelmed by the immemorial panoply of royalty, and, thrilling with the sense of his own strange elevation, dream himself into a gorgeous phantasy of crowns and powers and chivalric love. When he told Victoria that "during a somewhat romantic and imaginative life, nothing has ever occurred to him so interesting as this confidential correspondence with one so exalted and so inspiring," was he not in earnest after all? When he wrote to a lady about the Court, "I love the Queen—perhaps the only person in this world left to me that I do love," was he not creating for himself an enchanted palace out of the Arabian Nights, full of melancholy and spangles, in which he actually believed? Victoria's state of mind was far more simple, untroubled by imaginative yearnings, she never lost herself in that nebulous region of the spirit where feeling and fancy grow confused. Her emotions, with all their intensity and all their exaggeration, retained the plain prosaic texture of everyday life. And it was fitting that her expression of them should be equally commonplace. She was, she told her Prime Minister, at the end of an official letter, "yours affly V R and I." In such a phrase the deep reality of her feeling is instantly manifest. The Faery's feet were on the solid earth, it was the *rusé* cynic who was in the air.

He had taught her, however, a lesson, which she had learnt with alarming

rapidity. A second Gloriana, did he call her? Very well, then, she would show that she deserved the compliment. Disquieting symptoms followed fast. In May, 1874, the Tsar, whose daughter had just been married to Victoria's second son, the Duke of Edinburgh, was in London, and, by an unfortunate error, it had been arranged that his departure should not take place until two days after the date on which his royal hostess had previously decided to go to Balmoral. Her Majesty refused to modify her plans. It was pointed out to her that the Tsar would certainly be offended, that the most serious consequences might follow. Lord Derby protested, Lord Salisbury, the Secretary of State for India, was much perturbed. But the Faery was unconcerned, she had settled to go to Balmoral on the 18th, and on the 18th she would go. At last Disraeli, exercising all his influence, induced her to agree to stay in London for two days more. "My head is still on my shoulders," he told Lady Bradford. "The great lady has absolutely postponed her departure! Everybody had failed, even the Prince of Wales, and I have no doubt I am not in favor. I can't help it. Salisbury says I have saved an Afghan War, and Derby compliments me on my unrivaled triumph." But before very long, on another issue, the triumph was the Faery's. Disraeli, who had suddenly veered towards a new Imperialism, had thrown out the suggestion that the Queen of England ought to become the Empress of India. Victoria seized upon the idea with avidity, and, in season and out of season, pressed upon her Prime Minister the desirability of putting his proposal into practice. He demurred, but she was not to be balked, and in 1876, in spite of his own unwillingness and that of his entire Cabinet, he found himself obliged to add to the troubles of a stormy session by introducing a bill for the alteration of the Royal Title. His compliance, however, finally conquered the Faery's heart. The measure was angrily attacked in both Houses, and Victoria was deeply touched by the untiring energy with which Disraeli defended it. She was, she said, much grieved by "the worry and annoyance" to which he was subjected, she feared she was the cause of it, and she would never forget what she owed to "her kind, good, and considerate friend." At the same time, her wrath fell on the Opposition. Their conduct, she declared, was "extraordinary, incomprehensible, and mistaken," and, in an emphatic sentence which seemed to contradict both itself and all her former proceedings, she protested that she "would be glad if it were more generally known that it was *her* wish, as people *will* have it, that it has been *forced upon her*!" When the affair was successfully over, the imperial triumph was celebrated in a suitable manner. On the day of the Delhi Proclamation, the new Earl of Beaconsfield went to Windsor to dine with the new Empress of India. That night the Faery, usually so homely in her attire, appeared in a glittering panoply of enormous uncut jewels, which had been presented to her by the reigning Princes of her *Raj*. At the end of the meal the Prime Minister, breaking through the rules of etiquette, arose, and in a flowery oration proposed the health of the Queen Empress. His audacity was well received, and his speech was rewarded by a smiling curtsy.

These were significant episodes, but a still more serious manifestation of Victoria's temper occurred in the following year, during the crowning crisis of Beaconsfield's life. His growing imperialism, his desire to magnify the power

and prestige of England, his insistence upon a "spirited foreign policy," had brought him into collision with Russia, the terrible Eastern Question loomed up, and when war broke out between Russia and Turkey, the gravity of the situation became extreme. The Prime Minister's policy was fraught with difficulty and danger. Realizing perfectly the appalling implications of an Anglo-Russian war, he was yet prepared to face even that eventuality if he could obtain his ends by no other method, but he believed that Russia in reality was still less desirous of a rupture, and that, if he played his game with sufficient boldness and adroitness, she would yield, when it came to the point, all that he required without a blow. It was clear that the course he had marked out for himself was full of hazard, and demanded an extraordinary nerve, a single false step, and either himself, or England, might be plunged in disaster. But nerve he had never lacked, he began his diplomatic egg dance with high assurance, and then he discovered that, besides the Russian Government, besides the Liberals and Mr Gladstone, there were two additional sources of perilous embarrassment with which he would have to reckon. In the first place there was a strong party in the Cabinet, headed by Lord Derby, the Foreign Secretary, which was unwilling to take the risk of war, but his culminating anxiety was the Faery.

From the first, her attitude was uncompromising. The old hatred of Russia, which had been engendered by the Crimean War, surged up again within her, she remembered Albert's prolonged animosity, she felt the prickings of her own greatness, and she flung herself into the turmoil with passionate heat. Her indignation with the Opposition—with any one who ventured to sympathize with the Russians in their quarrel with the Turks—was unbounded. When anti-Turkish meetings were held in London, presided over by the Duke of Westminster and Lord Shaftesbury, and attended by Mr Gladstone and other prominent Radicals, she considered that "the Attorney-General ought to be set at these men", "it can't," she exclaimed, "be constitutional." Never in her life, not even in the crisis over the Ladies of the Bedchamber, did she show herself a more furious partisan. But her displeasure was not reserved for the Radicals, the backsliding Conservatives equally felt its force. She was even discontented with Lord Beaconsfield himself. Failing entirely to appreciate the delicate complexity of his policy, she constantly assailed him with demands for vigorous action, interpreted each finesse as a sign of weakness, and was ready at every juncture to let slip the dogs of war. As the situation developed, her anxiety grew feverish. "The Queen," she wrote, "is feeling terribly anxious lest delay should cause us to be too late and lose our prestige for ever! It worries her night and day." "The Faery," Beaconsfield told Lady Bradford, "writes every day and telegraphs every hour, this is almost literally the case." She raged loudly against the Russians. "And the language," she cried, "the insulting language—used by the Russians against us! It makes the Queen's blood boil!" "Oh," she wrote a little later, "if the Queen were a man, she would like to go and give those Russians, whose word one cannot believe, such a beating! We shall never be friends again till we have it out. This the Queen feels sure of."

The unfortunate Prime Minister, urged on to violence by Victoria on one

side, had to deal, on the other, with a Foreign Secretary who was fundamentally opposed to any policy of active interference at all. Between the Queen and Lord Derby he held a harassed course. He gained, indeed, some slight satisfaction in playing off the one against the other—in stimulating Lord Derby with the Queen's missives, and in appeasing the Queen by repudiating Lord Derby's opinions, on one occasion he actually went so far as to compose, at Victoria's request, a letter bitterly attacking his colleague, which Her Majesty forthwith signed, and sent, without alteration, to the Foreign Secretary. But such devices only gave a temporary relief, and it soon became evident that Victoria's martial ardor was not to be sidetracked by hostilities against Lord Derby, hostilities against Russia were what she wanted, what she would, what she must, have. For now, casting aside the last relics of moderation, she began to attack her friend with a series of extraordinary threats. Not once, not twice, but many times she held over his head the formidable menace of her imminent abdication. "If England," she wrote to Beaconsfield, "is to kiss Russia's feet, she will not be a party to the humiliation of England and would lay down her crown," and she added that the Prime Minister might, if he thought fit, repeat her words to the Cabinet. "This delay," she ejaculated, "this uncertainty by which, abroad, we are losing our prestige and our position, while Russia is advancing and will be before Constantinople in no time! Then the Government will be fearfully blamed and the Queen so humiliated that she thinks she would abdicate at once. Be bold!" "She feels," she reiterated, "she cannot, as she before said, remain the Sovereign of a country that is letting itself down to kiss the feet of the great barbarians, the retarders of all liberty and civilization that exists." When the Russians advanced to the outskirts of Constantinople she fired off three letters in a day demanding war, and when she learnt that the Cabinet had only decided to send the Fleet to Gallipoli she declared that "her first impulse" was "to lay down the thorny crown, which she feels little satisfaction in retaining if the position of this country is to remain as it is now." It is easy to imagine the agitating effect of such a correspondence upon Beaconsfield. This was no longer the Faery, it was a genie whom he had rashly called out of her bottle, and who was now intent upon showing her supernal power. More than once, perplexed, dispirited, shattered by illness, he had thoughts of withdrawing altogether from the game. One thing alone, he told Lady Bradford, with a wry smile, prevented him. "If I could only," he wrote, "face the scene which would occur at headquarters if I resigned, I would do so at once."

He held on, however, to emerge victorious at last. The Queen was pacified, Lord Derby was replaced by Lord Salisbury, and at the Congress of Berlin *der alte Jude* carried all before him. He returned to England in triumph, and assured the delighted Victoria that she would very soon be, if she was not already, the "Dictatress of Europe."

But soon there was an unexpected reverse. At the General Election of 1880 the country, mistrustful of the forward policy of the Conservatives, and carried away by Mr. Gladstone's oratory, returned the Liberals to power. Victoria was horrified, but within a year she was to be yet more nearly hit. The grand romance had come to its conclusion. Lord Beaconsfield, worn out with age

and maladies, but moving still, an assiduous mummy, from dinner-party to dinner party, suddenly moved no longer. When she knew that the end was inevitable, she seemed, by a pathetic instinct, to divest herself of her royalty, and to shrink, with hushed gentleness, beside him, a woman and nothing more. "I send some Osborne primroses," she wrote to him with touching simplicity, "and I meant to pay you a little visit this week, but I thought it better you should be quite quiet and not speak. And I beg you will be very good and obey the doctors." She would see him, she said, "when we come back from Osborne, which won't be long." "Every one is so distressed at your not being well," she added, and she was, "Ever yours very affly, V R I." When the royal letter was given him, the strange old comedian, stretched on his bed of death, poised it in his hand, appeared to consider deeply, and then whispered to those about him, "This ought to be read to me by a Privy Councilor."

IX OLD AGE

MEANWHILE in Victoria's private life many changes and developments had taken place. With the marriages of her elder children her family circle widened, grandchildren appeared, and a multitude of new domestic interests sprang up. The death of King Leopold in 1865 had removed the predominant figure of the older generation and the functions he had performed as the center and adviser of a large group of relatives in Germany and in England devolved upon Victoria. These functions she discharged with unremitting industry, carrying on an enormous correspondence, and following with absorbed interest every detail in the lives of the ever-ramifying cousinhood. And she tasted to the full both the joys and the pains of family affection. She took a particular delight in her grandchildren, to whom she showed an indulgence which their parents had not always enjoyed, though, even to her grandchildren, she could be, when the occasion demanded it, severe. The eldest of them, the little Prince Wilhelm of Prussia, was a remarkably headstrong child, he dared to be impertinent even to his grandmother, and once, when she told him to bow to a visitor at Osborne, he disobeyed her outright. This would not do: the order was sternly repeated, and the naughty boy, noticing that his kind grandmamma had suddenly turned into a most terrifying lady, submitted his will to hers, and bowed very low indeed.

It would have been well if all the Queen's domestic troubles could have been got over as easily. Among her more serious distresses was the conduct of the Prince of Wales. The young man was now independent and married, he had shaken the parental yoke from his shoulders, he was positively beginning to do as he liked. Victoria was much perturbed, and her worst fears seemed to be justified when in 1870 he appeared as a witness in a society divorce case. It was clear that the heir to the throne had been mixing with people of whom she did not at all approve. What was to be done? She saw that it was not only her son that was to blame—that it was the whole system of society, and so she despatched a letter to Mr. Delane, the editor of *The Times*, asking him if he would "frequently write articles pointing out the immense danger and evil of

the wretched frivolity and levity of the views and lives of the Higher Classes " And five years later Mr Delane did write an article upon that very subject Yet it seemed to have very little effect

Ah! if only the Higher Classes would learn to live as she lived in the domestic sobriety of her sanctuary at Balmoral! For more and more did she find solace and refreshment in her Highland domain, and twice yearly, in the spring and in the autumn, with a sigh of relief, she set her face northwards, in spite of the humble protests of Ministers, who murmured vainly in the royal ears that to transact the affairs of State over an interval of six hundred miles added considerably to the cares of government Her ladies, too, felt occasionally a slight reluctance to set out, for, especially in the early days, the long pilgrimage was not without its drawbacks For many years the Queen's conservatism forbade the continuation of the railway up Deeside, so that the last stages of the journey had to be accomplished in carriages But, after all, carriages had their good points, they were easy, for instance, to get in and out of, which was an important consideration, for the royal train remained for long immune from modern conveniences, and when it drew up, on some border moorland, far from any platform, the high bred dames were obliged to descend to earth by the perilous foot board, the only pair of folding steps being reserved for Her Majesty's saloon In the days of crinolines such moments were sometimes awkward, and it was occasionally necessary to summon Mr Johnstone, the short and sturdy Manager of the Caledonian Railway, who, more than once, in a high gale and drenching rain with great difficulty "pushed up"—as he himself described it—some unlucky Lady Blanche or Lady Agatha into her compartment But Victoria cared for none of these things She was only intent upon regaining, with the utmost swiftness, her enchanted Castle, where every spot was charged with memories, where every memory was sacred, and where life was passed in an incessant and delightful round of absolutely trivial events

And it was not only the place that she loved, she was equally attached to 'the simple mountaineers,' from whom, she said, "she learnt many a lesson of resignation and faith" Smith and Grant and Ross and Thompson—she was devoted to them all, but, beyond the rest, she was devoted to John Brown The Prince's gillie had now become the Queen's personal attendant—a body servant from whom she was never parted, who accompanied her on her drives, waited on her during the day, and slept in a neighboring chamber at night She liked his strength, his solidity, the sense he gave her of physical security, she even liked his rugged manners and his rough unaccommodating speech She allowed him to take liberties with her which would have been unthinkable from anybody else To bully the Queen, to order her about, to reprimand her—who could dream of venturing upon such audacities? And yet, when she received such treatment from John Brown, she positively seemed to enjoy it The eccentricity appeared to be extraordinary, but, after all, it is no uncommon thing for an autocratic dowager to allow some trusted indispensable servant to adopt towards her an attitude of authority which is jealously forbidden to relatives or friends the power of a dependant still remains, by a psychological sleight-of-hand, one's own power, even when it is exercised over oneself

When Victoria meekly obeyed the abrupt commands of her henchman to get off her pony or put on her shawl, was she not displaying, and in the highest degree, the force of her volition? People might wonder, she could not help that, this was the manner in which it pleased her to act, and there was an end of it. To have submitted her judgment to a son or a Minister might have seemed wiser or more natural, but if she had done so, she instinctively felt, she would indeed have lost her independence. And yet upon somebody she longed to depend. Her days were heavy with the long process of domination. As she drove in silence over the moors she leaned back in the carriage, oppressed and weary, but what a relief!—John Brown was behind on the rumble, and his strong arm would be there for her to lean upon when she got out.

He had, too, in her mind, a special connection with Albert. In their expeditions the Prince had always trusted him more than any one, the gruff, kind, hairy Scotsman was, she felt, in some mysterious way, a legacy from the dead. She came to believe at last—or so it appeared—that the spirit of Albert was nearer when Brown was near. Often, when seeking inspiration over some complicated question of political or domestic import, she would gaze with deep concentration at her late husband's bust. But it was also noticed that sometimes in such moments of doubt and hesitation Her Majesty's looks would fix themselves upon John Brown.

Eventually, the "simple mountaineer" became almost a state personage. The influence which he wielded was not to be overlooked. Lord Beaconsfield was careful, from time to time, to send courteous messages to "Mr. Brown" in his letters to the Queen, and the French Government took particular pains to provide for his comfort during the visits of the English Sovereign to France. It was only natural that among the elder members of the royal family he should not have been popular, and that his failings—for failings he had, though Victoria would never notice his too acute appreciation of Scotch whisky—should have been the subject of acrimonious comment at Court. But he served his mistress faithfully, and to ignore him would be a sign of disrespect in her biographer. For the Queen, far from making a secret of her affectionate friendship, took care to publish it to the world. By her orders two gold medals were struck in his honor, on his death, in 1883, a long and eulogistic obituary notice of him appeared in the *Court Circular*, and a Brown memorial brooch—of gold, with the late gillie's head on one side and the royal monogram on the other—was designed by Her Majesty for presentation to her Highland servants and cottagers, to be worn by them on the anniversary of his death, with a mourning scarf and pins. In the second series of extracts from the Queen's *Highland Journals*, published in 1884, her "devoted personal attendant and faithful friend" appears upon almost every page, and is in effect the hero of the book. With an absence of reticence remarkable in royal persons, Victoria seemed to demand, in this private and delicate matter, the sympathy of the whole nation, and yet—such is the world!—there were those who actually treated the relations between their Sovereign and her servant as a theme for ribald jests.

II

The busy years hastened away, the traces of Time's unimaginable touch grew manifest, and old age, approaching, laid a gentle hold upon Victoria. The gray hair whitened, the mature features mellowed, the short firm figure amplified and moved more slowly, supported by a stick. And, simultaneously, in the whole tenor of the Queen's existence an extraordinary transformation came to pass. The nation's attitude towards her, critical and even hostile as it had been for so many years, altogether changed, while there was a corresponding alteration in the temper of Victoria's own mind.

Many causes led to this result. Among them were the repeated strokes of personal misfortune which befell the Queen during a cruelly short space of years. In 1878 the Princess Alice, who had married in 1862 the Prince Louis of Hesse-Darmstadt, died in tragic circumstances. In the following year the Prince Imperial, the only son of the Empress Eugénie, to whom Victoria, since the catastrophe of 1870, had become devotedly attached, was killed in the Zulu War. Two years later, in 1881, the Queen lost Lord Beaconsfield, and, in 1883, John Brown. In 1884 the Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany, who had been an invalid from birth, died prematurely, shortly after his marriage. Victoria's cup of sorrows was indeed overflowing, and the public, as it watched the widowed mother weeping for her children and her friends, displayed a constantly increasing sympathy.

An event which occurred in 1882 revealed and accentuated the feelings of the nation. As the Queen, at Windsor, was walking from the train to her carriage, a youth named Roderick Maclean fired a pistol at her from a distance of a few yards. An Eton boy struck up Maclean's arm with an umbrella before the pistol went off, no damage was done, and the culprit was at once arrested. This was the last of a series of seven attempts upon the Queen—attempts which, taking place at sporadic intervals over a period of forty years, resembled one another in a curious manner. All, with a single exception, were perpetrated by adolescents, whose motives were apparently not murderous, since, save in the case of Maclean, none of their pistols was loaded. These unhappy youths, who, after buying their cheap weapons, stuffed them with gunpowder and paper, and then went off, with the certainty of immediate detection, to click them in the face of royalty, present a strange problem to the psychologist. But, though in each case their actions and their purposes seemed to be so similar, their fates were remarkably varied. The first of them, Edward Oxford, who fired at Victoria within a few months of her marriage, was tried for high treason, declared to be insane, and sent to an asylum for life. It appears, however, that this sentence did not commend itself to Albert, for when, two years later, John Francis committed the same offense, and was tried upon the same charge, the Prince pronounced that there was no insanity in the matter. "The wretched creature," he told his father, was "not out of his mind, but a thorough scamp." "I hope," he added, "his trial will be conducted with the greatest strictness." Apparently it was, at any rate, the jury shared the view of the Prince, the plea of insanity was set aside, and Francis was found guilty of high treason and condemned to death, but, as there was no proof of an intent to kill or even

to wound, this sentence, after a lengthened deliberation between the Home Secretary and the Judges, was commuted for one of transportation for life. As the law stood, these assaults, futile as they were, could only be treated as high treason, the discrepancy between the actual deed and the tremendous penalties involved was obviously grotesque, and it was, besides, clear that a jury, knowing that a verdict of guilty implied a sentence of death, would tend to the alternative course, and find the prisoner not guilty but insane—a conclusion which, on the face of it, would have appeared to be the more reasonable. In 1842, therefore, an Act was passed making any attempt to hurt the Queen a misdemeanor, punishable by transportation for seven years, or imprisonment, with or without hard labor, for a term not exceeding three years—the misdemeanor, at the discretion of the Court, “to be publicly or privately whipped, as often, and in such manner and form, as the Court shall direct, not exceeding thrice.” The four subsequent attempts were all dealt with under this new law, William Bean, in 1842, was sentenced to eighteen months’ imprisonment, William Hamilton, in 1849, was transported for seven years, and, in 1850, the same sentence was passed upon Lieutenant Robert Pate, who struck the Queen on the head with his cane in Piccadilly. Pate, alone among these delinquents, was of mature years, he had held a commission in the Army, dressed himself as a dandy, and was, the Prince declared, “manifestly deranged.” In 1872 Arthur O’Connor, a youth of seventeen, fired an unloaded pistol at the Queen outside Buckingham Palace, he was immediately seized by John Brown, and sentenced to one year’s imprisonment and twenty strokes of the birch rod. It was for his bravery upon this occasion that Brown was presented with one of his gold medals. In all these cases the jury had refused to allow the plea of insanity, but Roderick Maclean’s attempt in 1882 had a different issue. On this occasion the pistol was found to have been loaded, and the public indignation, emphasized as it was by Victoria’s growing popularity, was particularly great. Either for this or for some other reason the procedure of the last forty years was abandoned, and Maclean was tried for high treason. The result was what might have been expected: the jury brought in a verdict of “not guilty, but insane”, and the prisoner was sent to an asylum during Her Majesty’s pleasure. Their verdict, however, produced a remarkable consequence. Victoria, who doubtless carried in her mind some memory of Albert’s disapproval of a similar verdict in the case of Oxford, was very much annoyed. What did the jury mean, she asked, by saying that Maclean was not guilty? It was perfectly clear that he was guilty—she had seen him fire off the pistol herself. It was in vain that Her Majesty’s constitutional advisers reminded her of the principle of English law which lays down that no man can be found guilty of a crime unless he be proved to have had a criminal intention. Victoria was quite unconvinced. “If that is the law,” she said, “the law must be altered” and altered it was. In 1883 an Act was passed changing the form of the verdict in cases of insanity, and the confusing anomaly remains upon the Statute Book to this day.

But it was not only through the feelings—commiserating or indignant—of personal sympathy that the Queen and her people were being drawn more nearly together, they were beginning, at last, to come to a close and permanent

agreement upon the conduct of public affairs Mr Gladstone's second administration (1880-85) was a succession of failures, ending in disaster and disgrace, liberalism fell into discredit with the country, and Victoria perceived with joy that her distrust of her Ministers was shared by an ever-increasing number of her subjects. During the crisis in the Sudan, the popular temper was her own. She had been among the first to urge the necessity of an expedition to Khartoum, and, when the news came of the catastrophic death of General Gordon, her voice led the chorus of denunciation which raved against the Government. In her rage, she despatched a fulminating telegram to Mr Gladstone, not in the usual cypher, but open, and her letter of condolence to Miss Gordon, in which she attacked her Ministers for breach of faith, was widely published. It was rumored that she had sent for Lord Hartington, the Secretary of State for War, and vehemently upbraided him. "She rated me," he was reported to have told a friend, "as if I'd been a footman." "Why didn't she send for the butler?" asked his friend. "Oh," was the reply, "the butler generally manages to keep out of the way on such occasions."

But the day came when it was impossible to keep out of the way any longer. Mr Gladstone was defeated, and resigned. Victoria, at a final interview, received him with her usual amenity, but, besides the formalities demanded by the occasion, the only remark which she made to him of a personal nature was to the effect that she supposed Mr Gladstone would now require some rest. He remembered with regret how, at a similar audience in 1874, she had expressed her trust in him as a supporter of the throne, but he noted the change without surprise. "Her mind and opinions," he wrote in his diary afterwards, "have since that day been seriously warped."

Such was Mr Gladstone's view, but the majority of the nation by no means agreed with him, and, in the General Election of 1886, they showed decisively that Victoria's politics were identical with theirs by casting forth the contrivers of Home Rule—that abomination of desolation—into outer darkness, and placing Lord Salisbury in power. Victoria's satisfaction was profound. A flood of new unwonted hopefulness swept over her, stimulating her vital spirits with a surprising force. Her habit of life was suddenly altered, abandoning the long seclusion which Disraeli's persuasions had only momentarily interrupted, she threw herself vigorously into a multitude of public activities. She appeared at drawing-rooms, at concerts, at reviews, she laid foundation-stones, she went to Liverpool to open an international exhibition, driving through the streets in her open carriage in heavy rain amid vast applauding crowds. Delighted by the welcome which met her everywhere, she warmed to her work. She visited Edinburgh, where the ovation of Liverpool was repeated and surpassed. In London, she opened in high state the Colonial and Indian Exhibition at South Kensington. On this occasion the ceremonial was particularly magnificent, a blare of trumpets announced the approach of Her Majesty, the "National Anthem" followed, and the Queen, seated on a gorgeous throne of hammered gold, replied with her own lips to the address that was presented to her. Then she rose, and, advancing upon the platform with regal port, acknowledged the acclamations of the great assembly by a succession of curtsies, of elaborate and commanding grace.

Next year was the fiftieth of her reign, and in June the splendid anniversary was celebrated in solemn pomp Victoria, surrounded by the highest dignitaries of her realm, escorted by a glittering galaxy of kings and princes, drove through the crowded enthusiasm of the capital to render thanks to God in Westminster Abbey In that triumphant hour the last remaining traces of past antipathies and past disagreements were altogether swept away The Queen was hailed at once as the mother of her people and as the embodied symbol of their imperial greatness, and she responded to the double sentiment with all the ardor of her spirit England and the people of England, she knew it, she felt it, were, in some wonderful and yet quite simple manner, *hers* Exultation, affection, gratitude, a profound sense of obligation, an unbounded pride—such were her emotions, and, coloring and intensifying the rest, there was something else At last, after so long, happiness—fragmentary, perhaps, and charged with gravity, but true and unmistakable none the less—had returned to her The unaccustomed feeling filled and warmed her consciousness When, at Buckingham Palace again, the long ceremony over, she was asked how she was, “I am very tired, but very happy,” she said

III

And so, after the toils and tempests of the day, a long evening followed—mild, serene, and lighted with a golden glory For an unexampled atmosphere of success and adoration invested the last period of Victoria’s life Her triumph was the summary, the crown, of a greater triumph—the culminating prosperity of a nation The solid splendor of the decade between Victoria’s two jubilees can hardly be paralleled in the annals of England The sage counsels of Lord Salisbury seemed to bring with them not only wealth and power, but security, and the country settled down, with calm assurance, to the enjoyment of an established grandeur And—it was only natural—Victoria settled down too For she was a part of the establishment—an essential part as it seemed—a fixture—a magnificent, immovable sideboard in the huge saloon of state Without her the heaped-up banquet of 1890 would have lost its distinctive quality—the comfortable order of the substantial unambiguous dishes, with their background of weighty glamour, half out of sight

Her own existence came to harmonize more and more with what was around her Gradually, imperceptibly, Albert receded It was not that he was forgotten—that would have been impossible—but that the void created by his absence grew less agonizing, and even, at last, less obvious At last Victoria found it possible to regret the bad weather without immediately reflecting that her “dear Albert always said we could not alter it, but must leave it as it was”, she could even enjoy a good breakfast without considering how “dear Albert” would have liked the battered eggs And, as that figure slowly faded, its place was taken, inevitably, by Victoria’s own Her being, revolving for so many years round an external object, now changed its motion and found its center in itself It had to be so her domestic position, the pressure of her public work, her indomitable sense of duty, made anything else impossible Her egotism proclaimed its rights Her age increased still further the surrounding deference,

and her force of character, emerging at length in all its plenitude, imposed itself absolutely upon its environment by the conscious effort of an imperious will

Little by little it was noticed that the outward vestiges of Albert's posthumous domination grew less complete. At Court the stringency of mourning was relaxed. As the Queen drove through the Park in her open carriage with her Highlanders behind her, nursery-maids canvassed eagerly the growing patch of violet velvet in the bonnet with its jet appurtenances on the small bowing head.

It was in her family that Victoria's ascendancy reached its highest point. All her offspring were married, the number of her descendants rapidly increased, there were many marriages in the third generation, and no fewer than thirty-seven of her great-grandchildren were living at the time of her death. A picture of the period displays the royal family collected together in one of the great rooms at Windsor—a crowded company of more than fifty persons, with the imperial matriarch in their midst. Over them all she ruled with a most potent sway. The small concerns of the youngest aroused her passionate interest, and the oldest she treated as if they were children still. The Prince of Wales, in particular, stood in tremendous awe of his mother. She had steadily refused to allow him the slightest participation in the business of government, and he had occupied himself in other ways. Nor could it be denied that he enjoyed himself—out of her sight, but, in that redoubtable presence, his abounding manhood suffered a miserable eclipse. Once, at Osborne, when, owing to no fault of his, he was too late for a dinner party, he was observed standing behind a pillar and, wiping the sweat from his forehead, trying to nerve himself to go up to the Queen. When at last he did so, she gave him a stiff nod, whereupon he vanished immediately behind another pillar, and remained there until the party broke up. At the time of this incident the Prince of Wales was over fifty years of age.

It was inevitable that the Queen's domestic activities should occasionally trench upon the domain of high diplomacy, and this was especially the case when the interests of her eldest daughter, the Crown Princess of Prussia, were at stake. The Crown Prince held liberal opinions, he was much influenced by his wife, and both were detested by Bismarck, who declared with scurrilous emphasis that the Englishwoman and her mother were a menace to the Prussian State. The feud was still further intensified when, on the death of the old Emperor (1888), the Crown Prince succeeded to the throne. A family entanglement brought on a violent crisis. One of the daughters of the new Empress had become betrothed to Prince Alexander of Battenberg, who had lately been ejected from the throne of Bulgaria owing to the hostility of the Tsar. Victoria, as well as the Empress, highly approved of the match. Of the two brothers of Prince Alexander, the elder had married another of her grand daughters, and the younger was the husband of her daughter, the Princess Beatrice, she was devoted to the handsome young man, and she was delighted by the prospect of the third brother—on the whole the handsomest, she thought, of the three—also becoming a member of her family. Unfortunately, however, Bismarck was opposed to the scheme. He perceived that the marriage would endanger the friendship between Germany and Russia, which was vital to his

foreign policy, and he announced that it must not take place. A fierce struggle between the Empress and the Chancellor followed. Victoria, whose hatred of her daughter's enemy was unbounded, came over to Charlottenburg to join in the fray. Bismarck, over his pipe and lager, snorted out his alarm. The Queen of England's object, he said, was clearly political—she wished to estrange Germany and Russia—and very likely she would have her way. "In family matters," he added, "she is not used to contradiction", she would "bring the parson with her in her traveling bag and the bridegroom in her trunk, and the marriage would come off on the spot." But the man of blood and iron was not to be thwarted so easily, and he asked for a private interview with the Queen. The details of their conversation are unknown, but it is certain that in the course of it Victoria was forced to realize the meaning of resistance to that formidable personage, and that she promised to use all her influence to prevent the marriage. The engagement was broken off, and in the following year Prince Alexander of Battenberg united himself to Fraulein Loisinger, an actress at the court theatre of Darmstadt.

But such painful incidents were rare. Victoria was growing very old, with no Albert to guide her, with no Beaconsfield to enflame her, she was willing enough to abandon the dangerous questions of diplomacy to the wisdom of Lord Salisbury, and to concentrate her energies upon objects which touched her more nearly and over which she could exercise an undisputed control. Her home—her court—the monuments at Balmoral—the livestock at Windsor—the organization of her engagements—the supervision of the multitudinous details of her daily routine—such matters played now an even greater part in her existence than before. Her life passed in an extraordinary exactitude. Every moment of her day was mapped out beforehand, the succession of her engagements was immutably fixed, the dates of her journeys—to Osborne, to Balmoral, to the South of France, to Windsor, to London—were hardly altered from year to year. She demanded from those who surrounded her a rigid precision in details, and she was preternaturally quick in detecting the slightest deviation from the rules which she had laid down. Such was the irresistible potency of her personality, that anything but the most implicit obedience to her wishes was felt to be impossible, but sometimes somebody was unpunctual, and unpunctuality was one of the most heinous of sins. Then her displeasure—her dreadful displeasure—became all too visible. At such moments there seemed nothing surprising in her having been the daughter of a martinet.

But these storms, unnerving as they were while they lasted, were quickly over, and they grew more and more exceptional. With the return of happiness a gentle benignity flowed from the aged Queen. Her smile, once so rare a visitant to those saddened features, flitted over them with an easy alacrity, the blue eyes beamed, the whole face, starting suddenly from its pendulous expressionlessness, brightened and softened and cast over those who watched it an unforgettable charm. For in her last years there was a fascination in Victoria's amiability which had been lacking even from the vivid impulse of her youth. Over all who approached her—or very nearly all—she threw a peculiar spell. Her grandchildren adored her, her ladies waited upon her

with a reverential love The honor of serving her obliterated a thousand in conveniences—the monotony of a court existence, the fatigue of standing, the necessity for a superhuman attentiveness to the minutæ of time and space As one did one's wonderful duty one could forget that one's legs were aching from the infinitude of the passages at Windsor, or that one's bare arms were turning blue in the Balmoral cold

What, above all, seemed to make such service delightful was the detailed interest which the Queen took in the circumstances of those around her Her absorbing passion for the comfortable commonplaces, the small crises, the recurrent sentimentalities, of domestic life constantly demanded wider fields for its activity, the sphere of her own family, vast as it was, was not enough, she became the eager confidante of the household affairs of her ladies, her sympathies reached out to the palace domestics, even the housemaids and scullions—so it appeared—were the objects of her searching inquiries, and of her heart felt solicitude when their lovers were ordered to a foreign station, or their aunts suffered from an attack of rheumatism which was more than usually acute

Nevertheless the due distinctions of rank were immaculately preserved The Queen's mere presence was enough to ensure that, but, in addition, the dominion of court etiquette was paramount For that elaborate code, which had kept Lord Melbourne stiff upon the sofa and ranged the other guests in silence about the round table according to the order of precedence, was as punctiliously enforced as ever Every evening after dinner, the hearth-rug, sacred to royalty, loomed before the profane in inaccessible glory, or, on one or two terrific occasions, actually lured them magnetically forward to the very edge of the abyss The Queen, at the fitting moment, moved towards her guests, one after the other they were led up to her, and, while dialogue followed dialogue in constraint and embarrassment, the rest of the assembly stood still, without a word Only in one particular was the severity of the etiquette allowed to lapse Throughout the greater part of the reign the rule that ministers must stand during their audiences with the Queen had been absolute When Lord Derby, the Prime Minister, had an audience of Her Majesty after a serious illness, he mentioned it afterwards, as a proof of the royal favor, that the Queen had remarked, "How sorry she was she could not ask him to be seated" Subsequently, Disraeli, after an attack of gout and in a moment of extreme expansion on the part of Victoria, had been offered a chair, but he had thought it wise humbly to decline the privilege In her later years, however, the Queen invariably asked Mr Gladstone and Lord Salisbury to sit down

Sometimes the solemnity of the evening was diversified by a concert, an opera, or even a play One of the most marked indications of Victoria's enfranchisement from the thralldom of widowhood had been her resumption—after an interval of thirty years—of the custom of commanding dramatic companies from London to perform before the Court at Windsor On such occasions her spirits rose high She loved acting, she loved a good plot, above all, she loved a farce Engrossed by everything that passed upon the stage she would follow, with childlike innocence, the unwinding of the story, or she would assume an air of knowing superiority and exclaim in triumph, "There! You

didn't expect *that*, did you?" when the *denouement* came Her sense of humor was of a vigorous though primitive kind She had been one of the very few persons who had always been able to appreciate the Prince Consort's jokes, and, when those were cracked no more, she could still roar with laughter, in the privacy of her household, over some small piece of fun—some oddity of an ambassador, or some ignorant Minister's *faux pas* When the jest grew subtle she was less pleased, but, if it approached the confines of the indecorous, the danger was serious To take a liberty called down at once Her Majesty's most crushing disapprobation, and to say something improper was to take the greatest liberty of all Then the royal lips sank down at the corners, the royal eyes stared in astonished protrusion, and in fact the royal countenance became inauspicious in the highest degree The transgressor shuddered into silence, while the awful "We are not amused" annihilated the dinner table Afterwards, in her private entourage, the Queen would observe that the person in question was, she very much feared, "not discreet", it was a verdict from which there was no appeal

In general, her esthetic tastes had remained unchanged since the days of Mendelssohn, Landseer, and Lablache She still delighted in the roudes of Italian opera, she still demanded a high standard in the execution of a piano forte duet Her views on painting were decided; Sir Edwin, she declared, was perfect, she was much impressed by Lord Leighton's manners, and she profoundly distrusted Mr Watts From time to time she ordered engraved portraits to be taken of members of the royal family, on these occasions she would have the first proofs submitted to her, and, having inspected them with minute particularity, she would point out their mistakes to the artists, indicating at the same time how they might be corrected The artists invariably discovered that Her Majesty's suggestions were of the highest value In literature her interests were more restricted She was devoted to Lord Tennyson, and, as the Prince Consort had admired George Eliot, she perused *Middlemarch* she was disappointed There is reason to believe, however, that the romances of another female writer, whose popularity among the humbler classes of Her Majesty's subjects was at one time enormous, secured, no less, the approval of Her Majesty Otherwise she did not read very much.

Once, however, the Queen's attention was drawn to a publication which it was impossible for her to ignore *The Greville Memoirs*, filled with a mass of historical information of extraordinary importance, but filled also with descriptions, which were by no means flattering, of George IV, William IV, and other royal persons, was brought out by Mr Reeve Victoria read the book, and was appalled It was, she declared, a "dreadful and really scandalous book," and she could not say "how *horrified* and *indignant*" she was at Greville's "indiscretion, indelicacy, ingratitude towards friends, betrayal of confidence and shameful disloyalty towards his Sovereign" She wrote to Disraeli to tell him that in her opinion it was "*very important* that the book should be severely censured and discredited" "The tone in which he speaks of royalty," she added, "is unlike anything one sees in history even, and is most reprehensible" Her anger was directed with almost equal vehemence against Mr Reeve for his having published "such an abominable book," and she charged Sir Arthur Helps to

convey to him her deep displeasure Mr Reeve, however, was impenitent When Sir Arthur told him that, in the Queen's opinion, "the book degraded royalty," he replied "Not at all, it elevates it by the contrast it offers between the present and the defunct state of affairs" But this adroit defense failed to make any impression upon Victoria, and Mr Reeve, when he retired from the public service, did not receive the knighthood which custom entitled him to expect Perhaps if the Queen had known how many caustic comments upon herself Mr Reeve had quietly suppressed in the published *Memoirs*, she would have been almost grateful to him, but, in that case, what would she have said of Greville? Imagination boggles at the thought As for more modern essays upon the same topic, Her Majesty, it is to be feared, would have characterized them as "not discreet"

But as a rule the leisure hours of that active life were occupied with recreations of a less intangible quality than the study of literature or the appreciation of art Victoria was a woman not only of vast property but of innumerable possessions She had inherited an immense quantity of furniture, of ornaments, of china, of plate, of valuable objects of every kind, her purchases, throughout a long life, made a formidable addition to these stores, and there flowed in upon her, besides, from every quarter of the globe, a constant stream of gifts Over this enormous mass she exercised an unceasing and minute supervision, and the arrangement and the contemplation of it, in all its details, filled her with an intimate satisfaction The collecting instinct has its roots in the very depths of human nature, and, in the case of Victoria, it seemed to owe its force to two of her dominating impulses—the intense sense, which had always been hers, of her own personality, and the craving which, growing with the years, had become in her old age almost an obsession, for fixity, for solidity, for the setting up of palpable barriers against the outrages of change and time When she considered the multitudinous objects which belonged to her, or, better still, when, choosing out some section of them as the fancy took her, she actually savored the vivid richness of their individual qualities, she saw herself deliciously reflected from a million facets, felt herself magnified miraculously over a boundless area, and was well pleased That was just as it should be, but then came the dismaying thought—everything slips away, crumbles, vanishes, Sevres dinner-services get broken, even golden basins go unaccountably astray, even one's self, with all the recollections and experiences that make up one's being, fluctuates, perishes, dissolves But no! It could not, should not be so! There should be no changes and no losses! Nothing should ever move—neither the past nor the present—and she herself least of all! And so the tenacious woman, hoarding her valuables, decreed their immortality with all the resolution of her soul She would not lose one memory or one pin

She gave orders that nothing should be thrown away—and nothing was There, in drawer after drawer, in wardrobe after wardrobe, reposed the dresses of seventy years But not only the dresses—the furs and the mantles and subsidiary frills and the muffs and the parasols and the bonnets—all were ranged in chronological order, dated and complete A great cupboard was devoted to the dolls, in the china room at Windsor a special table held the mugs of her childhood, and her children's mugs as well Mementoes of the past surrounded

her in serried accumulations. In every room the tables were powdered thick with the photographs of relatives, their portraits, revealing them at all ages, covered the walls, their figures, in solid marble, rose up from pedestals, or gleamed from brackets in the form of gold and silver statuettes. The dead, in every shape—in miniatures, in porcelain, in enormous life-size oil-paintings—were perpetually about her. John Brown stood upon her writing-table in solid gold. Her favorite horses and dogs, endowed with a new durability, crowded round her footsteps. Sharp, in silver gilt, dominated the dinner table, Boy and Boz lay together among unfading flowers, in bronze. And it was not enough that each particle of the past should be given the stability of metal or of marble: the whole collection, in its arrangement, no less than its entity, should be immutably fixed. There might be additions, but there might never be alterations. No chintz might change, no carpet, no curtain, be replaced by another, or, if long use at last made it necessary, the stuffs and the patterns must be so identically reproduced that the keenest eye might not detect the difference. No new picture could be hung upon the walls at Windsor, for those already there had been put in their places by Albert, whose decisions were eternal. So, indeed, were Victoria's. To ensure that they should be the aid of the camera was called in. Every single article in the Queen's possession was photographed from several points of view. These photographs were submitted to Her Majesty, and when, after careful inspection, she had approved of them, they were placed in a series of albums, richly bound. Then, opposite each photograph, an entry was made, indicating the number of the article, the number of the room in which it was kept, its exact position in the room and all its principal characteristics. The fate of every object which had undergone this process was henceforth irrevocably sealed. The whole multitude, once and for all, took up its steadfast station. And Victoria, with a gigantic volume or two of the endless catalogue always beside her, to look through, to ponder upon, to expatiate over, could feel, with a double contentment, that the transitoriness of this world had been arrested by the amplitude of her might.

Thus the collection, ever multiplying, ever encroaching upon new fields of consciousness, ever rooting itself more firmly in the depths of instinct, became one of the dominating influences of that strange existence. It was a collection not merely of things and of thoughts, but of states of mind and ways of living as well. The celebration of anniversaries grew to be an important branch of it—of birthdays and marriage days and death days, each of which demanded its appropriate feeling, which, in its turn, must be itself expressed in an appropriate outward form. And the form, of course—the ceremony of rejoicing or lamentation—was stereotyped with the rest: it was part of the collection. On a certain day, for instance, flowers must be strewn on John Brown's monument at Balmoral, and the date of the yearly departure for Scotland was fixed by that fact. Inevitably it was around the central circumstance of death—death, the final witness to human mutability—that these commemorative cravings clustered most thickly. Might not even death itself be humbled, if one could recall enough?—if one asserted, with a sufficiently passionate and reiterated emphasis, the eternity of love? Accordingly, every bed in which Victoria slept had attached to it, at the back, on the right-hand side, above the pillow, a

photograph of the head and shoulders of Albert as he lay dead, surmounted by a wreath of immortelles. At Balmoral, where memories came crowding so closely, the solid signs of memory appeared in surprising profusion. Obelisks, pyramids, tombs, statues, cairns, and seats of inscribed granite, proclaimed Victoria's dedication to the dead. There, twice a year, on the days that followed her arrival, a solemn pilgrimage of inspection and meditation was performed. There, on August 26—Albert's birthday—at the foot of the bronze statue of him in Highland dress, the Queen, her family, her Court, her servants, and her tenantry, met together and in silence drank to the memory of the dead. In England the tokens of remembrance pullulated hardly less. Not a day passed without some addition to the multifold assemblage—a gold statuette of Ross, the piper—a life-sized marble group of Victoria and Albert, in medieval costume, inscribed upon the base with the words "Allured to brighter worlds and led the way"—a granite slab in the shrubbery at Osborne, informing the visitor of "Waldmann the very favorite little dachshund of Queen Victoria, who brought him from Baden, April, 1872, died, July 11, 1881."

At Frogmore, the great mausoleum, perpetually enriched, was visited almost daily by the Queen when the Court was at Windsor. But there was another, a more secret and a hardly less holy shrine. The suite of rooms which Albert had occupied in the Castle was kept forever shut away from the eyes of any save the most privileged. Within those precincts everything remained as it had been at the Prince's death, but the mysterious preoccupation of Victoria had commanded that her husband's clothing should be laid afresh, each evening upon the bed, and that, each evening, the water should be set ready in the basin, as if he were still alive, and this incredible rite was performed with scrupulous regularity for nearly forty years.

Such was the inner worship, and still the flesh obeyed the spirit, still the daily hours of labor proclaimed Victoria's consecration to duty and to the ideal of the dead. Yet, with the years, the sense of self-sacrifice faded, the natural energies of that ardent being discharged themselves with satisfaction into the channel of public work, the love of business which, from her girlhood, had been strong within her, reasserted itself in all its vigor, and, in her old age, to have been cut off from her papers and her boxes would have been, not a relief, but an agony to Victoria. Thus, though toiling Ministers might sigh and suffer, the whole process of government continued, till the very end, to pass before her. Nor was that all, ancient precedent had made the validity of an enormous number of official transactions dependent upon the application of the royal sign-manual, and a great proportion of the Queen's working hours was spent in this mechanical task. Nor did she show any desire to diminish it. On the contrary, she voluntarily resumed the duty of signing commissions in the army, from which she had been set free by Act of Parliament, and from which, during the years of middle life, she had abstained. In no case would she countenance the proposal that she should use a stamp. But, at last, when the increasing pressure of business made the delays of the antiquated system intolerable, she consented that, for certain classes of documents, her oral sanction should be sufficient. Each paper was read aloud to her, and she said at the end "Approved." Often, for hours at a time, she would sit, with Albert's bust in front

of her, while the word "Approved" issued at intervals from her lips. The word came forth with a majestic sonority, for her voice now—how changed from the silvery treble of her girlhood!—was a contralto, full and strong.

IV

The final years were years of apotheosis. In the dazzled imagination of her subjects Victoria soared aloft towards the regions of divinity through a nimbus of purest glory. Criticism fell dumb, deficiencies which, twenty years earlier, would have been universally admitted, were now as universally ignored. That the nation's idol was a very incomplete representative of the nation was a circumstance that was hardly noticed, and yet it was conspicuously true. For the vast changes which, out of the England of 1837, had produced the England of 1897, seemed scarcely to have touched the Queen. The immense industrial development of the period, the significance of which had been so thoroughly understood by Albert, meant little indeed to Victoria. The amazing scientific movement, which Albert had appreciated no less, left Victoria perfectly cold. Her conception of the universe, and of man's place in it, and of the stupendous problems of nature and philosophy remained, throughout her life, entirely unchanged. Her religion was the religion which she had learnt from the Baroness Lehzen and the Duchess of Kent. Here, too, it might have been supposed that Albert's views might have influenced her. For Albert, in matters of religion, was advanced. Disbelieving altogether in evil spirits, he had had his doubts about the miracle of the Gadarene Swine. Stockmar, even, had thrown out, in a remarkable memorandum on the education of the Prince of Wales, the suggestion that while the child "must unquestionably be brought up in the creed of the Church of England," it might nevertheless be in accordance with the spirit of the times to exclude from his religious training the inculcation of a belief in "the supernatural doctrines of Christianity." This, however, would have been going too far, and all the royal children were brought up in complete orthodoxy. Anything else would have grieved Victoria, though her own conceptions of the Orthodox were not very precise. But her nature, in which imagination and subtlety held so small a place, made her instinctively recoil from the intricate ecstasies of High Anglicanism, and she seemed to feel most at home in the simple faith of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. This was what might have been expected, for Lehzen was the daughter of a Lutheran pastor, and the Lutherans and the Presbyterians have much in common. For many years Dr Norman Macleod, an innocent Scotch minister, was her principal spiritual adviser, and, when he was taken from her, she drew much comfort from quiet chats about life and death with the cottagers at Balmoral. Her piety, absolutely genuine, found what it wanted in the sober exhortations of old John Grant and the devout saws of Mrs P Farquharson. They possessed the qualities which, as a child of fourteen, she had so sincerely admired in the Bishop of Chester's *Exposition of the Gospel of St Matthew*, they were "just plain and comprehensible and full of truth and good feeling." The Queen, who gave her name to the Age of Mill and of Darwin, never got any further than that.

From the social movements of her time Victoria was equally remote Towards the smallest no less than towards the greatest changes she remained inflexible During her youth and middle age smoking had been forbidden in polite society, and so long as she lived she would not withdraw her anathema against it Kings might protest, bishops and ambassadors, invited to Windsor, might be reduced, in the privacy of their bedrooms, to lie full-length upon the floor and smoke up the chimney—the interdict continued It might have been supposed that a female sovereign would have lent her countenance to one of the most vital of all the reforms to which her epoch gave birth—the emancipation of women—but, on the contrary, the mere mention of such a proposal sent the blood rushing to her head In 1870, her eye having fallen upon the report of a meeting in favor of Woman's Suffrage, she wrote to Mr Martin in royal rage—"The Queen is most anxious to enlist every one who can speak or write to join in checking this mad, wicked folly of 'Woman's Rights,' with all its attendant horrors, on which her poor feeble sex is bent, forgetting every sense of womanly feeling and propriety Lady — ought to get a *good whipping* It is a subject which makes the Queen so furious that she cannot contain herself God created men and women different—then let them remain each in their own position Tennyson has some beautiful lines on the difference of men and women in 'The Princess' Woman would become the most hateful, heartless, and disgusting of human beings were she allowed to unsex herself, and where would be the protection which man was intended to give the weaker sex? The Queen is sure that Mrs Martin agrees with her" The argument was irrefutable, Mrs Martin agreed, and yet the canker spread

In another direction Victoria's comprehension of the spirit of her age has been constantly asserted It was for long the custom for courtly historians and polite politicians to compliment the Queen upon the correctness of her attitude towards the Constitution But such praises seem hardly to be justified by the facts In her later years Victoria more than once alluded with regret to her conduct during the Bedchamber crisis, and let it be understood that she had grown wiser since Yet in truth it is difficult to trace any fundamental change either in her theory or her practice in constitutional matters throughout her life The same despotic and personal spirit which led her to break off the negotiations with Peel is equally visible in her animosity towards Palmerston, in her threats of abdication to Disraeli, and in her desire to prosecute the Duke of Westminster for attending a meeting upon Bulgarian atrocities The complex and delicate principles of the Constitution cannot be said to have come within the compass of her mental faculties, and in the actual developments which it underwent during her reign she played a passive part From 1840 to 1861 the power of the Crown steadily increased in England, from 1861 to 1901 it steadily declined The first process was due to the influence of the Prince Consort, the second to that of a series of great Ministers During the first Victoria was in effect a mere accessory, during the second the threads of power, which Albert had so laboriously collected, inevitably fell from her hands into the vigorous grasp of Mr Gladstone, Lord Beaconsfield, and Lord Salisbury Perhaps, absorbed as she was in routine, and difficult as she found it to distinguish at all clearly between the trivial and the essential, she was only dimly aware of what

was happening Yet, at the end of her reign, the Crown was weaker than at any other time in English history Paradoxically enough, Victoria received the highest eulogiums for assenting to a political evolution, which, had she completely realized its import, would have filled her with supreme displeasure

Nevertheless it must not be supposed that she was a second George III Her desire to impose her will, vehement as it was, and unlimited by any principle, was yet checked by a certain shrewdness She might oppose her Ministers with extraordinary violence, she might remain utterly impervious to arguments and supplications, the pertinacity of her resolution might seem to be unconquerable, but, at the very last moment of all, her obstinacy would give way Her innate respect and capacity for business, and perhaps, too, the memory of Albert's scrupulous avoidance of extreme courses, prevented her from ever entering an *impasse* By instinct she understood when the facts were too much for her, and to them she invariably yielded After all, what else could she do?

But if, in all these ways, the Queen and her epoch were profoundly separated, the points of contact between them also were not few Victoria understood very well the meaning and the attractions of power and property, and in such learning the English nation, too, had grown to be more and more proficient During the last fifteen years of the reign—for the short Liberal Administration of 1892 was a mere interlude—imperialism was the dominant creed of the country It was Victoria's as well In this direction, if in no other, she had allowed her mind to develop Under Disraeli's tutelage the British Dominions over the seas had come to mean much more to her than ever before, and, in particular, she had grown enamored of the East The thought of India fascinated her, she set to, and learnt a little Hindustani, she engaged some Indian servants, who became her inseparable attendants, and one of whom, Munshi Abdul Karim, eventually almost succeeded to the position which had once been John Brown's At the same time, the imperialist temper of the nation invested her office with a new significance exactly harmonizing with her own inmost proclivities The English polity was in the main a common sense structure, but there was always a corner in it where common sense could not enter—where, somehow or other, the ordinary measurements were not applicable and the ordinary rules did not apply So our ancestors had laid it down, giving scope, in their wisdom, to that mystical element which, as it seems, can never quite be eradicated from the affairs of men Naturally it was in the Crown that the mysticism of the English polity was concentrated—the Crown, with its venerable antiquity, its sacred associations, its imposing spectacular array But, for nearly two centuries, common-sense had been predominant in the great building, and the little, unexplored, inexplicable corner had attracted small attention Then, with the rise of imperialism, there was a change For imperialism is a faith as well as a business, as it grew, the mysticism in English public life grew with it, and simultaneously a new importance began to attach to the Crown The need for a symbol—a symbol of England's might, of England's worth, of England's extraordinary and mysterious destiny—became felt more urgently than ever before The Crown was that symbol and the Crown rested upon the head of Victoria Thus it happened that while by the end of the

reign the power of the sovereign had appreciably diminished, the prestige of the sovereign had enormously grown

Yet this prestige was not merely the outcome of public changes, it was an intensely personal matter, too. Victoria was the Queen of England, the Empress of India, the quintessential pivot round which the whole magnificent machine was revolving—but how much more besides! For one thing, she was of a great age—an almost indispensable qualification for popularity in England. She had given proof of one of the most admired characteristics of the race—persistent vitality. She had reigned for sixty years, and she was not out. And then, she was a character. The outlines of her nature were firmly drawn, and, even through the mists which envelop royalty, clearly visible. In the popular imagination her familiar figure filled, with satisfying ease, a distinct and memorable place. It was, besides, the kind of figure which naturally called forth the admiring sympathy of the great majority of the nation. Goodness they prized above every other human quality, and Victoria, who had said that she would be good at the age of twelve, had kept her word. Duty, conscience, morality—yes! in the light of those high beacons the Queen had always lived. She had passed her days in work and not in pleasure—in public responsibilities and family cares. The standard of solid virtue which had been set up so long ago amid the domestic happiness of Osborne had never been lowered for an instant. For more than half a century no divorced lady had approached the precincts of the Court. Victoria, indeed, in her enthusiasm for wifely fidelity, had laid down a still stricter ordinance: she frowned severely upon any widow who married again. Considering that she herself was the offspring of a widow's second marriage, this prohibition might be regarded as an eccentricity, but, no doubt, it was an eccentricity on the right side. The middle classes, firm in the triple brass of their respectability, rejoiced with a special joy over the most respectable of Queens. They almost claimed her, indeed, as one of themselves, but this would have been an exaggeration. For, though many of her characteristics were most often found among the middle classes, in other respects—in her manners, for instance—Victoria was decidedly aristocratic. And, in one important particular, she was neither aristocratic nor middle-class: her attitude toward herself was simply regal.

Such qualities were obvious and important, but, in the impact of a personality, it is something deeper, something fundamental and common to all its qualities, that really tells. In Victoria, it is easy to discern the nature of this underlying element: it was a peculiar sincerity. Her truthfulness, her single-mindedness, the vividness of her emotions and her unrestrained expression of them, were the varied forms which this central characteristic assumed. It was her sincerity which gave her at once her impressiveness, her charm, and her absurdity. She moved through life with the imposing certitude of one to whom concealment was impossible—either towards her surroundings or towards herself. There she was, all of her—the Queen of England, complete and obvious, the world might take her or leave her, she had nothing more to show, or to explain, or to modify, and, with her peerless carriage, she swept along her path. And not only was concealment out of the question, reticence, reserve, even dignity itself, as it sometimes seemed, might be very well dispensed with. As Lady

Lyttelton said "There is a transparency in her truth that is very striking—not a shade of exaggeration in describing feelings or facts, like very few other people I ever knew Many may be as true, but I think it goes often along with some reserve She talks all out, just as it is, no more and no less" She talked all out, and she wrote all out, too Her letters, in the surprising jet of their expression, remind one of a turned-on tap What is within pours forth in an immediate, spontaneous rush Her utterly unliterary style has at least the merit of being a vehicle exactly suited to her thoughts and feelings, and even the platitude of her phraseology carries with it a curiously personal flavor Undoubtedly it was through her writings that she touched the heart of the public Not only in her *Highland Journals*, where the mild chronicle of her private proceedings was laid bare without a trace either of affectation or of embarrassment, but also in those remarkable messages to the nation which, from time to time, she published in the newspapers, her people found her very close to them indeed They felt instinctively Victoria's irresistible sincerity, and they responded And in truth it was an endearing trait

The personality and the position, too—the wonderful combination of them—that, perhaps, was what was finally fascinating in the case The little old lady, with her white hair and her plain mourning clothes, in her wheeled chair or her donkey-carriage—one saw her so, and then—close behind—with their immediate suggestion of singularity, of mystery, and of power—the Indian servants That was the familiar vision, and it was admirable, but, at chosen moments, it was right that the widow of Windsor should step forth apparent Queen The last and the most glorious of such occasions was the Jubilee of 1897 Then, as the splendid procession passed along, escorting Victoria through the thronged reechoing streets of London on her progress of thanksgiving to St Paul's Cathedral, the greatness of her realm and the adoration of her subjects blazed out together The tears welled to her eyes, and, while the multitude roared round her, "How kind they are to me! How kind they are!" she repeated over and over again That night her message flew over the Empire "From my heart I thank my beloved people May God bless them!" The long journey was nearly done But the traveler, who had come so far, and through such strange experiences, moved on with the old unfaltering step The girl, the wife, the aged woman, were the same vitality, conscientiousness, pride, and simplicity were hers to the latest hour

X THE END

THE EVENING had been golden, but, after all, the day was to close in cloud and tempest Imperial needs, imperial ambitions, involved the country in the South African War There were checks, reverses, bloody disasters, for a moment the nation was shaken, and the public distresses were felt with intimate solicitude by the Queen But her spirit was high, and neither her courage nor her confidence wavered for a moment Throwing herself heart and soul into the struggle, she labored with redoubled vigor, interested herself in every detail of the hostilities, and sought by every means in her power to

render service to the national cause. In April, 1900, when she was in her eighty first year, she made the extraordinary decision to abandon her annual visit to the South of France, and to go instead to Ireland, which had provided a particularly large number of recruits to the armies in the field. She stayed for three weeks in Dublin, driving through the streets, in spite of the warnings of her advisers, without an armed escort, and the visit was a complete success. But, in the course of it, she began, for the first time, to show signs of the fatigue of age.

For the long strain and the unceasing anxiety, brought by the war, made themselves felt at last. Endowed by nature with a robust constitution, Victoria, though in periods of depression she had sometimes supposed herself an invalid, had in reality throughout her life enjoyed remarkably good health. In her old age, she had suffered from a rheumatic stiffness of the joints, which had necessitated the use of a stick, and, eventually, a wheeled chair, but no other ailments attacked her, until, in 1898, her eyesight began to be affected by incipient cataract. After that, she found reading more and more difficult, though she could still sign her name, and even, with some difficulty, write letters. In the summer of 1900, however, more serious symptoms appeared. Her memory, in whose strength and precision she had so long prided herself, now sometimes deserted her, there was a tendency towards aphasia, and, while no specific disease declared itself, by the autumn there were unmistakable signs of a general physical decay. Yet, even in these last months, the strain of iron held firm. The daily work continued, nay, it actually increased, for the Queen, with an astonishing pertinacity, insisted upon communicating personally with an ever-growing multitude of men and women who had suffered through the war.

By the end of the year the last remains of her ebbing strength had almost deserted her, and through the early days of the opening century it was clear that her dwindling forces were only kept together by an effort of will. On January 14, she had at Osborne an hour's interview with Lord Roberts, who had returned victorious from South Africa a few days before. She inquired with acute anxiety into all the details of the war, she appeared to sustain the exertion successfully, but, when the audience was over, there was a collapse. On the following day her medical attendants recognized that her state was hopeless, and yet, for two days more, the indomitable spirit fought on, for two days more she discharged the duties of a Queen of England. But after that there was an end of working, and then, and not till then, did the last optimism of those about her break down. The brain was failing, and life was gently slipping away. Her family gathered round her, for a little more she lingered, speechless and apparently insensible, and, on January 22, 1901, she died.

When, two days previously, the news of the approaching end had been made public, astonished grief had swept over the country. It appeared as if some monstrous reversal of the course of nature was about to take place. The vast majority of her subjects had never known a time when Queen Victoria had not been reigning over them. She had become an indissoluble part of their whole scheme of things, and that they were about to lose her appeared a scarcely possible thought. She herself, as she lay blind and silent, seemed to those who watched her to be divested of all thinking—to have glided already,

unawares, into oblivion Yet, perhaps, in the secret chambers of consciousness, she had her thoughts, too Perhaps her fading mind called up once more the shadows of the past to float before it, and retraced, for the last time, the vanished visions of that long history—passing back and back, through the cloud of years, to older and ever older memories—to the spring woods at Osborne, so full of primroses for Lord Beaconsfield—to Lord Palmerston's queer clothes and high demeanor, and Albert's face under the green lamp, and Albert's first stag at Balmoral, and Albert in his blue and silver uniform, and the Baron coming in through a doorway, and Lord M dreaming at Windsor with the rooks cawing in the elm-trees, and the Archbishop of Canterbury on his knees in the dawn, and the old King's turkey-cock ejaculations, and Uncle Leopold's soft voice at Claremont, and Lehzen with the globes, and her mother's feathers sweeping down towards her, and a great old repeater watch of her father's in its tortoise-shell case, and a yellow rug, and some friendly flounces of sprigged muslin, and the trees and the grass at Kensington

Short Stories

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Notes on the Short Story

THE FORM OF THE SHORT STORY

Poe Defines the Short Story In 1842 Edgar Allan Poe published a review of Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Twice Told Tales*. In the course of the review he remarked

A skillful literary artist has constructed a tale. If wise, he has not fashioned his thoughts to accommodate his incidents, but having conceived, with deliberate care, a certain unique or single effect to be wrought out, he then invests such incidents,—he then combines such events as may best aid him in establishing this preconceived effect. If his very initial sentence tend not to the outbringing of this effect, then he has failed in his first step. In the whole composition there should be no word written, of which the tendency, direct or indirect, is not to the one pre-established design. And by such means, with such care and skill, a picture is at last painted which leaves in the mind of him who contemplates it with a kindred art, a sense of fullest satisfaction. The idea of the tale has been presented unblemished, because undisturbed, and this is an end unattainable by the novel.

Though Poe's whole review was, and is, important, the paragraph which has been quoted holds a curious place in the history of literary forms. It has a special significance for both the writer and the student of short stories. There had been, as we have indicated earlier, short stories before Poe's time, but they can only be called accidents, since the short story did not consciously exist as a literary form until Poe defined and limited it. Story-tellers at one time or another had arranged and presented their material so as to bring out "a certain unique and single effect," but those same story-tellers—Boccaccio, for example—at other times had presented their material either as straight narrative or disrupted it with irrelevant incidents or details. Form interested them only secondarily, if at all, their main concern was with telling a tale. Their method was often, usually indeed, chronological. They told first what had happened first, and they told last what had happened last, and since the last incidents were commonly of minor importance, many a good story was spoiled by an anti-climax.

With a few pages of sharp analysis Poe forever divided brief prose narratives into two parts: there were, he said in effect, stories that were merely short, and there were short stories. Stories that were merely short could wander as they wished, but if they would be short stories, they must have form, the material must be carefully selected, every detail must be chosen and arranged so as to give a final single effect. The distinction is clear, definite. In making it, Poe made the short story conscious of itself as a literary form. In addition, he helped to crystallize the form by writing short stories of exceptional brilliance and power. He is so famous, indeed, as a writer of short stories that few people realize that he is also famous as a critic.

Poe's dictum has never been seriously disputed. Later critics have quoted Poe and upheld him. One of them, Professor Brander Matthews, insisted that *short story* should be spelled with a hyphen—*short-story*—so that narratives that fitted the form would be distinguished from stories that were merely short. And in a letter to a friend Robert Louis Stevenson expressed perfectly the short story writer's attitude toward his material. The friend had advised that Stevenson give one of his stories a new end, and Stevenson replied

Make another end to it? Ah, yes, but that's not the way I write, the whole tale is implied, I never use an effect when I can help it, unless it prepares the effects that are to follow, that's what the story consists in. To make another end, that is to make the beginning all wrong. The *dénouement* of a long story is nothing, it is just "a full close," which you may approach and accompany as you please—it is a coda, not an essential number in the rhythm, but the body and end of a short story is bone of the bone and blood of the blood of the beginning.

This insistence on singleness of effect or unity of impression in the short story is directly comparable to the need for "point" to an anecdote. In a good anecdote every detail prepares the way for a startling climax, and in a good short story every detail points toward some special significance. In a narrative no such special significance is necessary. If the details are in themselves interesting, nothing more is asked, but if that narrative is to be transformed into a short story, the details must not be considered for themselves but for their relation to the special significance for which the story is to exist.

Let us say, for example, that we have a narrative concerned with James Morton, a tennis player. Now, if we begin with his early interest in the game, his long hours of practice, and continue through his successes and defeats until he finally becomes national champion, we may have a very interesting, even exciting, narrative, but we shan't have a short story unless we give that final triumph a meaning greater than itself. That triumph may stand for the overcoming of a sense of inferiority, it may lead to success in a love affair through a revelation of Morton's character, it may have a moral significance if, say, Morton has been offered a large sum of much needed money to lose. Whatever the special significance may be, it must be present, and every detail must be chosen and presented so as to make the significance strong and real.

Length of Short Stories That unity of effect demanded by nearly all critics has had the greatest influence in determining both the nature and length of short stories. One might say that the necessity for unity of effect determines the length, and that the length determines the nature. It is obvious that some material cannot best be presented briefly, and it is equally obvious that brevity is essential if the singleness of purpose, on which Poe insisted, is to be achieved. Poe aptly compared the short story to the lyric. He pointed out that a reader could not for long sustain the intense emotion required for full appreciation of poetry. One should be able to read a poem, he said, in one sitting, and the time of the sitting he gave as not more than one hour. If a longer time was taken, a totality of impression, he thought, was lost. Most of us would be inclined to argue that many long poems, like many long novels, lose nothing if put down, picked up, and put down again. So far as the lyric

is concerned, however, his dictum stands. A long lyric—not, as he said, a long *poem*—is a paradox. And for the same reason, a long short story is likewise a paradox. A long short story isn't a short story, because neither an author nor a reader can sustain that necessary unity of impression for a great many pages.

True, editors do speak of long short stories, but by "long" they mean only ten or twelve thousand words, fifteen thousand at the most. They call a narrative ranging from fifteen to thirty thousand words a novelette, meaning simply that the technique of the novel rather than that of the short story is employed, as, indeed, it nearly always is. The usual range of short stories is from three to six or seven thousand words. Both longer and shorter stories are written and published, but they form exceptions.

In recent years the so called short short stories have become popular. These "short shorts" are twenty-five hundred words at the most, usually they are shorter—and usually they are without any distinction whatever. Nine out of ten are merely elaborated anecdotes that depend for their effectiveness on a surprise ending. Handicapped by the space limit, the author can merely outline a plot, and plot alone seldom results in a powerful story.

THE THREE ELEMENTS

Like the novel, the short story is composed of either plot, character, or setting—of any two in combination, or of all three. Of course, whatever the fundamental nature of the story, there is practically always an element of plot—that is, a struggle expressed or implied—and nearly always the actors are somewhat characterized. The setting may be important, or it may be barely indicated. When we speak of a story as a plot story, we mean only that the emphasis is on plot, we do not mean necessarily that the other two elements are entirely lacking. And when we speak of a setting story, we certainly do not mean that there is no struggle and that there are no actors. We mean, instead, that the setting is of fundamental importance, that its influence on the actors and on the action is in the particular story essential.

Plot. A plot implies a struggle, a conflict that results in a change—in something lost or something gained. The struggle may be an entirely emotional one, a battle within a character against a desire, say, or it may be actual physical combat. It may be implied rather than expressed, but the element of conflict must be present. And that conflict, be it ever so slight, must have significance. It must mean something. It can't be a mere passing quarrel that leaves everything exactly as it was before it occurred. Or if there is no change, there must be significance in the fact that there has been no change. There can be irony or humor or tragedy in sheer immobility. The struggle in Katherine Mansfield's *A Cup of Tea* is by no means obvious, but it is present, and much of its significance lies in its brevity and slowness. A real struggle would have been out of character, and it is the revelation of the character that gives the story its meaning.

Ring Lardner's bitter story *Haircut* seems at first glance to be devoted entirely to a revelation of character, but supporting that revelation there is a

plot as plain and simple as the hero-villain plot of the old-fashioned melo dramas. And in complete contrast, the plot in Joseph Conrad's *The Lagoon* is not, as it first seems, based on the struggle a man makes to achieve happiness with the woman he loves, instead, it is based on the man's struggle with his shame.

In our popular magazines the plots of short stories are nearly always very simple. The struggle is obvious. A man fights with his environment, with another man for a girl, with economic adversity, and so on. In the so-called "quality" magazines the struggle more often occurs within a character—and sometimes the stories in these magazines have no struggle whatever. Sometimes they lack even incidents, all movement. Such literary exercises are not stories, short or otherwise. They may be mood pictures, prose lyrics, they may be character sketches, they may be "frozen moments" but to call them short stories is to make definitions meaningless, and they lie entirely outside the scope of this chapter.

Character In nearly all short stories of real distinction character plays a strong, and often the predominating, part. The man in John Galsworthy's *Quality*, for example, is all-important. There is a plot and there is a setting, but the significance and beauty lie in the revelation of the man. With a different leading character *A Cup of Tea* would lose its significance. All the action grows out of the woman herself. She being what she is, the final moment is inevitable. The final moment, on the other hand, in *Harcut* is not inevitable. Something else could have happened to Jim, however glad we may be that nothing else did, but Rosemary moved like a puppet pulled by the little threads of her own nature. The difference does not make *A Cup of Tea* a better story than *Harcut*. The end of one story is dependent on incident, the end of the other is dependent on character, but the incident does not alter the fact that Lardner's characterization of Jim is almost unbearably accurate. It is Jim's character that impresses us most, not his end.

It is sometimes difficult to decide whether the emphasis in a short story is on character or on *theme*. In other words, in some stories the special significance lies in the theme rather than in the character. Certainly, Ring Lardner used Jim to reveal the brutality common in stupid practical jokes, and Katherine Mansfield used Rosemary to reveal the thin, trivial, selfish life that shallowness of character leads to. Yet most critics would almost surely label *A Cup of Tea* as a character story, and they would even more surely paste that label on *Harcut*. Regarding *Quality*, however, there might well be a difference of opinion. To some critics, the character would probably seem of first importance, to other critics, the character might seem only the servant of the theme. The label, however, hardly matters, since in the best theme stories the theme is always revealed through character. If the theme is permitted to predominate, the story takes on the tone of a tract, and the emotional reaction is lost in moral or philosophical speculations.

Setting We always feel, of course, that the action of the story must take place somewhere, and usually we want to know something about the background. Sometimes, however, the background is of little or no importance. The people are in a drawing room, strolling along a country lane, dancing

in a ballroom. Placed elsewhere, the same people in the same emotional circumstances would do the same things. In many stories, on the other hand, the setting motivates the action or gives it much of its significance. Bret Harte's great story *The Luck of Roaring Camp* is as dependent on its setting for its final effectiveness as it is on its characters or its plot. The particular plot, in deed, would not exist without the particular setting.

THE CONTEMPORARY SHORT STORY

It is impossible to describe the contemporary short story. Hundreds are published monthly, and they range in manner and mood all the way from the highly literary and carefully plotless "frozen moments" previously mentioned to the scarlet crudities of the "pulp" magazines, which demand plot and nothing much but plot. Everywhere we find the surprise ending, first made popular, of course, by O. Henry, though we seldom find any of O. Henry's humor or uncanny ingenuity accompanying it. Most of the stories are written by men and women who write to earn a living, and one cannot earn a living by selling a story now and then to one of the "quality" magazines, which pay badly. One must write for the magazines that pay well, and those magazines, numbering their readers, as they do, in the hundreds of thousands and millions, want stories with a wide appeal. They are forced to cater to people who insist on happy endings and who are often prudish in their tastes. Further, those people demand movement in their stories, a plot that will catch immediate interest and hold it, they want lots of dialogue, little subtlety, and the glamor of romance. Such restrictions, of course, limit a writer cruelly, and the result is that most of the stories printed last, and deserve to last, only the week or month that the magazine in which they appear is in circulation. The stories are very skillfully written, they are good entertainment, but they aren't art, and they do not pretend to be.

There is no reason, however, for despair—for the kind of moaning over the present state of the short story that some critics are fond of indulging in. The short story, they tell us, has become a machine-made product, as standardized as bolts and nuts and hardly more exciting. There is a formula, they say, for western stories, a formula for mystery stories, a formula for love stories, a formula for business stories, and so on. True enough, perhaps, but some remarkably fine stories are devised within the formulas, and the formulas, furthermore, are neither so definitely defined nor so hampering as the more pessimistic critics like to believe. It must be admitted that editorial insistence, except in the "quality" magazines, on a happy ending does limit the market, but an unhappy ending does not guarantee, as most undergraduates and some critics seem to think, an artistic story. A good story, be its theme gay or dismal, usually finds publication in the end. James Branch Cabell has reported the difficulties he experienced in placing his stories with magazines, but there is always a strictly limited audience for the type of story he writes, and he had to suffer, as all pioneers suffer, in being ahead of his time. Eventually his stories appeared in print and brought him fame. The magazines have

caught up with him, and there is now a market for his stories, as there is a market for stories of the quality of Conrad's *The Lagoon* or Steele's *How Beautiful with Shoes*. Short story writers are experimenting always, trying new methods, new ideas, some of them are laboring long and lovingly, and some of them, we may be sure, will produce stories of power and beauty. More we have no right to ask.

THE LAGOON¹

by Joseph Conrad

Jozef Teodor Konrad Nalecz Korzeniowski (1857-1924) was born in the Ukraine. As a child he lived with his exiled parents in Russia, and before he was twenty had aided in gun-running for a political party in South America and for Don Carlos of Spain, and he had fought a duel. In 1878 he went to England (totally ignorant as yet of the language). Eight years later not only had he learned English and become a British subject, but he had passed his examinations as a sailing master. For the next twenty years he served on more than twenty vessels. In 1895 *Almayer's Folly*, his first novel, was published. Best known of his works are *Youth*, *Lord Jim*, *Victory*, and *Nostramo*.

Throughout his writings Conrad insists on the need for fidelity, honor, and courage. He abhorred mental chaos, tyranny, and social radicalism. Yet he disliked to be considered a moralist. The teachings of Marcus Aurelius, he once wrote, were not for him.

He is unequaled in contemporary literature as a story teller, a creator of atmosphere, and an analyst of motives and emotions.

In the following short story Conrad introduces the reader first to the conclusion of Arsat's story—the death of the kidnapped woman. He then gives Arsat's version of the elopement, and at the end of the story returns once more to the dead woman and Arsat's grief. Note that a man of courage and fidelity is found wanting, as frequently in Conrad's narratives, at the supreme moment—in this instance, Arsat had failed to stand by his overtaken brother.

THE WHITE man, leaning with both arms over the roof of the little house in the stern of the boat, said to the steersman—

"We will pass the night in Arsat's clearing. It is late."

The Malay only grunted, and went on looking fixedly at the river. The white man rested his chin on his crossed arms and gazed at the wake of the boat. At the end of the straight avenue of forests cut by the intense glitter of the river, the sun appeared unclouded and dazzling, poised low over the water that shone smoothly like a band of metal. The forests, somber and dull, stood motionless and silent on each side of the broad stream. At the foot of big, towering trees, trunkless nipa palms rose from the mud of the bank, in bunches of leaves enormous and heavy, that hung unstirring over the brown swirl of eddies. In the stillness of the air every tree, every leaf, every bough, every tendril of creeper and every petal of minute blossoms seemed to have been bewitched into an immobility perfect and final. Nothing moved on the river but the eight paddles

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that rose flashing regularly, dipped together with a single splash, while the steersman swept right and left with a periodic and sudden flourish of his blade describing a glinting semicircle above his head. The churned-up water frothed alongside with a confused murmur. And the white man's canoe, advancing upstream in the short lived disturbance of its own making, seemed to enter the portals of a land from which the very memory of motion had forever departed.

The white man, turning his back upon the setting sun, looked along the empty and broad expanse of the sea-reach. For the last three miles of its course the wandering, hesitating river, as if enticed irresistibly by the freedom of an open horizon, flows straight into the sea, flows straight to the east—to the east that harbors both light and darkness. Astern of the boat the repeated call of some bird, a cry discordant and feeble, skipped along over the smooth water and lost itself, before it could reach the other shore, in the breathless silence of the world.

The steersman dug his paddle into the stream, and held hard with stiffened arms, his body thrown forward. The water gurgled aloud, and suddenly the long straight reach seemed to pivot on its center, the forests swung in a semicircle, and the slanting beams of sunset touched the broadside of the canoe with a fiery glow, throwing the slender and distorted shadows of its crew upon the streaked glitter of the river. The white man turned to look ahead. The course of the boat had been altered at right-angles to the stream, and the carved dragon-head of its prow was pointing now at a gap in the fringing bushes of the bank. It glided through, brushing the overhanging twigs, and disappeared from the river like some slim and amphibious creature leaving the water for its lair in the forests.

The narrow creek was like a ditch. Tortuous, fabulously deep, filled with gloom under the thin strip of pure and shining blue of the heaven. Immense trees soared up, invisible behind the festooned draperies of creepers. Here and there, near the glistening blackness of the water, a twisted root of some tall tree showed amongst the tracery of small ferns, black and dull, writhing and motionless, like an arrested snake. The short words of the paddlers reverberated loudly between the thick and somber walls of vegetation. Darkness oozed out from between the trees, through the tangled maze of the creepers, from behind the great fantastic and unstirring leaves, the darkness, mysterious and invincible, the darkness scented and poisonous of impenetrable forests.

The men poled in the shoaling water. The creek broadened, opening out into a wide sweep of a stagnant lagoon. The forests receded from the marshy bank, leaving a level strip of bright green, reedy grass to frame the reflected blueness of the sky. A fleecy pink cloud drifted high above, trailing the delicate coloring of its image under the floating leaves and the silvery blossoms of the lotus. A little house, perched on high piles, appeared black in the distance. Near it, two tall nibong palms, that seemed to have come out of the forests in the background, leaned slightly over the ragged roof, with a suggestion of sad tenderness and care in the droop of their leafy and soaring heads.

The steersman, pointing with his paddle, said, "Arsat is there. I see his canoe fast between the piles."

The polers ran along the sides of the boat glancing over their shoulders at the end of the day's journey. They would have preferred to spend the night somewhere else than on this lagoon of weird aspect and ghostly reputation. Moreover, they disliked Arsat, first as a stranger, and also because he who repairs a ruined house, and dwells in it, proclaims that he is not afraid to live amongst the spirits that haunt the places abandoned by mankind. Such a man can disturb the course of fate by glances or words, while his familiar ghosts are not easy to propitiate by casual wayfarers upon whom they long to wreak the malice of their human master. White men care not for such things, being unbelievers and in league with the Father of Evil, who leads them unharmed through the invisible dangers of this world. To the warnings of the righteous they oppose an offensive pretense of disbelief. What is there to be done?

So they thought, throwing their weight on the end of their long poles. The big canoe glided on swiftly, noiselessly, and smoothly, towards Arsat's clearing, till, in a great rattling of poles thrown down, and the loud murmurs of "Allah be praised!" it came with a gentle knock against the crooked piles below the house.

The boatmen with uplifted faces shouted discordantly, "Arsat! O Arsat!" Nobody came. The white man began to climb the rude ladder giving access to the bamboo platform before the house. The juragan of the boat said sulkily, "We will cook in the sampan, and sleep on the water."

"Pass my blankets and the basket," said the white man, curtly.

He knelt on the edge of the platform to receive the bundle. Then the boat shoved off, and the white man, standing up, confronted Arsat, who had come out through the low door of his hut. He was a man young, powerful, with broad chest and muscular arms. He had nothing on but his sarong. His head was bare. His big, soft eyes stared eagerly at the white man, but his voice and demeanor were composed as he asked, without any words of greeting—

"Have you medicine, Tuan?"

"No," said the visitor in a startled tone. "No. Why? Is there sickness in the house?"

"Enter and see," replied Arsat, in the same calm manner, and turning short round, passed again through the small doorway. The white man, dropping his bundles, followed.

In the dim light of the dwelling he made out on a couch of bamboos a woman stretched on her back under a broad sheet of red cotton cloth. She lay still, as if dead, but her big eyes, wide open, glittered in the gloom, staring upwards at the slender rafters, motionless and unseeing. She was in a high fever, and evidently unconscious. Her cheeks were sunk slightly, her lips were partly open, and on the young face there was the ominous and fixed expression—the absorbed, contemplating expression of the unconscious who are going to die. The two men stood looking down at her in silence.

"Has she been long ill?" asked the traveler.

"I have not slept for five nights," answered the Malay, in a deliberate tone. "At first she heard voices calling her from the water and struggled against me who held her. But since the sun of today rose she hears nothing—she hears not me. She sees nothing. She sees not me—me!"

He remained silent for a minute, then asked softly—
“Tuan, will she die?”

“I fear so,” said the white man, sorrowfully. He had known Arsat years ago, in a far country in times of trouble and danger, when no friendship is to be despised. And since his Malay friend had come unexpectedly to dwell in the hut on the lagoon with a strange woman, he had slept many times there, in his journeys up and down the river. He liked the man who knew how to keep faith in council and how to fight without fear by the side of his white friend. He liked him—not so much perhaps as a man likes his favorite dog—but still he liked him well enough to help and ask no questions, to think sometimes vaguely and hazily in the midst of his own pursuits, about the lonely man and the long-haired woman with audacious face and triumphant eyes, who lived together hidden by the forests—alone and feared.

The white man came out of the hut in time to see the enormous conflagration of sunset put out by the swift and stealthy shadows that, rising like a black and impalpable vapor above the tree-tops, spread over the heaven, extinguishing the crimson glow of floating clouds and the red brilliance of departing day light. In a few moments all the stars came out above the intense blackness of the earth and the great lagoon gleaming suddenly with reflected lights resembled an oval patch of night sky flung down into the hopeless and abysmal night of the wilderness. The white man had some supper out of the basket, then collecting a few sticks that lay about the platform, made up a small fire, not for warmth, but for the sake of the smoke, which would keep off the mosquitos. He wrapped himself in the blankets and sat with his back against the reed wall of the house, smoking thoughtfully.

Arsat came through the doorway with noiseless steps and squatted down by the fire. The white man moved his outstretched legs a little.

“She breathes,” said Arsat in a low voice, anticipating the expected question. “She breathes and burns as if with a great fire. She speaks not, she hears not—and burns!”

He paused for a moment, then asked in a quiet, incurious tone—

“Tuan will she die?”

The white man moved his shoulders uneasily and muttered in a hesitating manner—

“If such is her fate.”

“No, Tuan,” said Arsat, calmly. “If such is my fate I hear, I see, I wait. I remember. Tuan, do you remember the old days? Do you remember my brother?”

“Yes,” said the white man. The Malay rose suddenly and went in. The other, sitting still outside, could hear the voice in the hut. Arsat said “Hear me! Speak!” His words were succeeded by a complete silence. “O Diamelen!” he cried, suddenly. After that cry there was a deep sigh. Arsat came out and sank down again in his old place.

They sat in silence before the fire. There was no sound within the house, there was no sound near them, but far away on the lagoon they could hear the voices of the boatmen ringing fitful and distinct on the calm water. The fire in the bows of the sampan shone faintly in the distance with a hazy red glow.

Then it died out The voices ceased The land and the water slept invisible, unstirring and mute It was as though there had been nothing left in the world but the glitter of stars streaming, ceaseless and vain, through the black stillness of the night

The white man gazed straight before him into the darkness with wide open eyes The fear and fascination, the inspiration and the wonder of death—of death near, unavoidable, and unseen, soothed the unrest of his race and stirred the most indistinct, the most intimate of his thoughts The ever-ready suspicion of evil, the gnawing suspicion that lurks in our hearts, flowed out into the stillness round him—into the stillness profound and dumb, and made it appear untrustworthy and infamous, like the placid and impenetrable mask of an unjustifiable violence In that fleeting and powerful disturbance of his being the earth enfolded in the starlight peace became a shadowy country of inhuman strife, a battle-field of phantoms terrible and charming, august or ignoble, struggling ardently for the possession of our helpless hearts An unquiet and mysterious country of inextinguishable desires and fears

A plaintive murmur rose in the night, a murmur saddening and startling, as if the great solitudes of surrounding woods had tried to whisper into his ear the wisdom of their immense and lofty indifference Sounds hesitating and vague floated in the air round him, shaped themselves slowly into words, and at last flowed on gently in a murmuring stream of soft and monotonous sentences He stirred like a man waking up and changed his position slightly Arsat, motionless and shadowy, sitting with bowed head under the stars, was speaking in a low and dreamy tone—

“for where can we lay down the heaviness of our trouble but in a friend’s heart? A man must speak of war and of love You, Tuan, know what war is, and you have seen me in time of danger seek death as other men seek life! A writing may be lost, a lie may be written, but what the eye has seen is truth and remains in the mind!”

“I remember,” said the white man, quietly Arsat went on with mournful composure—

“Therefore I shall speak to you of love Speak in the night Speak before both night and love are gone—and the eye of day looks upon my sorrow and my shame, upon my blackened face, upon my burnt-up heart”

A sigh, short and faint, marked an almost imperceptible pause, and then his words flowed on, without a stir, without a gesture

“After the time of trouble and war was over and you went away from my country in the pursuit of your desires, which we, men of the islands, cannot understand, I and my brother became again, as we had been before, the sword-bearers of the Ruler You know we were men of family, belonging to a ruling race, and more fit than any to carry on our right shoulder the emblem of power And in the time of prosperity Si Dendring showed us favor, as we, in time of sorrow, had showed to him the faithfulness of our courage It was a time of peace A time of deer hunts and cock-fights, of idle talks and foolish squabbles between men whose bellies are full and weapons are rusty But the sower watched the young rice-shoots grow up without fear, and the traders came and went, departed lean and returned fat into the river of peace They brought

news, too Brought lies and truth mixed together, so that no man knew when to rejoice and when to be sorry We heard from them about you also They had seen you here and had seen you there And I was glad to hear, for I remembered the stirring times, and I always remembered you, Tuan, till the time came when my eyes could see nothing in the past, because they had looked upon the one who is dying there—in the house”

He stopped to exclaim in an intense whisper, “O Mara bahia! O Calamity!” then went on speaking a little louder

“There’s no worse enemy and no better friend than a brother, Tuan, for one brother knows another, and in perfect knowledge is strength for good or evil I loved my brother I went to him and told him that I could see nothing but one face, hear nothing but one voice He told me ‘Open your heart so that she can see what is in it—and wait Patience is wisdom Inchī Midah may die or our Ruler may throw off his fear of a woman!’ I waited! You remember the lady with the veiled face, Tuan, and the fear of our Ruler before her cunning and temper And if she wanted her servant, what could I do? But I fed the hunger of my heart on short glances and stealthy words I loitered on the path to the bath-houses in the daytime, and when the sun had fallen behind the forest I crept along the jasmine hedges of the women’s courtyard Unseeing, we spoke to one another through the scent of flowers, through the veil of leaves, through the blades of long grass that stood still before our lips, so great was our prudence, so faint was the murmur of our great longing The time passed swiftly and there were whispers amongst women—and our enemies watched—my brother was gloomy, and I began to think of killing and of a fierce death We are of a people who take what they want—like you whites There is a time when a man should forget loyalty and respect Might and authority are given to rulers, but to all men is given love and strength and courage My brother said, ‘You shall take her from their midst We are two who are like one’ And I answered, ‘Let it be soon, for I find no warmth in sunlight that does not shine upon her’ Our time came when the Ruler and all the great people went to the mouth of the river to fish by torchlight There were hundreds of boats, and on the white sand, between the water and the forests, dwellings of leaves were built for the households of the Rajahs The smoke of cooking-fires was like a blue mist of the evening, and many voices rang in it joyfully While they were making the boats ready to beat up the fish, my brother came to me and said, ‘Tonight!’ I looked to my weapons, and when the time came our canoe took its place in the circle of boats carrying the torches The lights blazed on the water, but behind the boats there was darkness When the shouting began and the excitement made them like mad we dropped out The water swallowed our fire, and we floated back to the shore that was dark with only here and there the glimmer of embers We could hear the talk of slave-girls amongst the sheds Then we found a place deserted and silent We waited there She came She came running along the shore, rapid and leaving no trace, like a leaf driven by the wind into the sea My brother said gloomily, ‘Go and take her, carry her into our boat’ I lifted her in my arms She panted Her heart was beating against my breast I said, ‘I take you from those people You came to the cry of my heart, but my arms take you into my boat against

the will of the great!' 'It is right,' said my brother 'We are men who take what we want and can hold it against many We should have taken her in day light' I said, 'Let us be off', for since she was in my boat I began to think of our Ruler's many men 'Yes Let us be off,' said my brother 'We are cast out and this boat is our country now—and the sea is our refuge' He lingered with his foot on the shore, and I entreated him to hasten, for I remembered the strokes of her heart against my breast and thought that two men cannot with stand a hundred We left, paddling downstream close to the bank, and as we passed by the creek where they were fishing, the great shouting had ceased, but the murmur of voices was loud like the humming of insects flying at noon-day The boats floated, clustered together, in the red light of torches, under a black roof of smoke, and men talked of their sport Men that boasted, and praised, and jeered—men that would have been our friends in the morning, but on that night were already our enemies We paddled swiftly past We had no more friends in the country of our birth She sat in the middle of the canoe with covered face, silent as she is now, unseeing as she is now—and I had no regret at what I was leaving because I could hear her breathing close to me—as I can hear her now "

He paused, listened with his ear turned to the doorway, then shook his head and went on

"My brother wanted to shout the cry of challenge—one cry only—to let the people know we were freeborn robbers who trusted our arms and the great sea And again I begged him in the name of our love to be silent Could I not hear her breathing close to me? I knew the pursuit would come quick enough My brother loved me He dipped his paddle without a splash He only said, 'There is a half a man in you now—the other half is in that woman I can wait When you are a whole man again, you will come back with me here to shout defiance We are sons of the same mother' I made no answer All my strength and all my spirit were in my hands that held the paddle—for I longed to be with her in a safe place beyond the reach of men's anger and of women's spite My love was so great, that I thought it could guide me to a country where death was unknown, if I could only escape from Inchi Midah's fury and from our Ruler's sword We paddled with haste, breathing through our teeth The blades bit deep into the smooth water We passed out of the river, we flew in clear channels amongst the shallows We skirted the black coast, we skirted the sand beaches where the sea speaks in whispers to the land, and the gleam of white sand flashed back past our boat, so swiftly she ran upon the water We spoke not Only once I said, 'Sleep, Diamelen, for soon you may want all your strength' I heard the sweetness of her voice, but I never turned my head The sun rose and still we went on Water fell from my face like rain from a cloud We flew in the light and heat. I never looked back, but I knew that my brother's eyes, behind me, were looking steadily ahead, for the boat went as straight as a bushman's dart, when it leaves the end of the sumpitan There was no better paddler, no better steersman than my brother Many times, together, we had won races in that canoe But we never had put out our strength as we did then—then, when for the last time we paddled together! There was no braver or stronger man in our country than my brother I could not spare the strength

to turn my head and look at him, but every moment I heard the hiss of his breath getting louder behind me. Still he did not speak. The sun was high. The heat clung to my back like a flame of fire. My ribs were ready to burst, but I could no longer get enough air into my chest. And then I felt I must cry out with my last breath, 'Let us rest!' 'Good!' he answered, and his voice was firm. He was strong. He was brave. He knew not fear and no fatigue. My brother!"

A murmur powerful and gentle, a murmur vast and faint, the murmur of trembling leaves, of stirring boughs, ran through the tangled depths of the forests, ran over the starry smoothness of the lagoon, and the water between the piles lapped the slimy timber once with a sudden splash. A breath of warm air touched the two men's faces and passed on with a mournful sound—a breath loud and short like an uneasy sigh of the dreaming earth.

Arsat went on in an even, low voice.

"We ran our canoe on the white beach of a little bay close to a long tongue of land that seemed to bar our road, a long wooded cape going far into the sea. My brother knew that place. Beyond the cape a river has its entrance, and through the jungle of that land there is a narrow path. We made a fire and cooked rice. Then we lay down to sleep on the soft sand in the shade of our canoe, while she watched. No sooner had I closed my eyes than I heard her cry of alarm. We leaped up. The sun was halfway down the sky already, and coming in sight in the opening of the bay we saw a prau manned by many paddlers. We knew it at once, it was one of our Rajah's praus. They were watching the shore, and saw us. They beat the gong, and turned the head of the prau into the bay. I felt my heart become weak within my breast. Diamelen sat on the sand and covered her face. There was no escape by sea. My brother laughed. He had the gun you had given him, Tuan, before you went away, but there was only a handful of powder. He spoke to me quickly. 'Run with her along the path. I shall keep them back, for they have no firearms, and landing in the face of a man with a gun is certain death for some. Run with her. On the other side of that wood there is a fisherman's house—and a canoe. When I have fired all the shots I will follow. I am a great runner, and before they can come up we shall be gone. I will hold out as long as I can, for she is but a woman—that can neither run nor fight, but she has your heart in her weak hands.' He dropped behind the canoe. The prau was coming. She and I ran, and as we rushed along the path I heard shots. My brother fired—once—twice—and the booming of the gong ceased. There was silence behind us. That neck of land is narrow. Before I heard my brother fire the third shot I saw the shelving shore, and I saw the water again, the mouth of a broad river. We crossed a grassy glade. We ran down to the water. I saw a low hut above the black mud, and a small canoe hauled up. I heard another shot behind me. I thought, 'That is his last charge.' We rushed down to the canoe, a man came running from the hut, but I leaped on him, and we rolled together in the mud. Then I got up, and he lay still at my feet. I don't know whether I had killed him or not. I and Diamelen pushed the canoe afloat. I heard yells behind me, and I saw my brother run across the glade. Many men were bounding after him. I took her in my arms and threw her into the boat, then leaped in myself.

When I looked back I saw that my brother had fallen. He fell and was up again, but the men were closing round him. He shouted, 'I am coming!' The men were close to him. I looked. Many men. Then I looked at her. Tuan, I pushed the canoe! I pushed it into deep water. She was kneeling forward looking at me, and I said, 'Take your paddle,' while I struck the water with mine. Tuan, I heard him cry. I heard him cry my name twice, and I heard voices shouting, 'Kill! Strike!' I never turned back. I heard him calling my name again with a great shriek, as when life is going out together with the voice—and I never turned my head. My own name! My brother! Three times he called—but I was not afraid of life. Was she not there in that canoe? And could I not with her find a country where death is forgotten—where death is unknown!"

The white man sat up. Arsat rose and stood, an indistinct and silent figure above the dying embers of the fire. Over the lagoon a mist drifting and low had crept, erasing slowly the glittering images of the stars. And now a great expanse of white vapor covered the land: it flowed cold and gray in the darkness, eddied in noiseless whirls round the tree-trunks and about the platform of the house, which seemed to float upon a restless and impalpable illusion of a sea. Only far away the tops of the trees stood outlined on the twinkle of heaven, like a somber and forbidding shore—a coast deceptive, pitiless and black.

Arsat's voice vibrated loudly in the profound peace.

"I had her there! I had her! To get her I would have faced all mankind. But I had her—and—"

His words went out ringing into the empty distances. He paused, and seemed to listen to them dying away very far—beyond help and beyond recall. Then he said quietly—

"Tuan, I loved my brother."

A breath of wind made him shiver. High above his head, high above the silent sea of mist the drooping leaves of the palms rattled together with a mournful and expiring sound. The white man stretched his legs. His chin rested on his chest, and he murmured sadly without lifting his head—

"We all love our brothers."

Arsat burst out with an intense whispering violence—

"What did I care who died? I wanted peace in my own heart."

He seemed to hear a stir in the house—listened—then stepped in noiselessly. The white man stood up. A breeze was coming in fitful puffs. The stars shone paler as if they had retreated into the frozen depths of immense space. After a chill gust of wind there were a few seconds of perfect calm and absolute silence. Then from behind the black and wavy line of the forests a column of golden light shot up into the heavens and spread over the semicircle of the eastern horizon. The sun had risen. The mist lifted, broke into drifting patches, vanished into thin flying wreaths, and the unveiled lagoon lay, polished and black, in the heavy shadows at the foot of the wall of trees. A white eagle rose over it with a slanting and ponderous flight, reached the clear sunshine and appeared dazzlingly brilliant for a moment, then soaring higher, became a dark and motionless speck before it vanished into the blue as if it had left the

earth forever. The white man, standing gazing upwards before the doorway, heard in the hut a confused and broken murmur of distracted words ending with a loud groan. Suddenly Arsat stumbled out with outstretched hands, shivered, and stood still for some time with fixed eyes. Then he said—

"She burns no more."

Before his face the sun showed its edge above the tree-tops rising steadily. The breeze freshened, a great brilliance burst upon the lagoon, sparkled on the rippling water. The forests came out of the clear shadows of the morning, became distinct, as if they had rushed nearer—to stop short in a great stir of leaves, of nodding boughs, of swaying branches. In the merciless sunshine the whisper of unconscious life grew louder, speaking in an incomprehensible voice round the dumb darkness of that human sorrow. Arsat's eyes wandered slowly, then stared at the rising sun.

"I can see nothing," he said half aloud to himself.

"There is nothing," said the white man, moving to the edge of the platform and waving his hand to his boat. A shout came faintly over the lagoon and the sampan began to glide towards the abode of the friend of ghosts.

"If you want to come with me, I will wait all the morning," said the white man, looking away upon the water.

"No, Tuan," said Arsat, softly. "I shall not eat or sleep in this house, but I must first see my road. Now I can see nothing—see nothing! There is no light and no peace in the world, but there is death—death for many. We are sons of the same mother—and I left him in the midst of enemies, but I am going back now."

He drew a long breath and went on in a dreamy tone.

"In a little while I shall see clear enough to strike—to strike. But she has died, and now darkness."

He flung his arms wide open, let them fall along his body, then stood still with unmoved face and stony eyes, staring at the sun. The white man got down into his canoe. The polers ran smartly along the sides of the boat, looking over their shoulders at the beginning of a weary journey. High in the stern, his head muffled up in white rags, the juragan sat moody, letting his paddle trail in the water. The white man, leaning with both arms over the grass roof of the little cabin, looked back at the shining ripple of the boat's wake. Before the sampan passed out of the lagoon into the creek he lifted his eyes. Arsat had not moved. He stood lonely in the searching sunshine, and he looked beyond the great light of a cloudless day into the darkness of a world of illusions.

QUALITY¹*by John Galsworthy*

A brief discussion of John Galsworthy's work is on page 119

I KNEW him from the days of my extreme youth, because he made my father's boots, inhabiting with his elder brother two little shops let into one, in a small by street—now no more, but then most fashionably placed in the West End

That tenement had a certain quiet distinction, there was no sign upon its face that he made for any of the Royal Family—merely his own German name of Gessler Brothers, and in the window a few pairs of boots I remember that it always troubled me to account for those unvarying boots in the window, for he made only what was ordered, reaching nothing down, and it seemed so inconceivable that what he made could ever have failed to fit Had he bought them to put there? That, too, seemed inconceivable He would never have tolerated in his house leather on which he had not worked himself Besides, they were too beautiful—the pair of pumps, so inexpressibly slim, the patent leathers with cloth tops, making water come into one's mouth, the tall brown riding boots with marvelous sooty glow, as if, though new, they had been worn a hundred years Those pairs could only have been made by one who saw before him the Soul of Boot—so truly were they prototypes, incarnating the very spirit of all footwear These thoughts, of course, came to me later, though even when I was promoted to him, at the age of perhaps fourteen, some inkling haunted me of the dignity of himself and brother For to make boots—such boots as he made—seemed to me then, and still seems to me, mysterious and wonderful

I remember well my shy remark, one day, while stretching out to him my youthful foot

"Isn't it awfully hard to do, Mr Gessler?"

And his answer, given with a sudden smile from out of the sardonic redness of his beard "Id is an Ardt!"

Himself, he was a little as if made of leather, with his yellow crinkly face, and crinkly reddish hair and beard, and neat folds slanting down his cheeks to the corners of his mouth, and his guttural and one-toned voice, for leather is a sardonic substance, and stiff and slow of purpose And that was the character of his face, save that his eyes, which were gray blue, had in them the simple gravity of one secretly possessed by the Ideal His elder brother was so very like him—though watery, paler in every way, with a great industry—that sometimes in early days I was not quite sure of him until the interview was over Then I knew that it was he, if the words, "I will ask my brudder," had not been spoken, and that, if they had, it was the elder brother

When one grew old and wild and ran up bills, one somehow never ran them up with Gessler Brothers It would not have seemed becoming to go in there

¹ From *The Inn of Tranquility* by John Galsworthy, reprinted by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons, publishers

and stretch out one's foot to that blue iron-spectacled face, owing him for more than—say—two pairs, just the comfortable reassurance that one was still his client

For it was not possible to go to him very often—his boots lasted terribly, having something beyond the temporary—some, as it were, essence of boot stitched into them

One went in, not as into most shops, in the mood of "Please serve me, and let me go!" but restfully, as one enters a church, and, sitting on the single wooden chair, waited—for there was never anybody there. Soon—over the top edge of that sort of well—rather dark, and smelling soothingly of leather—which formed the shop, there would be seen his face, or that of his elder brother, peering down. A guttural sound, and the tip-tap of bast slippers beating the narrow wooden stairs, and he would stand before one without coat, a little bent, in leather apron, with sleeves turned back, blinking—as if awakened from some dream of boots, or like an owl surprised in daylight and annoyed at this interruption

And I would say "How do you do, Mr Gessler? Could you make me a pair of Russia leather boots?"

Without a word he would leave me, retiring whence he came, or into the other portion of the shop, and I would continue to rest in the wooden chair, inhaling the incense of his trade. Soon he would come back, holding in his thin, veined hand a piece of gold-brown leather. With eyes fixed on it, he would remark "What a beautiful piece!" When I, too, had admired it, he would speak again "When do you want dem?" And I would answer "Oh! As soon as you conveniently can." And he would say "Tomorrow fordnighd?" Or if he were his elder brother "I will ask my brudder!"

Then I would murmur "Thank you! Good-morning, Mr Gessler." "Goot morning!" he would reply, still looking at the leather in his hand. And as I moved to the door, I would hear the tip-tap of his bast slippers restoring him, up the stairs, to his dream of boots. But if it were some new kind of foot-gear that he had not yet made me, then indeed he would observe ceremony—divesting me of my boot and holding it long in his hand, looking at it with eyes at once critical and loving, as if recalling the glow with which he had created it, and rebuking the way in which one had disorganized this masterpiece. Then, placing my foot on a piece of paper, he would two or three times tickle the outer edges with a pencil and pass his nervous fingers over my toes, feeling himself into the heart of my requirements.

I cannot forget that day on which I had occasion to say to him "Mr Gessler, that last pair of town walking-boots creaked, you know."

He looked at me for a time without replying, as if expecting me to withdraw or qualify the statement, then said

"Id shouldn'd 'ave creaked"

"It did, I'm afraid"

"You goddem wed before dey found demselves?"

"I don't think so"

At that he lowered his eyes, as if hunting for memory of those boots, and I felt sorry I had mentioned this grave thing

"Zend dem back!" he said, "I will look at dem"

A feeling of compassion for my creaking boots surged up in me, so well could I imagine the sorrowful long curiosity of regard which he would bend on them

"Zome boods," he said slowly, "are bad from birdt If I can do noding wid dem, I dake dem off your bill"

Once (once only) I went absent mindedly into his shop, in a pair of boots bought in an emergency at some large firm's He took my order without showing me any leather, and I could feel his eyes penetrating the inferior integument of my foot At last he said

"Dose are nod my boods"

The tone was not one of anger, nor of sorrow, not even of contempt, but there was in it something quiet that froze the blood He put his hand down and pressed a finger on the place where the left boot, endeavoring to be fashionable, was not quite comfortable

"Id 'urds you dere," he said "Dose big virms 'ave no self respect Drash!" And then, as if something had given way within him, he spoke long and bitterly It was the only time I ever heard him discuss the conditions and hardships of his trade

"Dey get id all," he said, "dey get id by advertisement, nod by work Dey dake it away from us, who lofe our boods Id gomes to this—bresently I haf no work Every year id gets less—you will see" And looking at his lined face I saw things I had never noticed before, bitter things and bitter struggle—and what a lot of gray hairs there seemed suddenly in his red beard!

As best I could, I explained the circumstances of the purchase of those ill-omened boots But his face and voice made a so deep impression that during the next few minutes I ordered many pairs! Nemesis fell! They lasted more terribly than ever And I was not able conscientiously to go to him for nearly two years

When at last I went I was surprised that outside one of the two little windows of his shop another name was painted, also that of a bootmaker—making, of course, for the Royal Family The old familiar boots, no longer in dignified isolation, were huddled in the single window Inside, the now contracted well of the one little shop was more scented and darker than ever And it was longer than usual, too, before a face peered down, and the tip-tap of the bast slippers began At last he stood before me, and, gazing through those rusty iron spectacles, said

"Mr —, isn'd it?"

"Ah! Mr Gessler," I stammered, "but your boots are really *too* good, you know! See, these are quite decent still!" And I stretched out to him my foot He looked at it

"Yes," he said, "beople do nod wand good boods, id seems"

To get away from his reproachful eyes and voice I hastily remarked "What have you done to your shop?"

He answered quietly "Id was too exbensif Do you wand some boods?"

I ordered three pairs, though I had only wanted two, and quickly left I had, I know not quite what feeling of being part, in his mind, of a conspiracy

against him or not perhaps so much against him as against his idea of boot. One does not, I suppose, care to feel like that, for it was again many months before my next visit to his shop, paid, I remember, with the feeling "Oh! well, I can't leave the old boy—so here goes! Perhaps it'll be his elder brother!"

For his elder brother, I knew, had not character enough to reproach me, even dumbly.

And, to my relief, in the shop there did appear to be his elder brother, handling a piece of leather.

"Well, Mr Gessler," I said, "how are you?"

He came close, and peered at me.

"I am breddy well," he said slowly, "but my elder brudder is dead."

And I saw that it was indeed himself—but how aged and wan! And never before had I heard him mention his brother. Much shocked, I murmured "Oh! I am sorry!"

"Yes," he answered, "he was a good man, he made a good bood, but he is dead." And he touched the top of his head, where the hair had suddenly gone as thin as it had been on that of his poor brother, to indicate, I suppose, the cause of death. "He could nod ged over losing de oder shop. Do you wand any boods?" And he held up the leather in his hand. "Id's a beaudiful biece."

I ordered several pairs. It was very long before they came—but they were better than ever. One simply could not wear them out. And soon after that I went abroad.

It was over a year before I was again in London. And the first shop I went to was my old friend's. I had left a man of sixty, I came back to find one of seventy-five, pinched and worn and tremulous, who genuinely, this time, did not at first know me.

"Oh! Mr Gessler," I said, sick at heart, "how splendid your boots are! See, I've been wearing this pair nearly all the time I've been abroad, and they're not half worn out, are they?"

He looked long at my boots—a pair of Russia leather, and his face seemed to regain its steadiness. Putting his hand on my instep, he said

"Do dey vid you here? I 'ad drouble wid dat bair, I remember."

I assured him that they had fitted beautifully.

"Do you wand any boods?" he said. "I can make dem quickly, id is a slack dime."

I answered "Please, please! I want boots all round—every kind!"

"I vill make a vresh model. Your food must be bigger." And with utter slowness, he traced round my foot, and felt my toes, only once looking up to say "Did I dell you my brudder was dead?"

To watch him was quite painful, so feeble had he grown, I was glad to get away.

I had given those boots up, when one evening they came. Opening the parcel, I set the four pairs out in a row. Then one by one I tried them on. There was no doubt about it. In shape and fit, in finish and quality of leather, they were the best he had ever made me. And in the mouth of one of the town walking boots I found his bill. The amount was the same as usual, but it gave me quite

a shock. He had never before sent it in until quarter day. I flew downstairs and wrote a check, and posted it at once with my own hand.

A week later, passing the little street, I thought I would go in and tell him how splendidly the new boots fitted. But when I came to where his shop had been, his name was gone. Still there, in the window, were the slim pumps, the patent leathers with cloth tops, the sooty riding-boots.

I went in, very much disturbed. In the two little shops—again made into one—was a young man with an English face.

"Mr. Gessler in?" I said.

He gave me a strange, ingratiating look.

"No, sir," he said, "no. But we can attend to anything with pleasure. We've taken the shop over. You've seen our name, no doubt, next door. We make for some very good people."

"Yes, yes," I said, "but Mr. Gessler?"

"Oh!" he answered, "dead."

"Dead! But I only received these boots from him last Wednesday week."

"Ah!" he said, "a shockin' go. Poor old man starved 'imself."

"Good God!"

"Slow starvation, the doctor called it! You see he went to work in such a way! Would keep the shop on, wouldn't have a soul touch his boots except himself. When he got an order, it took him such a time. People won't wait. He lost everybody. And there he'd sit, goin' on and on—I will say that for him—not a man in London made a better boot! But look at the competition! He never advertised! Would 'ave the best leather, too, and do it all 'imself. Well, there it is. What could you expect with his ideas?"

"But starvation—!"

"That may be a bit flowery, as the sayin' is—but I know myself he was sittin' over his boots day and night, to the very last. You see, I used to watch him. Never gave 'imself time to eat, never had a penny in the house. All went in rent and leather. How he lived so long I don't know. He regular let his fire go out. He was a character. But he made good boots."

"Yes," I said, "he made good boots."

And I turned and went out quickly, for I did not want that youth to know that I could hardly see.

A CUP OF TEA¹

by Katherine Mansfield

Katherine Mansfield (1890-1923) was born in New Zealand, where she spent most of her girlhood. Her first volume of short stories, *In a German Pension*, was published in 1911, two years later she married the English critic, John Middleton Murry. Her other volumes of short stories are *Bliss*, *The Garden Party*, *The Doves' Nest*, *Something Childish*. She was the author also of *Poems*, the *Journal of Katherine Mansfield* and the two volumes of her *Letters* supply much valuable information on her literary development and her attitude toward her work.

¹ From *The Doves' Nest*, by Katherine Mansfield, by permission of and special arrangement with Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., authorized publishers.

Katherine Mansfield's short stories rank with the best written in the English language for subtlety of characterization. She was not interested in clever plot, in the romantic situation, but with the relation of one person to another as expressed by a seemingly inconsequential action or phrase. Her stories are restrained and polished, and frequently bitingly satirical.

ROSEMARY FELL was not exactly beautiful. No, you couldn't have called her beautiful. Pretty? Well, if you took her to pieces. . . . But why be so cruel as to take any one to pieces? She was young, brilliant, extremely modern, exquisitely well dressed, amazingly well read in the newest of the new books, and her parties were the most delicious mixture of the really important people and artists—quaint creatures, discoveries of hers, some of them too terrifying for words, but others quite presentable and amusing.

Rosemary had been married two years. She had a duck of a boy. No, not Peter—Michael. And her husband absolutely adored her. They were rich, really rich, not just comfortably well off, which is odious and stuffy and sounds like one's grandparents. But if Rosemary wanted to shop she would go to Paris as you and I would go to Bond Street. If she wanted to buy flowers, the car pulled up at that perfect shop in Regent Street, and Rosemary inside the shop just gazed in her dazzled, rather exotic way, and said "I want those and those and those. Give me four bunches of those. And that jar of roses. Yes, I'll have all the roses in the jar. No, no lilac. I hate lilac. It's got no shape." The attendant bowed and put the lilac out of sight, as though this was only too true, lilac was dreadfully shapeless. "Give me those stumpy little tulips. Those red and white ones." And she was followed to the car by a thin shopgirl staggering under an immense white paper armful that looked like a baby in long clothes.

One winter afternoon she had been buying something in a little antique shop in Curzon Street. It was a shop she liked. For one thing, one usually had it to oneself. And then the man who kept it was ridiculously fond of serving her. He beamed whenever she came in. He clasped his hands, he was so gratified that he could scarcely speak. Flattery, of course. All the same, there was something.

"You see, madam," he would explain in his low respectful tones, "I love my things. I would rather not part with them than sell them to some one who does not appreciate them, who has not that fine feeling which is so rare. . . ." And, breathing deeply, he unrolled a tiny square of blue velvet and pressed it on the glass counter with his pale finger-tips.

Today it was a little box. He had been keeping it for her. He had shown it to nobody as yet. An exquisite little enamel box with a glaze so fine it looked as though it had been baked in cream. On the lid a minute creature stood under a flowery tree, and a more minute creature still had her arms around his neck. Her hat, really no bigger than a geranium petal, hung from a branch, it had green ribbons. And there was a pink cloud like a watchful cherub floating above their heads. Rosemary took her hands out of her long gloves. She always took off her gloves to examine such things. Yes, she liked it very much. She loved it, it was a great duck. She must have it. And, turning the creamy box

opening and shutting it, she couldn't help noticing how charming her hands were against the blue velvet. The shopman, in some dim cavern of his mind, may have dared to think so too. For he took a pencil, leant over the counter, and his pale bloodless fingers crept timidly towards those rosy, flashing ones, as he murmured gently "If I may venture to point out to madam, the flowers on the little lady's bodice."

"Charming!" Rosemary admired the flowers. But what was the price? For a moment the shopman did not seem to hear. Then a murmur reached her "Twenty-eight guineas, madam."

"Twenty-eight guineas!" Rosemary gave no sign. She laid the little box down, she buttoned her gloves again. Twenty-eight guineas. Even if one is rich. She looked vague. She stared at a plump tea-kettle like a plump hen above the shopman's head, and her voice was dreamy as she answered "Well, keep it for me—will you? I'll."

But the shopman had already bowed as though keeping it for her was all any human being could ask. He would be willing, of course, to keep it for her for ever.

The discreet door shut with a click. She was outside on the step, gazing at the winter afternoon. Rain was falling, and with the rain it seemed the dark came too, spinning down like ashes. There was a cold bitter taste in the air, and the new-lighted lamps looked sad. Sad were the lights in the houses opposite. Dimly they burned as if regretting something. And people hurried by, hidden under their hateful umbrellas. Rosemary felt a strange pang. She pressed her muff to her breast, she wished she had the little box, too, to cling to. Of course, the car was there. She'd only to cross the pavement. But still she waited. There are moments, horrible moments in life, when one emerges from shelter and looks out, and it's awful. One oughtn't to give way to them. One ought to go home and have an extra-special tea. But at the very instant of thinking that, a young girl, thin, dark, shadowy—where had she come from?—was standing at Rosemary's elbow and a voice like a sigh, almost like a sob, breathed "Madam, may I speak to you a moment?"

"Speak to me?" Rosemary turned. She saw a little battered creature with enormous eyes, some one quite young, no older than herself, who clutched at her coat-collar with reddened hands, and shivered as though she had just come out of the water.

"M-madam," stammered the voice. "Would you let me have the price of a cup of tea?"

"A cup of tea?" There was something simple, sincere in that voice, it wasn't in the least the voice of a beggar. "Then have you no money at all?" asked Rosemary.

"None, madam," came the answer.

"How extraordinary!" Rosemary peered through the dusk, and the girl gazed back at her. How more than extraordinary! And suddenly it seemed to Rosemary such an adventure. It was like something out of a novel by Dostoevsky, this meeting in the dusk. Supposing she took the girl home? Supposing she did do one of those things she was always reading about or seeing on the stage what would happen? It would be thrilling. And she heard herself saying after

wards to the amazement of her friends "I simply took her home with me," as she stepped forward and said to that dim person beside her "Come home to tea with me"

The girl drew back startled She even stopped shivering for a moment Rosemary put out a hand and touched her arm "I mean it," she said, smiling And she felt how simple and kind her smile was "Why won't you? Do Come home with me now in my car and have tea"

"You—you don't mean it, madam," said the girl, and there was pain in her voice

"But I do," cried Rosemary "I want you to To please me Come along"

The girl put her fingers to her lips and her eyes devoured Rosemary "You're—you're not taking me to the police station?" she stammered

"The police station!" Rosemary laughed out "Why should I be so cruel? No, I only want to make you warm and to hear—anything you care to tell me"

Hungry people are easily led The footman held the door of the car open, and a moment later they were skimming through the dusk

"There!" said Rosemary She had a feeling of triumph as she slipped her hand through the velvet strap She could have said, "Now I've got you," as she gazed at the little captive she had netted But of course she meant it kindly Oh, more than kindly She was going to prove to this girl that—wonderful things did happen in life, that—fairy godmothers were real, that—rich people had hearts, and that women *were* sisters She turned impulsively, saying "Don't be frightened After all, why shouldn't you come back with me? We're both women If I'm the more fortunate, you ought to expect"

But happily at that moment, for she didn't know how the sentence was going to end, the car stopped The bell was rung, the door opened, and with a charming, protecting, almost embracing movement, Rosemary drew the other into the hall Warmth, softness, light, a sweet scent, all those things so familiar to her she never even thought about them, she watched that other receive It was fascinating She was like the little rich girl in her nursery with all the cupboard doors to open, all the boxes to unpack

"Come, come upstairs," said Rosemary, longing to begin to be generous "Come up to my room" And, besides, she wanted to spare this poor little thing from being stared at by the servants, she decided as they mounted the stairs she would not even ring for Jeanne, but take off her things by herself The great thing was to be natural!

And "There!" cried Rosemary again, as they reached her beautiful big bed room with the curtains drawn, the fire leaping on her wonderful lacquer furniture, her gold cushions and the primrose and blue rugs

The girl stood just inside the door, she seemed dazed But Rosemary didn't mind that

"Come and sit down," she cried, dragging her big chair up to the fire, "in this comfy chair Come and get warm You look so dreadfully cold"

"I daren't, madam," said the girl, and she edged backwards

"Oh, please,"—Rosemary ran forward—"you mustn't be frightened, you mustn't, really Sit down, and when I've taken off my things we shall go into

the next room and have tea and be cozy Why are you afraid?" And gently she half pushed the thin figure into its deep cradle.

But there was no answer The girl stayed just as she had been put, with her hands by her sides and her mouth slightly open To be quite sincere, she looked rather stupid But Rosemary wouldn't acknowledge it She leant over her, saying "Won't you take off your hat? Your pretty hair is all wet And one is so much more comfortable without a hat, isn't one?"

There was a whisper that sounded like, "Very good, madam," and the crushed hat was taken off

"Let me help you off with your coat, too," said Rosemary

The girl stood up But she held on to the chair with one hand and let Rosemary pull It was quite an effort The other scarcely helped her at all She seemed to stagger like a child, and the thought came and went through Rosemary's mind, that if people wanted helping they must respond a little, just a little, otherwise it became very difficult indeed And what was she to do with the coat now? She left it on the floor, and the hat too She was just going to take a cigarette off the mantelpiece when the girl said quickly, but so lightly and strangely "I'm very sorry, madam, but I'm going to faint I shall go off, madam, if I don't have something"

"Good heavens, how thoughtless I am!" Rosemary rushed to the bell

"Tea! Tea at once! And some brandy immediately!"

The maid was gone again, but the girl almost cried out "No, I don't want no brandy I never drink brandy It's a cup of tea I want, madam" And she burst into tears

It was a terrible and fascinating moment Rosemary knelt beside her chair

"Don't cry, poor little thing," she said "Don't cry" And she gave the other her lace handkerchief She really was touched beyond words She put her arm round those thin, birdlike shoulders

Now at last the other forgot to be shy, forgot everything except that they were both women, and gasped out "I can't go on no longer like this I can't bear it I shall do away with myself I can't bear no more"

"You shan't have to I'll look after you Don't cry any more Don't you see what a good thing it was that you met me? We'll have tea and you'll tell me everything And I shall arrange something I promise. *Do* stop crying It's so exhausting Please!"

The other did stop just in time for Rosemary to get up before the tea came She had the table placed between them She plied the poor little creature with everything, all the sandwiches, all the bread and butter, and every time her cup was empty she filled it with tea, cream and sugar People always said sugar was so nourishing As for herself she didn't eat, she smoked and looked away tactfully so that the other should not be shy

And really the effect of that slight meal was marvelous When the tea-table was carried away a new being, a light, frail creature with tangled hair, dark lips, deep, lighted eyes, lay back in the big chair in a kind of sweet languor, looking at the blaze Rosemary lit a fresh cigarette, it was time to begin

"And when did you have your last meal?" she asked softly

But at that moment the door-handle turned

"Rosemary, may I come in?" It was Philip

"Of course"

He came in "Oh, I'm so sorry," he said, and stopped and stared

"It's quite all right," said Rosemary, smiling "This is my friend, Miss—"

"Smith, madam," said the languid figure, who was strangely still and unafraid

"Smith," said Rosemary "We are going to have a little talk"

"Oh, yes," said Philip "Quite," and his eye caught sight of the coat and hat on the floor He came over to the fire and turned his back to it "It's a beastly afternoon," he said curiously, still looking at that listless figure, looking at its hands and boots, and then at Rosemary again

"Yes, isn't it?" said Rosemary enthusiastically "Vile"

Philip smiled his charming smile "As a matter of fact," said he, "I wanted you to come into the library for a moment Would you? Will Miss Smith excuse us?"

The big eyes were raised to him, but Rosemary answered for her "Of course she will" And they went out of the room together

"I say," said Philip, when they were alone "Explain Who is she? What does it all mean?"

Rosemary, laughing, leaned against the door and said "I picked her up in Curzon Street Really She's a real pick-up She asked me for the price of a cup of tea, and I brought her home with me"

"But what on earth are you going to do with her?" cried Philip

"Be nice to her," said Rosemary quickly "Be frightfully nice to her Look after her I don't know how We haven't talked yet But show her—treat her—make her feel—"

"My darling girl," said Philip, "you're quite mad, you know It simply can't be done"

"I knew you'd say that," retorted Rosemary "Why not? I want to Isn't that a reason? And besides, one's always reading about these things I decided—"

"But," said Philip slowly, and he cut the end of a cigar, "she's so astonishingly pretty"

"Pretty?" Rosemary was so surprised that she blushed "Do you think so? I—I hadn't thought about it"

"Good Lord!" Philip struck a match "She's absolutely lovely Look again, my child I was bowled over when I came into your room just now However

I think you're making a ghastly mistake Sorry, darling, if I'm crude and all that But let me know if Miss Smith is going to dine with us in time for me to look up *The Milliner's Gazette*"

"You absurd creature!" said Rosemary, and she went out of the library, but not back to her bedroom She went to her writing-room and sat down at her desk Pretty! Absolutely lovely! Bowled over! Her heart beat like a heavy bell Pretty! Lovely! She drew her check book towards her But no, checks would be of no use, of course She opened a drawer and took out five pound notes, looked at them, put two back, and holding the three squeezed in her hand she went back to her bedroom

Half an hour later Philip was still in the library, when Rosemary came in

"I only wanted to tell you," said she, and she leaned against the door again and looked at him with her dazzled exotic gaze, "Miss Smith won't dine with us tonight"

Philip put down the paper "Oh, what's happened? Previous engagement?"

Rosemary came over and sat down on his knee "She insisted on going," said she, "so I gave the poor little thing a present of money I couldn't keep her against her will, could I?" she added softly

Rosemary had just done her hair, darkened her eyes a little, and put on her pearls She put up her hands and touched Philip's cheeks

"Do you like me?" said she, and her tone, sweet, husky, troubled him

"I like you awfully," he said, and he held her tighter "Kiss me"

There was a pause

Then Rosemary said dreamily, "I saw a fascinating little box today It cost twenty eight guineas May I have it?"

Philip jumped her on his knee "You may, little wasteful one," said he

But that was not really what Rosemary wanted to say

"Philip," she whispered, and she pressed his head against her bosom, "am I pretty?"

IN THE MATTER OF A PRIVATE¹

by Rudyard Kipling

Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936) was one of the great masters of the short story and has left a body of tales that for sheer brilliance and power to enthrall are among the foremost narratives of the language Born in India, he went as a child to England where he was educated, but at seventeen he returned to India and engaged in journalistic work there until his first books, *Departmental Duties* and *Plain Tales from the Hills*, gave him an early and permanent fame In 1907 he was given the Nobel Prize award Among his many books are *Stalky & Co*, *Soldiers Three*, *Captains Courageous*, *Kim*, and the two *Jungle Books*

PEOPLE who have seen, say that one of the quaintest spectacles of human frailty is an outbreak of hysterics in a girls' school It starts without warning, generally on a hot afternoon, among the elder pupils A girl giggles till the giggle gets beyond control Then she throws up her head, and cries, "Honk, honk, honk," like a wild goose, and tears mix with laughter If the mistress be wise, she will rap out something severe at this point to check matters If she be tender-hearted, and send for a drink of water, the chances are largely in favor of another girl laughing at the afflicted one and herself collapsing Thus the trouble spreads, and may end in half of what answers to the Lower Sixth of a boys' school rocking and whooping together Given a week of warm weather, two stately promenades per diem, a heavy mutton and rice meal in the middle of the day, a certain amount of nagging from the teachers,

¹ From *Soldiers Three* by Rudyard Kipling, copyright, 1897, 1921, reprinted by permission on Doubleday, Doran & Co, Inc

and a few other things, some amazing effects develop. At least, this is what folk say who have had experience.

Now, the Mother Superior of a Convent and the Colonel of a British Infantry Regiment would be justly shocked at any comparison being made between their respective charges. But it is a fact, that under certain circumstances, Thomas in bulk can be worked up into dithering, rippling hysteria. He does not weep, but he shows his trouble unmistakably, and the consequences get into the newspapers, and all the good people who hardly know a Martini from a Snider say "Take away the brute's ammunition!"

Thomas isn't a brute, and his business, which is to look after virtuous people, demands that he shall have his ammunition to his hand. He doesn't wear silk stockings, and he really ought to be supplied with a new Adjective to help him to express his opinions, but, for all that, he is a great man. If you call him "the heroic defender of the national honor" one day and "a brutal and licentious soldiery" the next, you naturally bewilder him, and he looks upon you with suspicion. There is nobody to speak for Thomas except people who have theories to work off on him, and nobody understands Thomas except Thomas, and he does not always know what is the matter with himself.

That is the prologue. This is the story.

Corporal Slane was engaged to be married to Miss Jhansi M'Kenna, whose history is well known in the regiment and elsewhere. He had his Colonel's permission, and, being popular with the men, every arrangement had been made to give the wedding what Private Ortheris called "eeklar." It fell in the heart of the hot weather, and, after the wedding, Slane was going up to the Hills with his bride. None the less, Slane's grievance was that the affair would be only a hired carriage wedding, and he felt that the "eeklar" of that was meager. Miss M'Kenna did not care so much. The Sergeant's wife was helping her to make her wedding-dress, and she was very busy. Slane was, just then, the only moderately contented man in barracks. All the rest were more or less miserable.

And they had so much to make them happy, too. All their work was over at eight in the morning, and for the rest of the day they could lie on their backs and smoke. Canteen plug and swear at the punkah coolies. They enjoyed a fine, full flesh meal in the middle of the day, and then threw themselves down on their cots and sweated and slept till it was cool enough to go out with their "towny," whose vocabulary contained less than six hundred words, and the Adjective, and whose views on every conceivable question they had heard many times before.

There was the Canteen, of course, and there was the Temperance Room with the second-hand papers in it, but a man of any profession cannot read for eight hours a day in a temperature of 96° or 98° in the shade, running up sometimes to 103° at midnight. Very few men, even though they get a pannikin of flat, stale, muddy beer and hide it under their cots, can continue drinking for six hours a day. One man tried, but he died, and nearly the whole regiment went to his funeral because it gave them something to do. It was too early for the excitement of fever or cholera. The men could only wait and wait and

wait, and watch the shadow of the barrack creeping across the blinding white dust That was a gay life

They lounged about cantonments—it was too hot for any sort of game, and almost too hot for vice—and fuddled themselves in the evening, and filled themselves to distension with the healthy nitrogenous food provided for them, and the more they stoked the less exercise they took and the more explosive they grew Then tempers began to wear away, and men fell a-brooding over insults real or imaginary, for they had nothing else to think of The tone of the repartees changed, and instead of saying light-heartedly "I'll knock your silly face in," men grew laboriously polite and hinted that the cantonments were not big enough for themselves and their enemy, and that there would be more space for one of the two in another Place

It may have been the Devil who arranged the thing, but the fact of the case is that Losson had for a long time been worrying Simmons in an aimless way It gave him occupation The two had their cots side by side, and would sometimes spend a long afternoon swearing at each other, but Simmons was afraid of Losson and dared not challenge him to a fight He thought over the words in the hot still nights, and half the hate he felt towards Losson he vented on the wretched punkah-coolie

Losson bought a parrot in the bazar, and put it into a little cage, and lowered the cage into the cool darkness of a well, and sat on the well-curb, shouting bad language down to the parrot He taught it to say "Simmons, ye *so-oor*," which means *swine*, and several other things entirely unfit for publication He was a big gross man, and he shook like a jelly when the parrot had the sentence correctly Simmons, however, shook with rage, for all the room were laughing at him—the parrot was such a disreputable puff of green feathers and it looked so human when it chattered Losson used to sit, swinging his fat legs, on the side of the cot, and ask the parrot what it thought of Simmons The parrot would answer "Simmons, ye *so-oor*" "Good boy," Losson used to say, scratching the parrot's head, "ye 'ear that, Sim?" And Simmons used to turn over on his stomach and make answer "I 'ear Take 'eed *you* don't 'ear something one of these days"

In the restless nights, after he had been asleep all day, fits of blind rage came upon Simmons and held him till he trembled all over, while he thought in how many different ways he would slay Losson Sometimes he would picture himself trampling the life out of the man, with heavy ammunition-boots, and at others smashing in his face with the butt, and at others jumping on his shoulders and dragging the head back till the neckbone cracked Then his mouth would feel hot and fevered, and he would reach out for another sup of the beer in the pannikin

But the fancy that came to him most frequently and stayed with him longest was one connected with the great roll of fat under Losson's right ear He noticed it first on a moonlight night, and thereafter it was always before his eyes It was a fascinating roll of fat A man could get his hand upon it and tear away one side of the neck, or he could place the muzzle of a rifle on it and blow away the head in a flash Losson had no right to be sleek and contented and well-to-do, when he, Simmons, was the butt of the room Some day, per-

haps, he would show those who laughed at the "Simmons, ye *so-oor*" joke, that he was as good as the rest, and held a man's life in the crook of his fore finger When Losson snored, Simmons hated him more bitterly than ever Why should Losson be able to sleep when Simmons had to stay awake hour after hour, tossing and turning on the tapes, with the dull liver pain gnawing into his right side and his head throbbing and aching after Canteen? He thought over this for many, many nights, and the world became unprofitable to him He even blunted his naturally fine appetite with beer and tobacco, and all the while the parrot talked at and made a mock of him

The heat continued and the tempers wore away more quickly than before A Sergeant's wife died of heat-apoplexy in the night, and the rumor ran abroad that it was cholera Men rejoiced openly, hoping that it would spread and send them into camp But that was a false alarm

It was late on a Tuesday evening, and the men were waiting in the deep double verandas for "Last Posts," when Simmons went to the box at the foot of his bed, took out his pipe, and slammed the lid down with a bang that echoed through the deserted barrack like the crack of a rifle Ordinarily speaking, the men would have taken no notice, but their nerves were fretted to fiddle-strings They jumped up, and three or four clattered into the barrack room only to find Simmons kneeling by his box

"Ow! It's you, is it?" they said and laughed foolishly "We thought 'twas—"

Simmons rose slowly If the accident had so shaken his fellows, what would not the reality do?

"You thought it was—did you? And what makes you think?" he said, lashing himself into madness as he went on, "to hell with your thinking, ye dirty spies"

"Simmons, ye *so-oor*," chuckled the parrot in the veranda sleepily, recognizing a well-known voice Now that was absolutely all

The tension snapped Simmons fell back on the arm-rack deliberately—the men were at the far end of the room—and took out his rifle and packet of ammunition "Don't go playing the goat, Sim!" said Losson "Put it down," but there was a quaver in his voice Another man stooped, slipped his boot and hurled it at Simmons's head The prompt answer was a shot which, fired at random, found its billet in Losson's throat Losson fell forward without a word, and the others scattered

"You thought it was!" yelled Simmons "You're drivin' me to it! I tell you you're drivin' me to it! Get up, Losson, an' don't lie shammin' there—you an' your blasted parrit that druv me to it!"

But there was an unaffected reality about Losson's pose that showed Simmons what he had done The men were still clamoring in the veranda Simmons appropriated two more packets of ammunition and ran into the moon light, muttering "I'll make a night of it Thirty roun's, an' the last for myself Take you that, you dogs!"

He dropped on one knee and fired into the brown of the men on the veranda, but the bullet flew high, and landed in the brick work with a vicious *phwrt* that made some of the younger ones turn pale It is, as musketry theorists observe, one thing to fire and another to be fired at

Then the instinct of the chase flared up. The news spread from barrack to barrack, and the men doubled out intent on the capture of Simmons, the wild beast, who was heading for the Cavalry parade ground, stopping now and again to send back a shot and a curse in the direction of his pursuers.

"I'll learn you to spy on me!" he shouted, "I'll learn you to give me dorgs' names! Come on, the 'ole lot o' you! Colonel John Anthony Deevee, C B!"—he turned towards the Infantry Mess and shook his rifle—"you think yourself the devil of a man—but I tell you that if you put your ugly old carcass outside o' that door, I'll make you the poorest lookin' man in the army. Come out, Colonel John Anthony Deevee, C B! Come out and see me practiss on the range. I'm the crack shot of the 'ole bloomin' battalion." In proof of which statement Simmons fired at the lighted windows of the mess house.

"Private Simmons, E Comp'ny, on 'he Cavalry p'rade-ground, Sir, with thirty rounds," said a Sergeant breathlessly to the Colonel. "Shootin' right and lef', Sir. Shot Private Losson. What's to be done, Sir?"

Colonel John Anthony Deevee, C B, sallied out, only to be saluted by a spurt of dust at his feet.

"Pull up!" said the Second in Command, "I don't want my step in that way, Colonel. He's as dangerous as a mad dog."

"Shoot him like one, then," said the Colonel bitterly, "if he won't take his chance. My regiment, too! If it had been the Towheads I could have understood."

Private Simmons had occupied a strong position near a well on the edge of the parade-ground, and was defying the regiment to come on. The regiment was not anxious to comply, for there is small honor in being shot by a fellow private. Only Corporal Slane, rifle in hand, threw himself down on the ground, and wormed his way towards the well.

"Don't shoot," said he to the men round him, "like as not you'll 'it me. I'll catch the beggar, livin'."

Simmons ceased shouting for a while, and the noise of trap-wheels could be heard across the plain. Major Oldyne, Commanding the Horse Battery, was coming back from a dinner in the Civil Lines, was driving after his usual custom—that is to say, as fast as the horse could go.

"A orf'cer! A blooming spangled orf'cer!" shrieked Simmons, "I'll make a scarecrow of that orf'cer!" The trap stopped.

"What's this?" demanded the Major of Gunners. "You there, drop your rifle."

"Why, it's Jerry Blazes! I ain't got no quarrel with you, Jerry Blazes. Pass, friend, an' all's well!"

But Jerry Blazes had not the faintest intention of passing a dangerous murderer. He was, as his adoring Battery swore long and fervently, without knowledge of fear, and they were surely the best judges, for Jerry Blazes, it was notorious, had done his possible to kill a man each time the Battery went out.

He walked towards Simmons with the intention of rushing him and knocking him down.

"Don't make me do it, Sir," said Simmons, "I ain't got nothing agin you. Ah! you would?"—the Major broke into a run—"Take that then!"

The Major dropped with a bullet through his shoulder, and Simmons stood over him. He had lost the satisfaction of killing Losson in the desired way, but here was a helpless body to his hand. Should he slip in another cartridge, and blow off the head, or with the butt smash in the white face? He stopped to consider, and a cry went up from the far side of the parade-ground. "He's killed Jerry Blazes!" But in the shelter of the well-pillars Simmons was safe, except when he stepped out to fire. "I'll blow yer 'andsome 'ead off, Jerry Blazes," said Simmons reflectively. "Six an' three is nine an' one is ten, an' that leaves me another nineteen, an' one for myself." He tugged at the string of the second packet of ammunition. Corporal Slane crawled out of the shadow of a bank into the moonlight.

"I see you!" said Simmons. "Come a bit further on an' I'll do for you."

"I'm comin'," said Corporal Slane briefly, "you've done a bad day's work, Sim. Come out 'ere an' come back with me."

"Come to—" laughed Simmons, sending a cartridge home with his thumb. "Not before I've settled you an' Jerry Blazes."

The Corporal was lying at full length in the dust of the parade ground, a rifle under him. Some of the less-cautious men in the distance shouted "Shoot 'im! Shoot 'im, Slane!"

"You move 'and or foot, Slane," said Simmons, "an' I'll kick Jerry Blazes' 'ead in, and shoot you after."

"I ain't movin'," said the Corporal, raising his head, "you daren't 'it a man on 'is legs. Let go o' Jerry Blazes an' come out o' that with your fists. Come an' 'it me. You daren't, you bloomin' dog-shooter!"

"I dare."

"You lie, you man-sticker. You sneakin' butcher, you lie. See there!" Slane kicked the rifle away, and stood up in the peril of his life. "Come on, now!"

The temptation was more than Simmons could resist, for the Corporal in his white clothes offered a perfect mark.

"Don't misname me," shouted Simmons, firing as he spoke. The shot missed, and the shooter, blind with rage, threw his rifle down and rushed at Slane from the protection of the well. Within striking distance, he kicked savagely at Slane's stomach, but the weedy Corporal knew something of Simmons's weakness, and knew, too, the deadly guard for that kick. Bowing forward and drawing up his right leg till the heel of the right foot was set some three inches above the inside of the left knee-cap, he met the blow standing on one leg—exactly as Gonds stand when they meditate—and ready for the fall that would follow. There was an oath, the Corporal fell over to his own left as shinbone met shinbone, and the Private collapsed, his right leg broken an inch above the ankle.

"'Pity you don't know that guard, Sim," said Slane, spitting out the dust as he rose. Then raising his voice—"Come an' take him orf. I've bruk 'is leg." This was not strictly true, for the Private had accomplished his own downfall, since it is the special merit of that leg-guard that the harder the kick the greater the kicker's discomfiture.

Slane walked to Jerry Blazes and hung over him with ostentatious anxiety, while Simmons, weeping with pain, was carried away. "'Ope you ain't 'urt

badly, Sir," said Slane. The Major had fainted, and there was an ugly, ragged hole through the top of his arm. Slane knelt down and murmured "S'elp me, I believe 'e's dead. Well, if that ain't my blooming luck all over!"

But the Major was destined to lead his Battery afield for many a long day with unshaken nerve. He was removed and nursed and petted into convalescence, while the Battery discussed the wisdom of capturing Simmons and blowing him from a gun. They idolized their Major, and his re-appearance on parade brought about a scene nowhere provided for in the Army Regulations.

Great, too, was the glory that fell to Slane's share. The Gunners would have made him drunk thrice a day for at least a fortnight. Even the Colonel of his own regiment complimented him upon his coolness, and the local paper called him a hero. These things did not puff him up. When the Major offered him money and thanks, the virtuous Corporal took the one and put the other aside. But he had a request to make and prefaced it with many a "Beg y' pardon, Sir." Could the Major see his way to letting the Slane-M'Kenna wedding be adorned by the presence of four Battery horses to pull a hired barouche? The Major could, and so could the Battery. Excessively so. It was a gorgeous wedding.

"Wot did I do it for?" said Corporal Slane. "For the 'orses o' course. Jhansi ain't a beauty to look at, but I wasn't goin' to 'ave a hired turn-out. Jerry Blazes? If I 'adn't wanted something, Sim might ha' blowed Jerry Blazes blooming 'ead into Hrish stew for aught I'd 'a' cared."

And they hanged Private Simmons—hanged him as high as Haman in hollow square of the regiment, and the Colonel said it was Drink, and the Chaplain was sure it was the Devil, and Simmons fancied it both, but he didn't know, and only hoped his fate would be a warning to his companions, and half a dozen "intelligent publicists" wrote six beautiful leading articles on "The Prevalence of Crime in the Army."

But not a soul thought of comparing the "bloody-minded Simmons" to the squawking, gaping schoolgirl with which this story opens.

THE BACKGROUND¹

by "Saki" (H. H. Munro)

"Saki" (H. H. Munro, 1870-1916) was an English writer who died in the World War. His humorously satiric stories have been widely admired and are now available in a single volume, *The Complete Short Stories of Saki*.

THAT woman's art-jargon tires me," said Clovis to his journalist friend. "She's so fond of talking of certain pictures as 'growing on one,' as though they were a sort of fungus."

"That reminds me," said the journalist, "of the story of Henri Deplis. Have I ever told it you?"

¹ Reprinted from *The Chronicles of Clovis* by "Saki." By permission of the estate of H. H. Munro.

Clovis shook his head

"Henri Deplis was by birth a native of the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg. On maturer reflection he became a commercial traveler. His business activities frequently took him beyond the limits of the Grand Duchy, and he was stopping in a small town of Northern Italy when news reached him from home that a legacy from a distant and deceased relative had fallen to his share.

"It was not a large legacy, even from the modest standpoint of Henri Deplis, but it impelled him towards some seemingly harmless extravagances. In particular it led him to patronize local art as represented by the tattoo-needles of Signor Andreas Pincini. Signor Pincini was, perhaps, the most brilliant master of tattoo craft that Italy had ever known, but his circumstances were decidedly impoverished, and for the sum of six hundred francs he gladly undertook to cover his client's back, from the collar-bone down to the waist-line, with a glowing representation of the Fall of Icarus. The design, when finally developed, was a slight disappointment to Monsieur Deplis, who had suspected Icarus of being a fortress taken by Wallenstein in the Thirty Years' War, but he was more than satisfied with the execution of the work, which was acclaimed by all who had the privilege of seeing it as Pincini's masterpiece.

"It was his greatest effort, and his last. Without even waiting to be paid, the illustrious craftsman departed this life, and was buried under an ornate tombstone, whose winged cherubs would have afforded singularly little scope for the exercise of his favorite art. There remained, however, the widow Pincini, to whom the six hundred francs were due. And thereupon arose the great crisis in the life of Henri Deplis, traveler of commerce. The legacy, under the stress of numerous little calls on its substance, had dwindled to very insignificant proportions, and when a pressing wine bill and sundry other current accounts had been paid, there remained little more than 430 francs to offer to the widow. The lady was properly indignant, not wholly, as she volubly explained, on account of the suggested writing-off of 170 francs, but also at the attempt to depreciate the value of her late husband's acknowledged masterpiece. In a week's time Deplis was obliged to reduce his offer to 405 francs, which circumstance fanned the widow's indignation into a fury. She canceled the sale of the work of art, and a few days later Deplis learned with a sense of consternation that she had presented it to the municipality of Bergamo, which had gratefully accepted it. He left the neighborhood as unobtrusively as possible, and was genuinely relieved when his business commands took him to Rome, where he hoped his identity and that of the famous picture might be lost sight of.

"But he bore on his back the burden of the dead man's genius. On presenting himself one day in the steaming corridor of a vapor bath, he was at once hustled back into his clothes by the proprietor, who was a North Italian, and who emphatically refused to allow the celebrated Fall of Icarus to be publicly on view without the permission of the municipality of Bergamo. Public interest and official vigilance increased as the matter became more widely known, and Deplis was unable to take a simple dip in the sea or river on the hottest afternoon unless clothed up to the collar-bone in a substantial bathing garment. Later on the authorities of Bergamo conceived the idea that salt water might be injurious to the masterpiece, and a perpetual injunction was obtained which

debarred the muchly harassed commercial traveler from sea bathing under any circumstances. Altogether, he was fervently thankful when his firm of employers found him a new range of activities in the neighborhood of Bordeaux. His thankfulness, however, ceased abruptly at the Franco-Italian frontier. An imposing array of official force barred his departure, and he was sternly reminded of the stringent law which forbids the exportation of Italian works of art.

"A diplomatic parley ensued between the Luxemburgian and Italian Governments, and at one time the European situation became overcast with the possibilities of trouble. But the Italian Government stood firm, it declined to concern itself in the least with the fortunes or even the existence of Henri Deplis, commercial traveler, but was immovable in its decision that the Fall of Icarus (by the late Pincini, Andreas), at present the property of the municipality of Bergamo, should not leave the country.

"The excitement died down in time, but the unfortunate Deplis, who was of a constitutionally retiring disposition, found himself a few months later once more the storm-center of a furious controversy. A certain German art expert, who had obtained from the municipality of Bergamo permission to inspect the famous masterpiece, declared it to be a spurious Pincini, probably the work of some pupil whom he had employed in his declining years. The evidence of Deplis on the subject was obviously worthless, as he had been under the influence of the customary narcotics during the long process of pricking in the design. The editor of an Italian art journal refuted the contentions of the German expert and undertook to prove that his private life did not conform to any modern standard of decency. The whole of Italy and Germany were drawn into the dispute, and the rest of Europe was soon involved in the quarrel. There were stormy scenes in the Spanish Parliament, and the University of Copenhagen bestowed a gold medal on the German expert (afterwards sending a commission to examine his proofs on the spot), while two Polish schoolboys in Paris committed suicide to show what *they* thought of the matter.

"Meanwhile, the unhappy human background fared no better than before, and it was not surprising that he drifted into the ranks of Italian anarchists. Four times at least he was escorted to the frontier as a dangerous and undesirable foreigner, but he was always brought back as the Fall of Icarus (attributed to Pincini, Andreas, early Twentieth Century). And then one day, at an anarchist congress at Genoa, a fellow worker, in the heat of debate, broke a phial full of corrosive liquid over his back. The red shirt that he was wearing mitigated the effects, but the Icarus was ruined beyond recognition. His assailant was severely reprimanded for assaulting a fellow-anarchist and received seven years' imprisonment for defacing a national art treasure. As soon as he was able to leave the hospital Henri Deplis was put across the frontier as an undesirable alien.

"In the quieter streets of Paris, especially in the neighborhood of the Ministry of Fine Arts, you may sometimes meet a depressed, anxious-looking man, who, if you pass him the time of day, will answer you with a slight Luxemburgian accent. He nurses the illusion that he is one of the lost arms of the

Venus de Milo, and hopes that the French Government may be persuaded to buy him On all other subjects I believe he is tolerably sane "

A MUNICIPAL REPORT¹

by O Henry

William Sydney Porter, "O Henry" (1862-1910), born at Greensboro, N. C., was bookkeeper, draftsman, and bank teller before he began his remarkable, and brief, career as a short story writer. Convicted of embezzling, of which he seems to have been only technically guilty, he served for a little more than three years in the federal penitentiary at Columbus, Ohio. Here he began seriously to write, using the pen name by which he is now known. Shortly after his release in 1901 he went to New York, where he wrote an amazingly large number of stories, now collected in such volumes as *Cabbages and Kings*, *The Four Million*, *The Trimmed Lamp*, and *The Voice of the City*. His short stories are frequently ironical but not harshly pessimistic, ingenious, and usually depend on a surprise ending for their effect.

EAST is East, and West is San Francisco, according to Californians. Californians are a race of people, they are not merely inhabitants of a State. They are the Southerners of the West. Now, Chicagoans are no less loyal to their city, but when you ask them why, they stammer and speak of lake fish and the new Odd Fellows Building. But Californians go into detail.

Of course they have, in the climate, an argument that is good for half an hour while you are thinking of your coal bills and heavy underwear. But as soon as they come to mistake your silence for conviction, madness comes upon them, and they picture the city of the Golden Gate as the Bagdad of the New World. So far, as a matter of opinion, no refutation is necessary. But, dear cousins all (from Adam and Eve descended), it is a rash one who will lay his finger on the map and say "In this town there can be no romance—what could happen here?" Yes, it is a bold and a rash deed to challenge in one sentence history, romance, and Rand and McNally.

"NASHVILLE—A city, port of delivery, and the capital of the State of Tennessee, is on the Cumberland River and on the N. C. & St. L. and the L. & N. railroads. This city is regarded as the most important educational center in the South."

I stepped off the train at 8 P. M. Having searched the thesaurus in vain for adjectives, I must, as a substitution, hie me to comparison in the form of a recipe.

Take of London fog 30 parts, malaria 10 parts, gas leaks 20 parts, dewdrops gathered in a brickyard at sunrise, 25 parts, odor of honeysuckle 15 parts. Mix.

The mixture will give you an approximate conception of a Nashville drizzle. It is not so fragrant as a moth ball nor so thick as pea soup, but 'tis enough—'twill serve.

I went to a hotel in a tumbril. It required strong self-suppression for me to

¹ From *Strictly Business*, by O. Henry, copyright, 1910, 1938, by Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc.

keep from climbing to the top of it and giving an imitation of Sidney Carton. The vehicle was drawn by beasts of a bygone era and driven by something dark and emancipated

I was sleepy and tired, so when I got to the hotel I hurriedly paid it the fifty cents it demanded (with approximate lagniappe, I assure you) I knew its habits, and I did not want to hear it prate about its old "marster" or anything that happened "befo' de wah"

The hotel was one of the kind described as "renovated" That means \$20,000 worth of new marble pillars, tiling, electric lights and brass cuspidors in the lobby, and a new L & N time table and a lithograph of Lookout Mountain in each one of the great rooms above The management was without reproach, the attention full of exquisite southern courtesy, the service as slow as the progress of a snail and as good humored as Rip Van Winkle The food was worth traveling a thousand miles for There is no other hotel in the world where you can get such chicken livers *en brochette*

At dinner I asked a Negro waiter if there was anything doing in town He pondered gravely for a minute, and then replied "Well, boss, I don't really reckon there's anything at all doin' after sundown"

Sundown had been accomplished, it had been drowned in the drizzle long before So that spectacle was denied me But I went forth upon the streets in the drizzle to see what might be there

"It is built on undulating grounds, and the streets are lighted by electricity at a cost of \$32,470 per annum"

As I left the hotel there was a race riot Down upon me charged a company of freedmen, or Arabs, or Zulus, armed with—no, I saw with relief that they were not rifles, but whips And I saw dimly a caravan of black, clumsy vehicles, and at the reassuring shouts, "Kyar you anywhere in the town, boss, fuh fifty cents," I reasoned that I was merely a "fare" instead of a victim

I walked through long streets, all leading uphill I wondered how those streets ever came down again Perhaps they didn't until they were "graded" On a few of the "main streets" I saw lights in stores here and there, saw street cars go by conveying worthy burghers hither and yon, saw people pass engaged in the art of conversation, and heard a burst of semi-lively laughter issuing from a soda-water and ice-cream parlor The streets other than "main" seemed to have enticed upon their borders houses consecrated to peace and domesticity In many of them lights shone behind discreetly drawn window shades, in a few pianos unkludged orderly and irreproachable music There was, indeed, little "doing" I wished I had come before sundown So I returned to my hotel

"In November, 1864, the Confederate General Hood advanced against Nashville, where he shut up a National force under General Thomas The latter then sallied forth and defeated the Confederates in a terrible conflict"

All my life I have heard of, admired, and witnessed the fine marksmanship of the South in its peaceful conflicts in the tobacco-chewing regions But in my hotel a surprise awaited me There were twelve bright, new, imposing, capacious brass cuspidors in the great lobby, tall enough to be called urns and so wide-mouthed that the crack pitcher of a lady baseball team should have been able to throw a ball into one of them at five paces distant But, although

a terrible battle had raged and was still raging, the enemy had not suffered Bright, new, imposing, capacious, untouched, they stood But, shades of Jefferson Brick! the tile floor—the beautiful tile floor! I could not avoid thinking of the battle of Nashville, and trying to draw, as is my foolish habit, some deductions about hereditary marksmanship

Here I first saw Major (by misplaced courtesy) Wentworth Caswell I knew him for a type the moment my eyes suffered from the sight of him A rat has no geographical habitat My old friend, A Tennyson, said, as he so well said almost everything

Prophet, curse me the blabbing lip,
And curse me the British vermin, the rat

Let us regard the word "British" as interchangeable *ad lib* A rat is a rat

This man was hunting about the hotel lobby like a starved dog that had forgotten where he had buried a bone He had a face of great acreage, red, pulpy, and with a kind of sleepy massiveness like that of Buddha He possessed one single virtue—he was very smoothly shaven The mark of the beast is not indelible upon a man until he goes about with a stubble I think that if he had not used his razor that day I would have repulsed his advances, and the criminal calendar of the world would have been spared the addition of one murder

I happened to be standing within five feet of a cuspidor when Major Caswell opened fire upon it I had been observant enough to perceive that the attacking force was using Gatlings instead of squirrel rifles, so I side-stepped so promptly that the major seized the opportunity to apologize to a noncombatant He had the blabbing lip In four minutes he had become my friend and had dragged me to the bar

I desire to interpolate here that I am a Southerner But I am not one by profession or trade I eschew the string tie, the slouch hat, the Prince Albert, the number of bales of cotton destroyed by Sherman, and plug chewing When the orchestra plays Dixie I do not cheer I slide a little lower on the leather-cornered seat and, well, order another Würzburger and wish that Longstreet had—but what's the use?

Major Caswell banged the bar with his fist, and the first gun at Fort Sumter re-echoed When he fired the last one at Appomattox I began to hope But then he began on family trees, and demonstrated that Adam was only a third cousin of a collateral branch of the Caswell family Genealogy disposed of, he took up, to my distaste, his private family matters He spoke of his wife, traced her descent back to Eve, and profanely denied any possible rumor that she may have had relations in the land of Nod

By this time I began to suspect that he was trying to obscure by noise the fact that he had ordered the drinks, on the chance that I would be bewildered into paying for them But when they were down he crashed a silver dollar loudly upon the bar Then, of course, another serving was obligatory. And when I had paid for that I took leave of him brusquely, for I wanted no more of him But before I had obtained my release he had prated loudly of an income that his wife received, and showed a handful of silver money

When I got my key at the desk the clerk said to me courteously "If that man Caswell has annoyed you, and if you would like to make a complaint, we will have him ejected. He is a nuisance, a loafer, and without any known means of support, although he seems to have some money most of the time. But we don't seem to be able to hit upon any means of throwing him out legally."

"Why, no," said I, after some reflection, "I don't see my way clear to making a complaint. But I would like to place myself on record as asserting that I do not care for his company. Your town," I continued, "seems to be a quiet one. What manner of entertainment, adventure, or excitement have you to offer to the stranger within your gates?"

"Well, sir," said the clerk, "there will be a show here next Thursday. It is—I'll look it up and have the announcement sent up to your room with the ice water. Good night."

After I went up to my room I looked out the window. It was only about ten o'clock, but I looked upon a silent town. The drizzle continued, spangled with dim lights, as far apart as currants in a cake sold at the Ladies' Exchange.

"A quiet place," I said to myself, as my first shoe struck the ceiling of the occupant of the room beneath mine. "Nothing of the life here that gives color and variety to the cities in the East and West. Just a good, ordinary, humdrum, business town."

"Nashville occupies a foremost place among the manufacturing centers of the country. It is the fifth boot and shoe market in the United States, the largest candy and cracker manufacturing city in the South, and does an enormous wholesale drygoods, grocery, and drug business."

I must tell you how I came to be in Nashville, and I assure you the digression brings as much tedium to me as it does to you. I was traveling elsewhere on my own business, but I had a commission from a northern literary magazine to stop over there and establish a personal connection between the publication and one of its contributors, Azalea Adair.

Adair (there was no clue to the personality except the handwriting) had sent in some essays (lost art!) and poems that had made the editors swear approvingly over their one o'clock luncheon. So they had commissioned me to round up said Adair and corner by contract his or her output at two cents a word before some other publisher offered her ten or twenty.

At nine o'clock the next morning, after my chicken livers *en brochette* (try them if you can find that hotel), I strayed out into the drizzle, which was still on for an unlimited run. At the first corner I came upon Uncle Caesar. He was a stalwart Negro, older than the pyramids, with gray wool and a face that reminded me of Brutus, and a second afterwards of the late King Cettiwayo. He wore the most remarkable coat that I ever had seen or expect to see. It reached to his ankles and had once been a Confederate gray in color. But rain and sun and age had so variegated it that Joseph's coat, beside it, would have faded to a pale monochrome. I must linger with that coat, for it has to do with the story—the story that is so long in coming, because you can hardly expect anything to happen in Nashville.

Once it must have been the military coat of an officer. The cape of it had

vanished, but all adown its front it had been frogged and tasseled magnificently. But now the frogs and tassels were gone. In their stead had been patiently stitched (I surmised by some surviving "black mammy") new frogs made of cunningly twisted common hempen twine. This twine was frayed and disheveled. It must have been added to the coat as a substitute for vanished splendors, with tasteless but painstaking devotion, for it followed faithfully the curves of the long-missing frogs. And, to complete the comedy and pathos of the garment, all its buttons were gone save one. The second button from the top alone remained. The coat was fastened by other twine strings tied through the buttonholes and other holes rudely pierced in the opposite side. There was never such a weird garment so fantastically bedecked and of so many mottled hues. The lone button was the size of a half-dollar, made of yellow horn and sewed on with coarse twine.

This Negro stood by a carriage so old that Ham himself might have started a hack line with it after he left the ark with the two animals hitched to it. As I approached he threw open the door, drew out a feather duster, waved it with out using it, and said in deep, rumbling tones

"Step right in, suh, ain't a speck of dust in it—jus' got back from a funeral, suh."

I inferred that on such gala occasions carriages were given an extra cleaning. I looked up and down the street and perceived that there was little choice among the vehicles for hire that lined the curb. I looked in my memorandum book for the address of Azalea Adair.

"I want to go to 861 Jessamine Street," I said, and was about to step into the hack. But for an instant the thick, long, gorilla-like arm of the old Negro barred me. On his massive and saturnine face a look of sudden suspicion and enmity flashed for a moment. Then, with quickly returning conviction, he asked blandishingly "What are you gwine there for, boss?"

"What is that to you?" I asked, a little sharply.

"Nothin', suh, jus' nothin' Only it's a lonesome kind of part of town and few folks ever has business out there. Step right in. The seats is clean—jes' got back from a funeral, suh."

A mile and a half it must have been to our journey's end. I could hear nothing but the fearful rattle of the ancient hack over the uneven brick paving, I could smell nothing but the drizzle, now further flavored with coal smoke and something like a mixture of tar and oleander blossoms. All I could see through the streaming windows were two rows of dim houses.

"The city has an area of 10 square miles, 181 miles of streets, of which 137 miles are paved, a system of water-works that cost \$2,000,000, with 77 miles of mains."

Eighty-sixty-one Jessamine Street was a decayed mansion. Thirty yards back from the street it stood, outmerged in a splendid grove of trees and untrimmed shrubbery. A row of box bushes overflowed and almost hid the paling fence from sight, the gate was kept closed by a rope noose that encircled the gate post and the first paling of the gate. But when you got inside you saw that 861 was a shell, a shadow, a ghost of former grandeur and excellence. But in the story, I have not yet got inside.

When the hack had ceased from rattling and the weary quadrupeds came to a rest I handed my jehu his fifty cents with an additional quarter, feeling a glow of conscious generosity as I did so. He refused it.

"It's two dollars, suh," he said.

"How's that?" I asked. "I plainly heard you call out at the hotel 'Fifty cents to any part of the town.'"

"It's two dollars, suh," he repeated obstinately. "It's a long ways from the hotel."

"It is within the city limits and well within them," I argued. "Don't think that you have picked up a greenhorn Yankee. Do you see those hills over there?" I went on, pointing toward the east (I could not see them, myself, for the drizzle), "well, I was born and raised on their other side. You old fool nigger, can't you tell people from other people when you see 'em?"

The grim face of King Cettiwayo softened. "Is you from the South, suh? I reckon it was them shoes of yourn fooled me. They is somethin' sharp in the toes for a southern gen'l'man to wear."

"Then the charge is fifty cents, I suppose?" said I inexorably.

His former expression, a mingling of cupidity and hostility, returned, remained ten seconds, and vanished.

"Boss," he said, "fifty cents is right, but I *needs* two dollars, suh, I'm *obleeged* to have two dollars. I ain't *demandin'* it now, suh, after I knows whar you's from, I'm jus' sayin' that I *has* to have two dollars tonight, and business is mighty po'."

Peace and confidence settled upon his heavy features. He had been luckier than he had hoped. Instead of having picked up a greenhorn, ignorant of rates, he had come upon an inheritance.

"You confounded old rascal," I said, reaching down to my pocket, "you ought to be turned over to the police."

For the first time I saw him smile. He knew, *he knew*, HE KNEW.

I gave him two one-dollar bills. As I handed them over I noticed that one of them had seen parlous times. Its upper right-hand corner was missing, and it had been torn through in the middle, but joined again. A strip of blue tissue paper, pasted over the split, preserved its negotiability.

Enough of the African bandit for the present. I left him happy, lifted the rope and opened the creaky gate.

The house, as I said, was a shell. A paint brush had not touched it in twenty years. I could not see why a strong wind should not have bowled it over like a house of cards until I looked again at the trees that hugged it close—the trees that saw the battle of Nashville and still drew their protecting branches around it against storm and enemy and cold.

Azalea Adair, fifty years old, white-haired, a descendant of the cavaliers, as thin and frail as the house she lived in, robed in the cheapest and cleanest dress I ever saw, with an air as simple as a queen's, received me.

The reception room seemed a mile square, because there was nothing in it except some rows of books, on unpainted white-pine bookshelves, a cracked marble-top table, a rag rug, a hairless horsehair sofa, and two or three chairs. Yes, there was a picture on the wall, a colored crayon drawing of a cluster of

pansies I looked around for the portrait of Andrew Jackson and the pine-cone hanging basket but they were not there

Azalea Adair and I had conversation, a little of which will be repeated to you She was a product of the old South, gently nurtured in the sheltered life Her learning was not broad, but was deep and of splendid originality in its somewhat narrow scope She had been educated at home, and her knowledge of the world was derived from inference and by inspiration Of such is the precious, small group of essayists made While she talked to me I kept brushing my fingers, trying, unconsciously, to rid them guiltily of the absent dust from the half-calf backs of Lamb, Chaucer, Hazlitt, Marcus Aurelius, Montaigne, and Hood She was exquisite, she was a valuable discovery Nearly everybody nowadays knows too much—oh, so much too much—of real life

I could perceive clearly that Azalea Adair was very poor A house and a dress she had, not much else, I fancied So, divided between my duty to the magazine and my loyalty to the poets and essayists who fought Thomas in the valley of the Cumberland, I listened to her voice, which was like a harpsichord's, and found that I could not speak of contracts In the presence of the nine Muses and the three Graces one hesitated to lower the topic to two cents There would have to be another colloquy after I had regained my commercialism But I spoke of my mission, and three o'clock of the next afternoon was set for the discussion of the business proposition

"Your town," I said, as I began to make ready to depart (which is the time for smooth generalities), "seems to be a quiet, sedate place A home town, I should say, where few things out of the ordinary ever happen"

"It carries on an extensive trade in stoves and hollow ware with the West and South, and its flouring mills have a daily capacity of more than 2,000 barrels"

Azalea Adair seemed to reflect

"I have never thought of it that way," she said, with a kind of sincere intensity that seemed to belong to her "Isn't it in the still, quiet places that things do happen? I fancy that when God began to create the earth on the first Monday morning one could have leaned out one's window and heard the drops of mud splashing from His trowel as He built up the everlasting hills What did the noisiest project in the world—I mean the building of the tower of Babel—result in finally? A page and a half of Esperanto in the *North American Review*"

"Of course," said I platitudinously, "human nature is the same everywhere, but there is more color—er—more drama and movement and—er—romance in some cities than in others"

"On the surface," said Azalea Adair "I have traveled many times around the world in a golden airship wafted on two wings—print and dreams I have seen (on one of my imaginary tours) the Sultan of Turkey bowstring with his own hands one of his wives who had uncovered her face in public I have seen a man in Nashville tear up his theatre tickets because his wife was going out with her face covered—with rice powder In San Francisco's Chinatown I saw the slave girl Sing Yee dipped slowly, inch by inch, in boiling almond oil to

make her swear she would never see her American lover again. She gave in when the boiling oil had reached three inches above her knee. At a euchre party in East Nashville the other night I saw Kitty Morgan cut dead by seven of her schoolmates and lifelong friends because she had married a house painter. The boiling oil was sizzling as high as her heart, but I wish you could have seen the fine little smile that she carried from table to table. Oh, yes, it is a humdrum town. Just a few miles of red brick houses and mud and stores and lumber yards."

Someone knocked hollowly at the back of the house. Azalea Adair breathed a soft apology and went to investigate the sound. She came back in three minutes with brightened eyes, a faint flush on her cheeks, and ten years lifted from her shoulders.

"You must have a cup of tea before you go," she said, "and a sugar cake."

She reached and shook a little iron bell. In shuffled a small Negro girl about twelve, barefoot, not very tidy, glowering at me with thumb in mouth and bulging eyes.

Azalea Adair opened a tiny, worn purse and drew out a dollar bill, a dollar bill with the upper right-hand corner missing, torn in two pieces and pasted together again with a strip of blue tissue paper. It was one of the bills I had given the piratical Negro—there was no doubt of it.

"Go up to Mr. Baker's store on the corner, Impy," she said, handing the girl the dollar bill, "and get a quarter of a pound of tea—the kind he always sends me—and ten cents' worth of sugar cakes. Now, hurry. The supply of tea in the house happens to be exhausted," she explained to me.

Impy left by the back way. Before the scrape of her hard, bare feet had died away on the back porch, a wild shriek—I was sure it was hers—filled the hollow house. Then the deep, gruff tones of an angry man's voice mingled with the girl's further squeals and unintelligible words.

Azalea Adair rose without surprise or emotion and disappeared. For two minutes I heard the hoarse rumble of the man's voice, then something like an oath and a slight scuffle, and she returned calmly to her chair.

"This is a roomy house," she said, "and I have a tenant for part of it. I am sorry to have to rescind my invitation to tea. It was impossible to get the kind I always use at the store. Perhaps tomorrow Mr. Baker will be able to supply me."

I was sure that Impy had not had time to leave the house. I inquired concerning street-car lines and took my leave. After I was well on my way I remembered that I had not learned Azalea Adair's name. But tomorrow would do.

That same day I started in on the course of iniquity that this uneventful city forced upon me. I was in the town only two days, but in that time I managed to lie shamelessly by telegraph, and to be an accomplice—after the fact, if that is the correct legal term—to a murder.

As I rounded the corner nearest my hotel the Afrite coachman of the polychromatic, nonpareil coat seized me, swung open the dungeony door of his

peripatetic sarcophagus, flirited his feather duster and began his ritual "Step right in, boss Carriage is clean—jus' got back from a funeral Fifty cents to any—"

And then he knew me and grinned broadly "'Scuse me, boss, you is de gen'l'man what rid out with me dis mawnin' Thank you kindly, suh "

"I am going out to 861 again tomorrow afternoon at three," said I, "and if you will be here, I'll let you drive me So you know Miss Adair?" I concluded, thinking of my dollar bill

"I belonged to her father, Judge Adair, suh," he replied

"I judge that she is pretty poor," I said "She hasn't much money to speak of, has she?"

For an instant I looked again at the fierce countenance of King Cettiwayo, and then he changed back to an extortionate old Negro hack driver

"She ain't gwine to starve, suh," he said slowly "She has reso'ces, suh, she has reso'ces "

"I shall pay you fifty cents for the trip," said I

"Dat is puffyckly correct, suh," he answered humbly "I jus' *had* to have dat two dollars dis mawnin', boss "

I went to the hotel and lied by electricity I wired the magazine "A Adair holds out for eight cents a word "

The answer that came back was "Give it to her quick, you duffer "

Just before dinner "Major" Wentworth Caswell bore down upon me with the greetings of a long-lost friend I have seen few men whom I have so instantaneously hated, and of whom it was so difficult to be rid I was standing at the bar when he invaded me, therefore I could not wave the white ribbon in his face I would have paid gladly for the drinks, hoping, thereby, to escape another, but he was one of those despicable, roaring, advertising bibbers who must have brass bands and fireworks attend upon every cent that they waste in their follies

With an air of producing millions he drew two one dollar bills from a pocket and dashed one of them upon the bar I looked once more at the dollar bill with the upper right-hand corner missing, torn through the middle, and patched with a strip of blue tissue paper It was my dollar bill again It could have been no other

I went up to my room The drizzle and the monotony of a dreary, eventless southern town had made me tired and listless I remember that just before I went to bed I mentally disposed of the mysterious dollar bill (which might have formed the clue to a tremendously fine detective story of San Francisco) by saying to myself sleepily "Seems as though a lot of people here own stock in the Hack-Driver's Trust Pays dividends promptly, too Wonder if—" Then I fell asleep

King Cettiwayo was at his post the next day, and rattled my bones over the stones out to 861 He was to wait and rattle me back again when I was ready

Azalea Adair looked paler and cleaner and frailer than she had looked on the day before After she had signed the contract at eight cents per word she

grew still paler and began to slip out of her chair Without much trouble I managed to get her up on the antediluvian horsehair sofa and then I ran out to the sidewalk and yelled to the coffee-colored Pirate to bring a doctor With a wisdom that I had not suspected in him, he abandoned his team and struck off up the street afoot, realizing the value of speed In ten minutes he returned with a grave, gray-haired and capable man of medicine In a few words (worth much less than eight cents each) I explained to him my presence in the hollow house of mystery He bowed with stately understanding, and turned to the old Negro

"Uncle Caesar," he said calmly, "run up to my house and ask Miss Lucy to give you a cream pitcher full of fresh milk and half a tumbler of port wine And hurry back Don't drive—run I want you to get back some time this week "

It occurred to me that Dr Merriman also felt a distrust as to the speeding power of the land-pirate's steeds After Uncle Caesar was gone, lumberingly, but swiftly, up the street, the doctor looked me over with great politeness and as much careful calculation until he had decided that I might do

"It is only a case of insufficient nutrition," he said "In other words, the result of poverty, pride, and starvation Mrs Caswell has many devoted friends who would be glad to aid her, but she will accept nothing except from that old Negro, Uncle Caesar, who was once owned by her family "

"Mrs Caswell!" said I, in surprise And then I looked at the contract and saw that she had signed it "Azalea Adair Caswell "

"I thought she was Miss Adair," I said

"Married to a drunken, worthless loafer, sir," said the doctor "It is said that he robs her even of the small sums that her old servant contributes toward her support "

When the milk and wine had been brought the doctor soon revived Azalea Adair She sat up and talked of the beauty of the autumn leaves that were then in season, and their height of color She referred lightly to her fainting seizure as the outcome of an old palpitation of the heart Impy fanned her as she lay on the sofa The doctor was due elsewhere, and I followed him to the door I told him that it was within my power and intentions to make a reasonable advance of money to Azalea Adair on future contributions to the magazine, and he seemed pleased

"By the way," he said, "perhaps you would like to know that you have had royalty for a coachman Old Caesar's grandfather was a king in Congo Caesar himself has royal ways, as you may have observed "

As the doctor was moving off I heard Uncle Caesar's voice inside "Did he git bofe of dem two dollars from you, Mis' Zalea?"

"Yes, Caesar," I heard Azalea Adair answer weakly And then I went in and concluded business negotiations with our contributor I assumed the responsibility of advancing fifty dollars, putting it as a necessary formality in binding our bargain And then Uncle Caesar drove me back to the hotel

Here ends all of the story as far as I can testify as a witness The rest must be only bare statements of facts

At about six o'clock I went out for a stroll Uncle Caesar was at his corner He threw open the door of his carriage, flourishing his duster, and began his depressing formula "Step right in, suh Fifty cents to anywhere in the city—hack's puffickly clean, suh—jus' got back from a funeral—"

And then he recognized me I think his eyesight was getting bad His coat had taken on a few more faded shades of color, the twine strings were more frayed and ragged, the last remaining button—the button of yellow horn—was gone A motley descendant of kings was Uncle Caesar!

About two hours later I saw an excited crowd besieging the front of a drug store In a desert where nothing happens this was manna, so I edged my way inside On an extemporized couch of empty boxes and chairs was stretched the mortal corporeality of Major Wentworth Caswell A doctor was testing him for the immortal ingredient His decision was that it was conspicuous by its absence

The erstwhile Major had been found dead on a dark street and brought by curious and ennuied citizens to the drug store The late human being had been engaged in terrific battle—the details showed that Loafer and reprobate though he had been, he had been also a warrior But he had lost His hands were yet clinched so tightly that his fingers would not be opened The gentle citizens who had known him stood about and searched their vocabularies to find some good words, if it were possible, to speak of him One kind-looking man said, after much thought "When 'Cas' was about fo'teen he was one of the best spellers in school"

While I stood there the fingers of the right hand of "the man that was," which hung down at the side of a white pine box, relaxed, and dropped some thing at my feet I covered it with one foot quietly, and a little later on I picked it up and pocketed it I reasoned that in his last struggle his hand must have seized that object unwittingly and held it in a death grip

At the hotel that night the main topic of conversation, with the possible exceptions of politics and prohibition, was the demise of Major Caswell I heard one man say to a group of listeners

"In my opinion, gentlemen, Caswell was murdered by some of these no account niggers for his money He had fifty dollars this afternoon which he showed to several gentlemen in the hotel When he was found the money was not on his person"

I left the city next morning at nine, and as the train was crossing the bridge over the Cumberland River I took out of my pocket a yellow horn overcoat button the size of a fifty-cent piece, with frayed ends of coarse twine hanging from it, and cast it out of the window into the slow, muddy waters below

I wonder what's doing in Buffalo!

HAIRCUT¹*by Ring Lardner*

Ringgold Wilmer Lardner (1885-1933) was one of the most famous of American short story writers and one of the most biting delineators of the American scene

I got another barber that comes over from Carterville and helps me out Saturdays, but the rest of the time I can get along all right alone. You can see for yourself that this ain't no New York City and besides that, the most of the boys works all day and don't have no leisure to drop in here and get themselves prettied up.

You're a newcomer, ain't you? I thought I hadn't seen you round before. I hope you like it good enough to stay. As I say, we ain't no New York City or Chicago, but we have pretty good times. Not as good, though, since Jim Kendall got killed. When he was alive, him and Hod Meyers used to keep this town in an uproar. I bet they was more laughin' done here than any town its size in America.

Jim was comical, and Hod was pretty near a match for him. Since Jim's gone, Hod tries to hold his end up just the same as ever, but it's tough goin' when you ain't got nobody to kind of work with.

They used to be plenty fun in here Saturdays. This place is jam-packed Saturdays, from four o'clock on. Jim and Hod would show up right after their supper round six o'clock. Jim would set himself down in that big chair, nearest the blue spittoon. Whoever had been settin' in that chair, why, they'd get up when Jim come in and give it to him.

You'd of thought it was a reserved seat like they have sometimes in a theaytre. Hod would generally always stand or walk up and down or some Saturdays, of course, he'd be settin' in this chair part of the time, gettin' a haircut.

Well, Jim would set there a while without openin' his mouth only to spit, and then finally he'd say to me, "Whitey,"—my right name, that is, my right first name, is Dick, but everybody round here calls me Whitey—Jim would say, "Whitey, your nose looks like a rosebud tonight. You must of been drinkin' some of your aw de cologne."

So I'd say, "No, Jim, but you look like you'd been drinkin' somethin' of that kind or somethin' worse."

Jim would have to laugh at that, but then he'd speak up and say, "No, I ain't had nothin' to drink, but that ain't sayin'. I wouldn't like somethin'. I wouldn't even mind if it was wood alcohol."

Then Hod Meyers would say, "Neither would your wife." That would set everybody to laughin' because Jim and his wife wasn't on very good terms. She'd of divorced him only they wasn't no chance to get alimony and she didn't have no way to take care of herself and the kids. She couldn't never understand Jim. He *was* kind of rough, but a good fella at heart.

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Him and Hod had all kinds of sport with Milt Sheppard. I don't suppose you've seen Milt. Well, he's got an Adam's apple that looks more like a mush melon. So I'd be shavin' Milt and when I'd start to shave down here on his neck, Hod would holler, "Hey, Whitey, wait a minute! Before you cut into it, let's make up a pool and see who can guess closest to the number of seeds."

And Jim would say, "If Milt hadn't of been so hoggish, he'd of ordered a half a cantaloupe instead of a whole one and it might not of stuck in his throat."

All the boys would roar at this and Milt himself would force a smile, though the joke was on him. Jim certainly was a card!

There's his shavin' mug, setting on the shelf, right next to Charley Vail's "Charles M. Vail." That's the druggist. He comes in regular for his shave, three times a week. And Jim's is the cup next to Charley's. "James H. Kendall." Jim won't need no shavin' mug no more, but I'll leave it there just the same for old time's sake. Jim certainly was a character!

Years ago, Jim used to travel for a canned goods concern over in Carterville. They sold canned goods. Jim had the whole northern half of the State and was on the road five days out of every week. He'd drop in here Saturdays and tell his experiences for that week. It was rich.

I guess he paid more attention to playin' jokes than makin' sales. Finally the concern let him out and he come right home here and told everybody he'd been fired instead of sayin' he'd resigned like most fellas would of.

It was a Saturday and the shop was full and Jim got up out of that chair and says, "Gentlemen, I got an important announcement to make. I been fired from my job."

Well, they asked him if he was in earnest and he said he was and nobody could think of nothin' to say till Jim finally broke the ice himself. He says, "I been sellin' canned goods and now I'm canned goods myself."

You see, the concern he'd been workin' for was a factory that made canned goods. Over in Carterville. And now Jim said he was canned himself. He was certainly a card!

Jim had a great trick that he used to play while he was travelin'. For instance, he'd be ridin' on a train and they'd come to some little town like, well, like, well, like, we'll say, like Benton. Jim would look out the train window and read the signs on the stores.

For instance, they'd be a sign, "Henry Smith, Dry Goods." Well, Jim would write down the name and the name of the town and when he got to wherever he was goin' he'd mail back a postal card to Henry Smith at Benton and not sign no name to it, but he'd write on the card, well, somethin' like "Ask your wife about that book agent that spent the afternoon last week," or "Ask your Missus who kept her from gettin' lonesome the last time you was in Carterville." And he'd sign the card, "A Friend."

Of course, he never knew what really come of none of these jokes, but he could picture what *probably* happened and that was enough.

Jim didn't work very steady after he lost his position with the Carterville people. What he did earn, doin' odd jobs round town, why, he spent pretty near all of it on gin, and his family might of starved if the stores hadn't of

carried them along Jim's wife tried her hand at dressmakin', but they ain't nobody goin' to get rich makin' dresses in this town

As I say, she'd of divorced Jim, only she seen that she couldn't support her self and the kids and she was always hopin' that some day Jim would cut out his habits and give her more than two or three dollars a week

They was a time when she would go to whoever he was workin' for and ask them to give her his wages, but after she done this once or twice, he beat her to it by borrowin' most of his pay in advance. He told it all round town, how he had outfoxed his Missus. He certainly was a caution!

But he wasn't satisfied with just outwittin' her. He was sore the way she had acted, tryin' to grab off his pay. And he made up his mind he'd get even. Well, he waited till Evans's Circus was advertised to come to town. Then he told his wife and two kiddies that he was goin' to take them to the circus. The day of the circus, he told them he would get the tickets and meet them outside the entrance to the tent.

Well, he didn't have no intentions of bein' there or buyin' tickets or nothin'. He got full of gin and laid round Wright's poolroom all day. His wife and the kids waited and waited and of course he didn't show up. His wife didn't have a dime with her, or nowhere else, I guess. So she finally had to tell the kids it was all off and they cried like they wasn't never goin' to stop.

Well, it seems, w'ile they was cryin', Doc Stair come along and he asked what was the matter, but Mrs. Kendall was stubborn and wouldn't tell him, but the kids told him and he insisted on takin' them and their mother in the show. Jim found this out afterwards and it was one reason why he had it in for Doc Stair.

Doc Stair come here about a year and a half ago. He's a mighty handsome young fella and his clothes always look like he has them made to order. He goes to Detroit two or three times a year and w'ile he's there must have a tailor take his measure and then make him a suit to order. They cost pretty near twice as much, but they fit a whole lot better than if you just bought them in a store.

For a w'ile everybody was wonderin' why a young doctor like Doc Stair should come to a town like this where we already got old Doc Gamble and Doc Foote that's both been here for years and all the practice in town was always divided between the two of them.

Then they was a story got round that Doc Stair's gal had throwed him over, a gal up in the Northern Peninsula somewhere, and the reason he come here was to hide himself away and forget it. He said himself that he thought they wasn't nothin' like general practice in a place like ours to fit a man to be a good all round doctor. And that's why he'd come.

Anyways, it wasn't long before he was makin' enough to live on, though they tell me that he never dunned nobody for what they owed him, and the folks here certainly has got the owin' habit, even in my business. If I had all that was comin' to me for just shaves alone, I could go to Carterville and put up at the Mercer for a week and see a different picture every night. For instance, they's old George Purdy—but I guess I shouldn't ought to be gossipin'.

Well, last year, our coroner died, died of the flu. Ken Beatty, that was his

name He was the coroner So they had to choose another man to be coroner in his place and they picked Doc Stair He laughed at first and said he didn't want it, but they made him take it It ain't no job that anybody would fight for and what a man makes out of it in a year would just about buy seeds for their garden Doc's the kind, though, that can't say no to nothin' if you keep at him long enough

But I was goin' to tell you about a poor boy we got here in town—Paul Dickson He fell out of a tree when he was about ten years old Lit on his head and it done somethin' to him and he ain't never been right No harm in him, but just silly Jim Kendall used to call him cuckoo, that's a name Jim had for anybody that was off their head, only he called people's head their bean That was another of his gags, callin' head bean and callin' crazy people cuckoo Only poor Paul ain't crazy, but just silly

You can imagine that Jim used to have all kinds of fun with Paul He'd send him to the White Front Garage for a left-handed monkey wrench Of course they ain't no such thing as a left handed monkey wrench

And once we had a kind of a fair here and they was a baseball game between the fats and the leans and before the game started Jim called Paul over and sent him way down to Schrader's hardware store to get a key for the pitcher's box

They wasn't nothin' in the way of gags that Jim couldn't think up, when he put his mind to it

Poor Paul was always kind of suspicious of people, maybe on account of how Jim had kept foolin' him Paul wouldn't have much to do with anybody only his own mother and Doc Stair and a girl here in town named Julie Gregg That is, she ain't a girl no more, but pretty near thirty or over

When Doc first come to town, Paul seemed to feel like here was a real friend and he hung round Doc's office most of the w'ile, the only time he wasn't there was when he'd go home to eat or sleep or when he seen Julie Gregg doin' her shoppin'

When he looked out Doc's window and seen her, he'd run downstairs and join her and tag along with her to the different stores The poor boy was crazy about Julie and she always treated him mighty nice and made him feel like he was welcome, though of course it wasn't nothin' but pity on her side

Doc done all he could to improve Paul's mind and he told me once that he really thought the boy was getting better, that they was times when he was as bright and sensible as anybody else

But I was goin' to tell you about Julie Gregg Old man Gregg was in the lumber business, but got to drinkin' and lost the most of his money and when he died, he didn't leave nothin' but the house and just enough insurance for the girl to skimp along on

Her mother was a kind of a half invalid and didn't hardly ever leave the house Julie wanted to sell the place and move somewheres else after the old man died, but the mother said she was born here and would die here It was tough on Julie as the young people round this town—well, she's too good for them

She'd been away to school and Chicago and New York and different places

and they ain't no subject she can't talk on, where you take the rest of the young folks here and you mention anything to them outside of Gloria Swanson or Tommy Meighan and they think you're delirious. Did you see Gloria in *Wages of Virtue*? You missed somethin'!

Well, Doc Stair hadn't been here more than a week when he come in one day to get shaved and I recognized who he was, as he had been pointed out to me, so I told him about my old lady. She's been ailin' for a couple years and either Doc Gamble or Doc Foote, neither one, seemed to be helpin' her. So he said he would come out and see her, but if she was able to get out herself, it would be better to bring her to his office where he could make a completer examination.

So I took her to his office and w'ile I was waitin' for her in the reception room, in come Julie Gregg. When somebody comes in Doc Stair's office, they's a bell that rings in his inside office so as he can tell they's somebody to see him.

So he left my old lady inside and come out to the front office and that's the first time him and Julie met and I guess it was what they call love at first sight. But it wasn't fifty-fifty. This young fella was the slickest lookin' fella she'd ever seen in this town and she went wild over him. To him she was just a young lady that wanted to see the doctor.

She'd came on about the same business I had. Her mother had been doctorin' for years with Doc Gamble and Doc Foote and without no results. So she'd heard they was a new doc in town and decided to give him a try. He promised to call and see her mother that same day.

I said a minute ago that it was love at first sight on her part. I'm not only judgin' by how she acted afterwards but how she looked at him that first day in his office. I ain't no mind reader, but it was wrote all over her face that she was gone.

Now Jim Kendall, besides bein' a jokesmith and a pretty good drinker, well, Jim was quite a lady killer. I guess he run pretty wild durin' the time he was on the road for them Carterville people, and besides that, he'd had a couple little affairs of the heart right here in town. As I say, his wife would have divorced him, only she couldn't.

But Jim was like the majority of men, and women, too, I guess. He wanted what he couldn't get. He wanted Julie Gregg and worked his head off tryin' to land her. Only he'd of said bean instead of head.

Well, Jim's habits and his jokes didn't appeal to Julie and of course he was a married man, so he didn't have no more chance than, well, than a rabbit. That's an expression of Jim's himself. When somebody didn't have no chance to get elected or somethin', Jim would always say they didn't have no more chance than a rabbit.

He didn't make no bones about how he felt. Right in here, more than once, in front of the whole crowd, he said he was stuck on Julie and anybody that could get her for him was welcome to his house and his wife and kids included. But she wouldn't have nothin' to do with him, wouldn't even speak to him on the street. He finally seen he wasn't gettin' nowheres with his usual line so he decided to try the rough stuff. He went right up to her house one evenin' and when she opened the door he forced his way in and grabbed her. But she

broke loose and before he could stop her, she run in the next room and locked the door and phoned to Joe Barnes Joe's the marshal Jim could hear who she was phonin' to and he beat it before Joe got there

Joe was an old friend of Julie's pa Joe went to Jim the next day and told him what would happen if he ever done it again

I don't know how the news of this little affair leaked out Chances is that Joe Barnes told his wife and she told somebody else's wife and they told their husband Anyways, it did leak out and Hod Meyers had the nerve to kid Jim about it, right here in this shop Jim didn't deny nothin' and kind of laughed it off and said for us all to wait, that lots of people had tried to make a monkey out of him, but he always got even

Meanwile everybody in town was wise to Julie's bein' wild mad over the Doc I don't suppose she had any idear how her face changed when him and her was together, of course she couldn't of, or she'd of kept away from him And she didn't know that we was all noticin' how many times she made excuses to go up to his office or pass it on the other side of the street and look up in his window to see if he was there I felt sorry for her and so did most other people

Hod Meyers kept rubbin' it into Jim about how the Doc had cut him out Jim didn't pay no attention to the kiddin' and you could see he was plannin' one of his jokes

One trick Jim had was the knack of changin' his voice He could make you think he was a girl talkin' and he could mimic any man's voice To show you how good he was along this line, I'll tell you the joke he played on me once

You know, in most towns of any size, when a man is dead and needs a shave, why, the barber that shaves him soaks him five dollars for the job, that is, he don't soak *him*, but whoever ordered the shave I just charge three dollars because personally I don't mind much shavin' a dead person They lay a whole lot stiller than live customers The only thing is that you don't feel like talkin' to them and you get kind of lonesome

Well, about the coldest day we ever had here, two years ago last winter, the phone rung at the house wile I was home to dinner and I answered the phone and it was a woman's voice and she said she was Mrs John Scott and her husband was dead and would I come out and shave him

Old John had always been a good customer of mine But they live seven miles out in the country, on the Streeter road Still I didn't see how I could say no

So I said I would be there, but would have to come in a jitney and it might cost three or four dollars besides the price of the shave So she, or the voice, it said that was all right, so I got Frank Abbott to drive me out to the place and when I got there, who should open the door but old John himself! He wasn't no more dead than, well, than a rabbit

It didn't take no private detective to figure out who had played me this little joke Nobody could of thought it up but Jim Kendall He certainly was a card!

I tell you this incident just to show you how he could disguise his voice and make you believe it was somebody else talkin' I'd of swore it was Mrs Scott had called me Anyways, some woman

Well, Jim waited till he had Doc Stair's voice down pat, then he went after revenge

He called Julie up on a night when he knew Doc was over in Carterville. She never questioned but what it was Doc's voice. Jim said he must see her that night, he couldn't wait no longer to tell her somethin'. She was all excited and told him to come to the house. But he said he was expectin' an important long distance call and wouldn't she please forget her manners for once and come to his office. He said they couldn't nothin' hurt her and nobody would see her and he just *must* talk to her a little w'ile. Well, poor Julie fell for it.

Doc always keeps a night light in his office, so it looked to Julie like they was somebody there.

Meanwhile Jim Kendall had went to Wright's poolroom, where they was a whole gang amusin' themselves. The most of them had drank plenty of gin, and they was a rough bunch even when sober. They was always strong for Jim's jokes and when he told them to come with him and see some fun they give up their card games and pool games and followed along.

Doc's office is on the second floor. Right outside his door they's a flight of stairs leadin' to the floor above. Jim and his gang hid in the dark behind these stairs.

Well, Julie come up to Doc's door and rung the bell and they was nothin' doin'. She rung it again and she rung it seven or eight times. Then she tried the door and found it locked. Then Jim made some kind of a noise and she heard it and waited a minute, and then she says, "Is that you, Ralph?" Ralph is Doc's first name.

They was no answer and it must of came to her all of a sudden that she'd been bunked. She pretty near fell downstairs and the whole gang after her. They chased her all the way home, hollerin', "Is that you, Ralph?" and "Oh, Ralphie, dear, is that you?" Jim says he couldn't holler it himself, as he was laughin' too hard.

Poor Julie! She didn't show up here on Main Street for a long, long time afterward.

And of course Jim and his gang told everybody in town, everybody but Doc Stair. They was scared to tell him, and he might of never knowed only for Paul Dickson. The poor cuckoo, as Jim called him, he was here in the shop one night when Jim was still gloatin' yet over what he'd done to Julie. And Paul took in as much of it as he could understand and he run to Doc with the story.

It's a cinch Doc went up in the air and swore he'd make Jim suffer. But it was a kind of a delicate thing, because if it got out that he had beat Jim up, Julie was bound to hear of it and then she'd know that Doc knew and of course knowin' that he knew would make it worse for her than ever. He was goin' to do somethin', but it took a lot of figurin'.

Well, it was a couple days later when Jim was here in the shop again, and so was the cuckoo. Jim was goin' duck-shootin' the next day and had came in lookin' for Hod Meyers to go with him. I happened to know that Hod had went over to Carterville and wouldn't be home till the end of the week. So Jim said he hated to go alone and he guessed he would call it off. Then poor Paul spoke up and said if Jim would take him he would go along. Jim thought a

w'ile and then he said, well, he guessed a half-wit was better than nothin'

I suppose he was plottin' to get Paul out in the boat and play some joke on him, like pushin' him in the water. Anyways, he said Paul could go. He asked him had he ever shot a duck and Paul said no, he'd never even had a gun in his hands. So Jim said he could set in the boat and watch him and if he behaved himself, he might lend him his gun for a couple of shots. They made a date to meet in the mornin' and that's the last I seen of Jim alive.

Next mornin', I hadn't been open more than ten minutes when Doc Stair come in. He looked kind of nervous. He asked me had I seen Paul Dickson. I said no, but I knew where he was, out duck shootin' with Jim Kendall. So Doc says that's what he had heard, and he couldn't understand it because Paul had told him he wouldn't never have no more to do with Jim as long as he lived.

He said Paul had told him about the joke Jim had played on Julie. He said Paul had asked him what he thought of the joke and the Doc told him that anybody that would do a thing like that ought not to be let live.

I said it had been a kind of a raw thing, but Jim just couldn't resist no kind of a joke, no matter how raw. I said I thought he was all right at heart, but just bubblin' over with mischief. Doc turned and walked out.

At noon he got a phone call from old John Scott. The lake where Jim and Paul had went shootin' is on John's place. Paul had came runnin' up to the house a few minutes before and said they'd been an accident. Jim had shot a few ducks and then give the gun to Paul and told him to try his luck. Paul hadn't never handled a gun and he was nervous. He was shakin' so hard that he couldn't control the gun. He let fire and Jim sunk back in the boat, dead.

Doc Stair, bein' the coroner, jumped in Frank Abbott's flivver and rushed out to Scott's farm. Paul and old John was down on the shore of the lake. Paul had rowed the boat to shore, but they'd left the body in it, waiting for Doc to come.

Doc examined the body and said they might as well fetch it back to town. They was no use leavin' it there or callin' a jury, as it was a plain case of accidental shootin'.

Personally I wouldn't never leave a person shoot a gun in the same boat I was in unless I was sure they knew somethin' about guns. Jim was a sucker to leave a new beginner have his gun, let alone a half wit. It probably served Jim right, what he got. But still we miss him round here. He certainly was a card! Comb it wet or dry?

HOW BEAUTIFUL WITH SHOES¹

by Wilbur Daniel Steele

Wilbur Daniel Steele, four times winner of the O. Henry Memorial award, was born at Greensboro, North Carolina, in 1886. In 1907 he was graduated from the University of Denver, and for a while thereafter studied art in this country and

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abroad Although he is a novelist and playwright, he is best known for his short stories He is the author of, in addition to other volumes, *Land's End*, *The Shame Dance*, *Urkey Island*, *The Man Who Saw Through Heaven*, and *Towers of Sand*

BY THE time the milking was finished, the sow, which had farrowed the past week, was making such a row that the girl spilled a pint of the warm milk down the trough lead to quiet the animal before taking the pail to the well house Then in the quiet she heard a sound of hoofs on the bridge, where the road crossed the creek a hundred yards below the house, and she set the pail down on the ground beside her bare, barn-soiled feet She picked it up again She set it down It was as if she calculated its weight

That was what she was doing, as a matter of fact, setting off against its pull toward the well house the pull of that wagon team in the road, with little more of personal will or wish in the matter than has a wooden weather vane between two currents in the wind And as with the vane, so with the wooden girl—the added behest of a whip lash cracking in the distance was enough, leaving the pail at the barn door, she set off in a deliberate, docile beeline through the cow-yard, over the fence, and down in a diagonal across the farm's one tilled field toward the willow brake that walled the road at the dip And once under way, though her mother came to the kitchen door and called in her high flat voice, 'Amarantha, where you goin', Amarantha?' the girl went on apparently unmoved, as though she had been as deaf as the woman in the doorway, indeed, if there was emotion in her it was the purely sensuous one of feeling the clods of the furrows breaking softly between her toes It was springtime in the mountains

'Amarantha, why don't you answer me, Amarantha?'

For moments after the girl had disappeared beyond the willows the widow continued to call, unaware through long habit of how absurd it sounded, the name which that strange man her husband had put upon their daughter in one of his moods Mrs Doggett had been deaf so long she did not realize that nobody else ever thought of it for the broad-fleshed, slow-minded girl, but called her Mary or, even more simply, Mare

Ruby Herter had stopped his team this side of the bridge, the mules' heads turned into the lane to his father's farm beyond the road A big-barreled, heavy-limbed fellow with a square, sallow, not unhandsome face, he took out youth in ponderous gestures of masterfulness, it was like him to have cracked his whip above his animals' ears the moment before he pulled them to a halt When he saw the girl getting over the fence under the willows he tongued the wad of tobacco out of his mouth into his palm, threw it away beyond the road, and drew a sleeve of his jumper across his lips

'Don't run yourself out o' breath, Mare, I got all night'

'I was comin'' It sounded sullen only because it was matter of fact

'Well, keep a-comin' and give us a smack' Hunched on the wagon seat, he remained motionless for some time after she had arrived at the hub, and when he stirred it was but to cut a fresh bit of tobacco, as if already he had forgotten why he threw the old one away Having satisfied his humor, he unbent,

climbed down, kissed her passive mouth, and hugged her up to him, roughly and loosely, his hands careless of contours. It was not out of the way, they were used to handling animals both of them, and it was spring. A slow warmth pervaded the girl, formless, nameless, almost impersonal.

Her betrothed pulled her head back by the braid of her yellow hair. He studied her face, his brows gathered and his chin out.

'Listen, Mare, you wouldn't leave nobody else hug and kiss you, dang you!'

She shook her head, without vehemence or anxiety.

'Who's that?' She hearkened up the road. 'Pull your team out,' she added, as a Ford came in sight around the bend above the house, driven at speed. 'Geddap!' she said to the mules herself.

But the car came to a halt near them, and one of the five men crowded in it called, 'Come on, Ruby, climb in. They's a loony loose out o' Dayville Asylum, and they got him trailed over somewheres on Split Ridge, and Judge North phoned up to Slosson's store for ever'body come help circle him—come on, hop the runnin' board!'

Ruby hesitated, an eye on his team.

'Scared, Ruby?' The driver raced his engine. 'They say this boy's a killer.'

'Mare, take the team in and tell pa.' The car was already moving when Ruby jumped it. A moment after it had sounded on the bridge it was out of sight.

'Amarantha, Amarantha, why don't you come, Amarantha?'

Returning from her errand, fifteen minutes later, Mare heard the plaint lifted in the twilight. The sun had dipped behind the back ridge, and though the sky was still bright with day, the dusk began to smoke up out of the plowed field like a ground-fog. The girl had returned through it, got the milk, and started toward the well-house before the widow saw her.

'Daughter, seems to me you might!' she expostulated without change of key. 'Here's some young man friend o' yours stopped to say howdy, and I been rackin' my lungs out after you. Put that milk in the cool and come!'

Some young man friend? But there was no good to be got from puzzling. Mare poured the milk in the pan in the dark of the low house over the well, and as she came out, stooping, she saw a figure waiting for her, black in silhouette against the yellowing sky.

'Who are you?' she asked, a native timidity making her sound sulky.

'"Amarantha!"' the fellow mused. 'That's poetry.' And she knew then that she did not know him.

She walked past, her arms straight down and her eyes front. Strangers always affected her with a kind of muscular terror simply by being strangers. So she gained the kitchen steps, aware by his tread that he followed. There, taking courage at sight of her mother in the doorway, she turned on him, her eyes down at the level of his knees.

'Who are you and what d' y' want?'

He still mused. 'Amarantha! Amarantha in Carolina! That makes me happy!'

Mare hazarded one upward look. She saw that he had red hair, brown eyes,

and hollows under his cheek-bones, and though the green sweater he wore on top of a gray overall was plainly not meant for him, sizes too large as far as girth went, yet he was built so long of limb that his wrists came inches out of the sleeves and made his big hands look even bigger

Mrs Doggett complained 'Why 'don't you introduce us, daughter?'

The girl opened her mouth and closed it again Her mother, unaware that no sound had come out of it, smiled and nodded, evidently taking to the tall, homely fellow and tickled by the way he could not seem to get his eyes off her daughter But the daughter saw none of it, all her attention centered upon the stranger's hands

Restless, hard-fleshed, and chap bitten, they were like a countryman's hands, but the fingers were longer than the ordinary, and slightly spatulate at their ends, and these ends were slowly and continuously at play among themselves

The girl could not have explained how it came to her to be frightened and at the same time to be calm, for she was inept with words It was simply that in an animal way she knew animals, knew them in health and ailing, and when they were ailing she knew by instinct, as her father had known, how to move so as not to fret them

Her mother had gone in to light up, from beside the lamp-shelf she called back, 'If he's aimin' to stay to supper you should've told me, Amarantha, though I guess there's plenty of the side-meat to go 'round, if you'll bring me in a few more turnips and potatoes, though it is late'

At the words the man's cheeks moved in and out 'I'm very hungry,' he said

Mare nodded deliberately Deliberately, as if her mother could hear her, she said over her shoulder, 'I'll go get the potatoes and turnips, ma' While she spoke she was moving, slowly, softly, at first, toward the right of the yard, where the fence gave over into the field Unluckily her mother spied her through the window

'Amarantha, where *are* you goin'?)

'I'm goin' to get the potatoes and turnips' She neither raised her voice nor glanced back, but lengthened her stride 'He won't hurt her,' she said to herself 'He won't hurt her, it's me, not her,' she kept repeating, while she got over the fence and down into the shadow that lay more than ever like a fog on the field

The desire to believe that it actually did hide her, the temptation to break from her rapid but orderly walk grew till she could no longer fight it She saw the road willows only a dash ahead of her She ran, her feet floundering among the furrows

She neither heard nor saw him, but when she realized he was with her she knew he had been with her all the while She stopped, and he stopped, and so they stood, with the dark open of the field all around Glancing sideways presently, she saw he was no longer looking at her with those strangely importunate brown eyes of his, but had raised them to the crest of the wooded ridge behind her

By and by, 'What does it make you think of?' he asked And when she made no move to see, 'Turn around and look!' he said, and though it was low and almost tender in its tone, she knew enough to turn

A ray of the sunset hidden in the west struck through the tops of the top most trees, far and small up there, a thin, bright hem

'What does it make you think of, Amarantha?' Answer'

'Fire,' she made herself say

'Or blood'

'Or blood, yeh That's right, or blood' She had heard a Ford going up the road beyond the willows, and her attention was not on what she said

The man soliloquized 'Fire and blood, both, spare one or the other, and where is beauty, the way the world is? It's an awful thing to have to carry, but Christ had it Christ came with a sword I love beauty, Amarantha I say, I love beauty!'

'Yeh, that's right, I hear' What she heard was the car stopping at the house

'Not prettiness Prettiness'll have to go with ugliness, because it's only ugliness trigged up But beauty!' Now again he was looking at her 'Do you know how beautiful you are, Amarantha, "Amarantha sweet and fair"?' Of a sudden, reaching behind her, he began to unravel the meshes of her hair braid, the long, flat-tipped fingers at once impatient and infinitely gentle "Braid no more that shining hair!"'

Flat-faced Mare Doggett tried to see around those glowing eyes so near to hers, but wise in her instinct, did not try too hard 'Yeh,' she temporized 'I mean, no, I mean'

'Amarantha, I've come a long, long way for you Will you come away with me now?'

'Yeh—that is—in a minute I will, mister—yeh

'Because you want to, Amarantha? Because you love me as I love you? Answer!'

'Yeh—sure—uh *Ruby!*'

The man tried to run, but there were six against him, coming up out of the dark that lay in the plowed ground Mare stood where she was while they knocked him down and got a rope around him, after that she walked back toward the house with Ruby and Older Haskins, her father's cousin

Ruby wiped his brow and felt of his muscles 'Gees, you're lucky we come, Mare We're no more'n past the town, when they come hollerin' he'd broke over this way'

When they came to the fence the girl sat on the rail for a moment and re-braided her hair before she went into the house, where they were making her mother smell ammonia

Lots of cars were coming Judge North was coming, somebody said When Mare heard this she went into her bedroom off the kitchen and got her shoes and put them on They were brand new two-dollar shoes with cloth tops, and she had only begun to break them in last Sunday, she wished afterwards she had put her stockings on too, for they would have eased the seams Or else that she had put on the old button pair, even though the soles were worn through

Judge North arrived He thought first of taking the loony straight through to Dayville that night, but then decided to keep him in the lock up at the courthouse till morning and make the drive by day Older Haskins stayed in,

gentling Mrs Doggett, while Ruby went out to help get the man into the Judge's sedan. Now that she had them on, Mare didn't like to take the shoes off till Older went, it might make him feel small, she thought.

Older Haskins had a lot of facts about the loony.

'His name's Humble Jewett,' he told them. 'They belong back in Breed County, all them Jewetts, and I don't reckon there's none on 'em that's not a mite unbalanced. He went to college though, worked his way, and he taught somethin' 'rother in some academy school a spell, till he went off his head all of a sudden and took after folks with an axe. I remember it in the paper at the time. They give out one while how the Principal wasn't goin' to live, and there was others—there was a girl he tried to strangle. That was four-five year back.'

Ruby came in guffawing. 'Know the only thing they can get 'im to say, Mare? Only God thing he'll say is, "Amarantha, she's goin' with me." Mare!'

'Yeh, I know.'

The cover of the kettle the girl was handling slid off the stove with a clatter. A sudden sick wave passed over her. She went out to the back, out into the air. It was not till now she knew how frightened she had been.

Ruby went home, but Older Haskins stayed to supper with them, and helped Mare do the dishes afterward, it was nearly nine when he left. The mother was already in bed, and Mare was about to sit down to get those shoes off her wretched feet at last, when she heard the cow carrying on up at the barn, lowing and kicking, and next minute the sow was in it with a horning note. It might be a fox passing by to get at the henhouse, or a weasel. Mare forgot her feet, took a broom-handle they used in boiling clothes, opened the back door, and stepped out. Blinking the lamplight from her eyes, she peered up toward the outbuildings, and saw the gable end of the barn standing like a red arrow in the dark, and the top of a butternut tree beyond it drawn in skeleton traceries, and just then a cock crowed.

She went to the right corner of the house and saw where the light came from, ruddy above the woods down the valley. Returning into the house, she bent close to her mother's ear and shouted, 'Somethin's a-fire down to the town, looks like,' then went out again and up to the barn. 'Soh! Soh!' she called in to the animals. She climbed up and stood on the top rail of the cow-pen fence, only to find she could not locate the flame even there.

Ten rods behind the buildings a mass of rock mounted higher than their ridgepoles, a chopped-off buttress of the back ridge, covered with oak scrub and wild grapes and blackberries, whose thorny ropes the girl beat away from her skirt with the broom handle as she scrambled up in the wine-colored dark. Once at the top, and the brush held aside, she could see the tongue-tip of the conflagration half a mile away at the town. And she knew by the bearing of the two church steeples that it was the building where the lock-up was that was burning.

There is a horror in knowing animals trapped in a fire, no matter what the animals.

'Oh, my God!' Mare said

A car went down the road Then there was a horse galloping That would be Older Haskins probably People were out at Ruby's father's farm, she could hear their voices raised There must have been another car up from the other way, for lights wheeled and shouts were exchanged in the neighborhood of the bridge Next thing she knew, Ruby was at the house below, looking for her probably

He was telling her mother Mrs Doggett was not used to him, so he had to shout even louder than Mare had to

'What y' reckon he done, the hellion! he broke the door and killed Lew Fyke and set the courthouse afire! Where's Mare?'

Her mother would not know Mare called 'Here, up the rock here'

She had better go down Ruby would likely break his bones if he tried to climb the rock in the dark, not knowing the way But the sight of the fire fascinated her simple spirit, the fearful element, more fearful than ever now, with the news 'Yes, I'm comin'; she called sulkily, hearing feet in the brush 'You wait, I'm comin''

When she turned and saw it was Humble Jewett, right behind her among the branches, she opened her mouth to screech She was not quick enough Before a sound came out he got one hand over her face and the other arm around her body

Mare had always thought she was strong, and the loony looked gangling, yet she was so easy for him that he need not hurt her He made no haste and little noise as he carried her deeper into the undergrowth Where the hill began to mount it was harder though Presently he set her on her feet He let the hand that had been over her mouth slip down to her throat, where the broad tipped fingers wound, tender as yearning, weightless as caress

'I was afraid you'd scream before you knew who 'twas, Amarantha But I didn't want to hurt your lips, dear heart, your lovely, quiet lips'

It was so dark under the trees she could hardly see him, but she felt his breath on her mouth, near to But then, instead of kissing her, he said, 'No! No!' took from her throat for an instant the hand that had held her mouth, kissed its palm, and put it back softly against her skin

'Now, my love, let's go before they come'

She stood stock still Her mother's voice was to be heard in the distance, strident and meaningless More cars were on the road Nearer, around the rock, there were sounds of tramping and thrashing Ruby fussed and cursed He shouted, 'Mare, dang you, where are you, Mare?' his voice harsh with uneasy anger Now, if she aimed to do anything, was the time to do it But there was neither breath nor power in her windpipe It was as if those yearning fingers had paralyzed the muscles

'Come!' The arm he put around her shivered against her shoulder blades It was anger 'I hate killing It's a dirty, ugly thing It makes me sick' He gagged, judging by the sound But then he ground his teeth 'Come away, my love!'

She found herself moving Once when she broke a branch underfoot with an

instinctive awkwardness he chided her 'Quiet, my heart, else they'll hear!' She made herself heavy. He thought she grew tired and bore more of her weight till he was breathing hard.

Men came up the hill. There must have been a dozen spread out, by the angle of their voices as they kept touch. Always Humble Jewett kept caressing Mare's throat with one hand, all she could do was hang back.

'You're tired and you're frightened,' he said at last. 'Get down here.'

There were twigs in the dark, the overhang of a thicket of some sort. He thrust her in under this, and lay beside her on the bed of groundpine. The hand that was not in love with her throat reached across her, she felt the weight of its forearm on her shoulder and its fingers among the strands of her hair, eagerly, but tenderly, busy. Not once did he stop speaking, no louder than breathing, his lips to her ear.

"Amarantha sweet and fair—Ah, braid no more that shining hair" "

Mare had never heard of Lovelace, the poet, she thought the loony was just going on, hardly listened, got little sense. But the cadence of it added to the lethargy of all her flesh.

"Like a clew of golden thread—Most excellently ravelled" "

Voices loudened, feet came tramping, a pair went past not two rods away.

"Do not then wind up the light—In ribbands, and o'ercloud in night" "

The search went on up the woods, men shouting to one another and beating the brush.

"But shake your head and scatter day!" I've never loved, Amarantha. They've tried me with prettiness, but prettiness is too cheap, yes, it's too cheap.

Mare was cold, and the coldness made her lazy. All she knew was that he talked on.

'But dogwood blowing in the spring isn't cheap. The earth of a field isn't cheap. Lots of times I've lain down and kissed the earth of a field, Amarantha. That's beauty, and a kiss for beauty.' His breath moved up her cheek. He trembled violently. 'No, no, not yet!' He got to his knees and pulled her by an arm. 'We can go now.'

They went back down the slope, but at an angle, so that when they came to the level they passed two hundred yards to the north of the house, and crossed the road there. More and more her walking was like sleep-walking, the feet numb in their shoes. Even when he had to let go of her, crossing the creek on stones, she stepped where he stepped with an obtuse docility. The voices of the searchers on the back ridge were small in distance when they began to climb the face of Coward Hill, on the opposite side of the valley.

There is an old farm on top of Coward Hill, big hayfields as flat as tables. It had been half past nine when Mare stood on the rock above the barn, it was toward midnight when Humble Jewett put aside the last branches of the woods and let her out on the height, and half a moon had risen. And a wind blew there, tossing the withered tops of last year's grasses, and mists ran with the wind, and ragged shadows with the mists, and mares'-tails of clear moonlight among the shadows, so that now the boles of birches on the forest's edge beyond the fences were but opal blurs and now cut alabaster. It struck so

cold against the girl's cold flesh, this wind, that another wind of shivers blew through her, and she put her hands over her face and eyes. But the madman stood with his eyes wide open and his mouth open, drinking the moonlight and the wet wind.

His voice, when he spoke at last, was thick in his throat.

'Get down on your knees' He got down on his and pulled her after 'And pray!'

Once in England a poet sang four lines. Four hundred years have forgotten his name, but they have remembered his lines. The daft man knelt upright, his face raised to the wild scud, his long wrists hanging to the dead grass. He began simply

*"O western wind, when wilt thou blow
That the small rain down can rain?"*

The Adam's-apple was big in his bent throat. As simply he finished

*"Christ, that my love were in my arms
And I in my bed again!"*

Mare got up and ran. She ran without aim or feeling in the power of the wind. She told herself again that the mists would hide her from him, as she had done at dusk. And again, seeing that he ran at her shoulder, she knew he had been there all the while, making a race of it, flailing the air with his long arms for joy of play in the cloud of spring, throwing his knees high, leaping the moon-blue waves of the brown grass, shaking his bright hair, and her own hair was a weight behind her, lying level on the wind. Once a shape went bounding ahead of them for instants, she did not realize it was a fox till it was gone.

She never thought of stopping, she never thought anything, except once, 'Oh, my God, I wish I had my shoes off!' And what would have been the good in stopping or in turning another way, when it was only play? The man's ecstasy magnified his strength. When a snake-fence came at them he took the top rail in flight, like a college hurdler and, seeing the girl hesitate and half turn as if to flee, he would have releaped it without touching a hand. But then she got a loom of buildings, climbed over quickly, before he should jump, and ran along the lane that ran with the fence.

Mare had never been up there, but she knew that the farm and the house belonged to a man named Wyker, a kind of cousin of Ruby Herter's, a violent, bearded old fellow who lived by himself. She could not believe her luck. When she had run half the distance and Jewett had not grabbed her, doubt grabbed her instead. 'Oh, my God, go careful!' she told herself. 'Go slow!' she implored herself, and stopped running, to walk.

Here was a misgiving the deeper in that it touched her special knowledge. She had never known an animal so far gone that its instincts failed it, a starving rat will scent the trap sooner than a fed one. Yet, after one glance at the house they approached, Jewett paid it no further attention, but walked with his eyes to the right, where the cloud had blown away, and wooded

ridges, like black waves rimed with silver, ran down away toward the Valley of Virginia

'I've never lived!' In his single cry there were two things, beatitude and pain

Between the bigness of the falling world and his eyes the flag of her hair blew He reached out and let it whip between his fingers Mare was afraid it would break the spell then, and he would stop looking away and look at the house again So she did something almost incredible, she spoke

'It's a pretty—I mean—a beautiful view down that-a-way'

'God Almighty beautiful, to take your breath away I knew I'd never loved, Belovéd—' He caught a foot under the long end of one of the boards that covered the well and went down heavily on his hands and knees It seemed to make no difference 'But I never knew I'd never lived,' he finished in the same tone of strong rapture, quadruped in the grass, while Mare ran for the door and grabbed the latch

When the latch would not give, she lost what little sense she had She pounded with her fists She cried with all her might 'Oh—hey—in there—hey—in there!' Then Jewett came and took her gently between his hands and drew her away, and then, though she was free, she stood in something like an awful embarrassment while he tried shouting

'Hey! Friend! whoever you are, wake up and let my love and me come in!'

'No!' wailed the girl

He grew peremptory 'Hey, wake up!' He tried the latch He passed to full fury in a wink's time, he cursed, he kicked, he beat the door till Mare thought he would break his hands Withdrawing, he ran at it with his shoulder, it burst at the latch, went slamming in, and left a black emptiness His anger dissolved in a big laugh Turning in time to catch her by a wrist, he cried joyously, 'Come, my Sweet One!'

'No! No! Please—aw—listen There ain't nobody there He ain't to home It wouldn't be right to go in anybody's house if they wasn't to home, you know that'

His laugh was blither than ever He caught her high in his arms

'I'd do the same by his love and him if 'twas my house, I would' At the threshold he paused and thought, 'That is, if she was the true love of his heart forever'

The room was the parlor Moonlight slanted in at the door, and another shaft came through a window and fell across a sofa, its covering dilapidated, showing its wadding in places The air was sour, but both of them were farm bred

'Don't, Amarantha!' His words were pleading in her ear 'Don't be so frightened'

He set her down on the sofa As his hands let go of her they were shaking 'But look, I'm frightened too' He knelt on the floor before her, reached out his hands, withdrew them 'See, I'm afraid to touch you' He mused, his eyes rounded 'Of all the ugly things there are, fear is the ugliest And yet, see, it can be the very beautifullest That's a strange queer thing'

The wind blew in and out of the room, bringing the thin, little bitter sweetness of new April at night The moonlight that came across Mare's shoulders

fell full upon his face, but hers it left dark, ringed by the aureole of her disordered hair

'Why do you wear a halo, Love?' He thought about it 'Because you're an angel, is that why?' The swift, untempered logic of the mad led him to dismay His hands came flying to hers, to make sure they were of earth, and he touched her breast, her shoulders, and her hair Peace returned to his eyes as his fingers twined among the strands

'"Thy hair is as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead "' He spoke like a man dreaming "'Thy temples are like a piece of pomegranate within thy locks"'

Mare never knew that he could not see her for the moonlight

'Do you remember, Love?'

She dared not shake her head under his hand 'Yeh, I reckon,' she temporized

'You remember how I sat at your feet, long ago, like this, and made up a song? And all the poets in all the world have never made one to touch it, have they, Love?'

'Ugh ugh—never'

'"How beautiful are thy feet with shoes "' Remember?'

'Oh, my God, what's he sayin' now?' she wailed to herself

"How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince's daughter! the joints of thy thighs are like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman"

"Thy navel is like a round goblet, which wanteth not liquor, thy belly is like an heap of wheat set about with lilies"

"Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins!"'

Mare had not been to church since she was a little girl, when her mother's black dress wore out 'No, no!' she wailed under her breath 'You're awful to say such awful things' She might have shouted it, nothing could have shaken the man now, rapt in the immortal, passionate periods of Solomon's Song

"now also thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine, and the smell of thy nose like apples!"'

Hotness touched Mare's face for the first time 'Aw, no, don't talk so!'

"And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine for my beloved causing the lips of them that are asleep to speak!"'

He had ended His expression changed Ecstasy gave place to anger, love to hate And Mare felt the change in the weight of the fingers in her hair

'What do you mean, I mustn't say it like that?' But it was not to her his fury spoke, for he answered himself straightway 'Like poetry, Mr Jewett, I won't have blasphemy around my school'

'Poetry! My God! if that isn't poetry—if that isn't music—' 'It's Bible, Jewett What you're paid to teach here is *literature*'

'Doctor Ryeworth, you're the blasphemer and you're an ignorant man'

'And your Principal And I won't have you going around reading sacred allegory like earthly love'

'Ryeworth, you're an old man, a dull man, a dirty man, and you'd be better dead'

Jewett's hands had slid down from Mare's head "Then I went to put my fingers around his throat, so But my stomach turned, and I didn't do it I went to my room I laughed all the way to my room I sat in my room at my table and I laughed I laughed all afternoon and long after dark came And then, about ten, somebody came and stood beside me in my room'

"Wherefore dost thou laugh, son?"

"Then I knew who He was, He was Christ

"I was laughing about that dirty, ignorant, crazy old fool, Lord"

"Wherefore dost thou laugh?"

'I didn't laugh any more He didn't say any more I kneeled down, bowed my head

"Thy will be done! Where is he, Lord?"

"Over at the girls' dormitory, waiting for Blossom Sinckley"

'Brassy Blossom, dirty Blossom'

It had come so suddenly it was nearly too late Mare tore at his hands with hers, tried with all her strength to pull her neck away

'Filthy Blossom! and him an old filthy man, Blossom! and you'll find him in Hell when you reach there, Blossom'

It was more the nearness of his face than the hurt of his hands that gave her power of fright to choke out three words

'I—ain't—Blossom!'

Light ran in crooked veins Through the veins she saw his face bewildered His hands loosened One fell down and hung, the other he lifted and put over his eyes, took it away again and looked at her

'Amarantha! His remorse was fearful to see 'What have I done!' His hands returned to hover over the hurts, ravening with pity, grief and tenderness Tears fell down his cheeks And with that, dammed desire broke its dam

'Amarantha, my love, my dove, my beautiful love—'

'And I ain't Amarantha neither, I'm Mary! Mary, that's my name!'

She had no notion what she had done He was like a crystal crucible that a chemist watches, changing hue in a wink with one adeptly added drop, but hers was not the chemist's eye All she knew was that she felt light and free of him, all she could see of his face as he stood away above the moonlight were the whites of his eyes

'Mary!' he muttered A slight paroxysm shook his frame So in the transparent crucible desire changed its hue He retreated farther, stood in the dark by some tall piece of furniture And still she could see the whites of his eyes

'Mary! Mary Adorable!' A wonder was in him 'Mother of God!'

Mare held her breath She eyed the door, but it was too far And already he came back to go on his knees before her, his shoulders so bowed and his face so lifted that it must have cracked his neck, she thought, all she could see on the face was pain

'Mary Mother, I'm sick to my death I'm so tired.'

She had seen a dog like that, one she had loosed from a trap after it had been there three days, its caught leg half gnawed free. Something about the eyes

'Mary Mother, take me in your arms

Once again her muscles tightened. But he made no move

'and give me sleep'

No, they were worse than the dog's eyes

'Sleep, sleep! why won't they let me sleep?' Haven't I done it all yet, Mother? Haven't I washed them yet of all their sins? I've drunk the cup that was given me, is there another? They've mocked me and reviled me, broken my brow with thorns and my hands with nails, and I've forgiven them, for they knew not what they did. Can't I go to sleep now, Mother?'

Mare could not have said why, but now she was more frightened than she had ever been. Her hands lay heavy on her knees, side by side, and she could not take them away when he bowed his head and rested his face upon them.

After a moment he said one thing more. 'Take me down gently when you take me from the Tree'

Gradually the weight of his body came against her shins, and he slept.

The moon streak that entered by the eastern window crept north across the floor, thinner and thinner, the one that fell through the southern doorway traveled east and grew fat. For a while Mare's feet pained her terribly and her legs too. She dared not move them, though, and by and by they did not hurt so much.

A dozen times, moving her head slowly on her neck, she canvassed the shadows of the room for a weapon. Each time her eyes came back to a heavy earthenware pitcher on a stand some feet to the left of the sofa. It would have had flowers in it when Wyker's wife was alive, probably it had not been moved from its dust ring since she died. It would be a long grab, perhaps too long, still, it might be done if she had her hands.

To get her hands from under the sleeper's head was the task she set herself. She pulled first one, then the other, infinitesimally. She waited. Again she tugged a very, very little. The order of his breathing was not disturbed. But at the third trial he stirred.

'Gently! gently!' His own muttering waked him more. With some drowsy instinct of possession he threw one hand across her wrists, pinning them together between thumb and fingers. She kept dead quiet, shut her eyes, lengthened her breathing, as if she too slept.

There came a time when what was pretense grew a peril, strange as it was, she had to fight to keep her eyes open. She never knew whether or not she really napped. But something changed in the air, and she was wide awake again. The moonlight was fading on the doorsill, and the light that runs before dawn waxed in the window behind her head.

And then she heard a voice in the distance, lifted in maundering song. It was old man Wyker coming home after a night, and it was plain he had had some whiskey.

Now a new terror laid hold of Mare.

'Shut up, you fool you!' she wanted to shout. 'Come quiet, quiet!' She might

have chanced it now to throw the sleeper away from her and scramble and run, had his powers of strength and quickness not taken her simple imagination utterly in thrall

Happily the singing stopped. What had occurred was that the farmer had espied the open door and, even befuddled as he was, wanted to know more about it quietly. He was so quiet that Mare began to fear he had gone away. He had the squirrel hunter's foot, and the first she knew of him was when she looked and saw his head in the doorway, his hard, soiled, whiskery face half up-side-down with craning.

He had been to the town. Between drinks he had wandered in and out of the night's excitement, had even gone a short distance with one search party himself. Now he took in the situation in the room. He used his forefinger. First he held it to his lips. Next he pointed it with a jabbing motion at the sleeper. Then he tapped his own forehead and described wheels. Lastly, with his whole hand, he made pushing gestures, for Mare to wait. Then he vanished as silently as he had appeared.

The minutes dragged. The light in the east strengthened and turned rosy. Once she thought she heard a board creaking in another part of the house, and looked down sharply to see if the loony stirred. All she could see of his face was a temple with freckles on it and the sharp ridge of a cheekbone, but even from so little she knew how deeply and peacefully he slept. The door darkened. Wyker was there again. In one hand he carried something heavy, with the other he beckoned.

'Come jumpin'' he said out loud.

Mare went jumping, but her cramped legs threw her down half way to the sill, the rest of the distance she rolled and crawled. Just as she tumbled through the door it seemed as if the world had come to an end above her, two barrels of a shotgun discharged into a room make a noise. Afterwards all she could hear in there was something twisting and bumping on the floor-boards. She got up and ran.

Mare's mother had gone to pieces, neighbor women put her to bed when Mare came home. They wanted to put Mare to bed, but she would not let them. She sat on the edge of her bed in her lean-to bedroom off the kitchen, just as she was, her hair down all over her shoulders and her shoes on, and stared away from them, at a place in the wallpaper.

'Yeh, I'll go myself. Lea' me be!'

The women exchanged quick glances, thinned their lips, and left her be. 'God knows,' was all they would answer to the questionings of those that had not gone in, 'but she's gettin' herself to bed.'

When the doctor came though he found her sitting just as she had been, still dressed, her hair down on her shoulders and her shoes on.

'What d' y' want?' she muttered and stared at the place in the wallpaper. How could Doc Paradise say, when he did not know himself?

'I didn't know if you might be—might be feeling very smart, Mary.'

'I'm all right. Lea' me be.'

It was a heavy responsibility Doc shouldered it. 'No, it's all right,' he said.

to the men in the road Ruby Herter stood a little apart, chewing sullenly and looking another way Doc raised his voice to make certain it carried 'Nope, nothing'

Ruby's ears got red, and he clamped his jaws He knew he ought to go in and see Mare, but he was not going to do it while everybody hung around waiting to see if he would A mule tied near him reached out and mouthed his sleeve in idle innocence, he wheeled and banged a fist against the side of the animal's head

'Well, what d' y' aim to do 'bout it?' he challenged its owner

He looked at the sun then It was ten in the morning 'Hell, I got work!' he flared, and set off down the road for home Doc looked at Judge North, and the Judge started after Ruby But Ruby shook his head angrily 'Lea' me be!' He went on, and the Judge came back

It got to be eleven and then noon People began to say, 'Like enough she'd be as thankful if the whole neighborhood wasn't camped here' But none went away

As a matter of fact they were no bother to the girl She never saw them The only move she made was to bend her ankles over and rest her feet on edge, her shoes hurt terribly and her feet knew it, though she did not She sat all the while staring at that one figure in the wallpaper, and she never saw the figure

Strange as the night had been, this day was stranger Fright and physical pain are perishable things once they are gone But while pain merely dulls and telescopes in memory and remains diluted pain, terror looked back upon has nothing of terror left A gambling chance taken, at no matter what odds, and won was a sure thing since the world's beginning, perils come through safely were never perilous But what fright does do in retrospect is this—it heightens each sensuous recollection, like a hard, clear lacquer laid on wood, bringing out the color and grain of it vividly

Last night Mare had lain stupid with fear on groundpine beneath a bush, loud foot-falls and light whispers confused in her ear Only now, in her room, did she smell the groundpine

Only now did the conscious part of her brain begin to make words of the whispering

'*Amarantha*,' she remembered, '*Amarantha sweet and fair*' That was as far as she could go for the moment, except that the rhyme with 'fair' was 'hair' But then a puzzle, held in abeyance, brought other words She wondered what 'ravel Ed' could mean '*Most excellently ravelléd*' It was left to her mother to bring the end

They gave up trying to keep her mother out at last The poor woman's prostration took the form of fussiness

'Good gracious, daughter, you look a sight Them new shoes, half ruined, ain't your feet *dead*? And look at your hair, all tangled like a wild one!'

She got a comb

'Be quiet, daughter, what's ailin' you Don't shake your head!'

'"*But shake your head and scatter day*"'

'What you say, Amarantha?' Mrs Doggett held an ear down

'Go 'way! Lea' me be!'

Her mother was hurt and left And Mare ran, as she stared at the wall paper

'Christ, that my love were in my arms'

Mare ran She ran through a wind white with moonlight and wet with 'the small rain' And the wind she ran through, it ran through her, and made her shiver as she ran And the man beside her leaped high over the waves of the dead grasses and gathered the wind in his arms, and her hair was heavy and his was tossing, and a little fox ran before them across the top of the world And the world spread down around in waves of black and silver, more immense than she had ever known the world could be, and more beautiful

'God Almighty beautiful, to take your breath away!'

Mare wondered, and she was not used to wondering 'Is it only crazy folks ever run like that and talk that way?'

She no longer ran, she walked, for her breath was gone And there was some other reason, some other reason Oh, yes, it was because her feet were hurting her So, at last, and roundabout, her shoes had made contact with her brain

Bending over the side of the bed, she loosened one of them mechanically She pulled it half off But then she looked down at it sharply, and she pulled it on again

'How beautiful'

Color overspread her face in a slow wave

'How beautiful are thy feet with shoes'

'Is it only crazy folks ever say such things?'

'O prince's daughter!'

'Or call you that?'

By and by there was a knock at the door It opened, and Ruby Herter came in

'Hello, Mare, old girl!' His face was red He scowled and kicked at the floor 'I'd 'a' been over sooner, except we got a mule down sick' He looked at his dumb betrothed 'Come on, cheer up, forget it! He won't scare you no more not that boy, not what's left o' him What you lookin' at, sourface? Ain't you glad to see me?'

Mare quit looking at the wallpaper and looked at the floor

'Yeh,' she said

'That's more like it, babe' He came and sat beside her, reached down behind her and gave her a spank 'Come on, give us a kiss, babe!' He wiped his mouth on his jumper sleeve, a good farmer's sleeve, spotted with milking He put his hands on her, he was used to handling animals 'Hey, you, warm up a little, reckon I'm goin' to do all the lovin'?'

'Ruby, lea' me be!'

'What!'

She was up, twisting He was up, purple

'What's ailin' of you, Mare? What you bawlin' about?'

'Nothin'—only go 'way!'

She pushed him to the door and through it with all her strength, and closed it in his face, and stood with her weight against it, crying, 'Go 'way! Go 'way! Lea me be!'

JANE¹

by W Somerset Maugham

W Somerset Maugham (b 1894), who was born and raised in Victorian England, became in his maturity one of the most urbane and cosmopolitan of twentieth century British writers. The trials of his early years are recounted in what is probably his masterpiece, the autobiographical novel *Of Human Bondage*. Among his other novels are *The Moon and Sixpence* and *Cakes and Ale* as well as, more recently, *The Razor's Edge* and *Then and Now*. He is also the author of some thirty plays, of travel books like *The Gentleman in the Parlour*, an autobiography, *The Summing Up*, and many volumes of brilliant short stories, the majority of which have been collected in the volume entitled *East and West*.

I REMEMBER very well the occasion on which I first saw Jane Fowler. It is indeed only because the details of the glimpse I had of her then are so clear that I trust my recollection at all, for, looking back, I must confess that I find it hard to believe that it has not played me a fantastic trick. I had lately returned to London from China and was drinking a dish of tea with Mrs Tower. Mrs Tower had been seized with the prevailing passion for decoration, and with the ruthlessness of her sex had sacrificed chairs in which she had comfortably sat for years, tables, cabinets, ornaments, on which her eyes had dwelt in peace since she was married, pictures that had been familiar to her for a generation, and delivered herself into the hands of an expert. Nothing remained in her drawing-room with which she had any association, or to which any sentiment was attached, and she had invited me that day to see the fashionable glory in which she now lived. Everything that could be pickled was pickled and what couldn't be pickled was painted. Nothing matched, but everything harmonized.

"Do you remember that ridiculous drawing-room suite that I used to have?" asked Mrs Tower.

The curtains were sumptuous yet severe, the sofa was covered with Italian brocade, the chair on which I sat was in *petit point*. The room was beautiful, opulent without garishness and original without affectation, yet to me it lacked something, and while I praised with my lips I asked myself why I so much preferred the rather shabby chintz of the despised suite, the Victorian water-colours that I had known so long, and the ridiculous Dresden china that had adorned the chimney-piece. I wondered what it was that I missed in all these rooms that the decorators were turning out with a profitable industry. Was it heart? But Mrs Tower looked about her happily.

"Don't you like my alabaster lamps?" she said. "They give such a soft light."

"Personally I have a weakness for a light that you can see by," I smiled.

¹ From *East and West*, by W Somerset Maugham, copyright 1921, 1934, by Doubleday & Company, Inc.

"It's so difficult to combine that with a light that you can't be too much seen by," laughed Mrs Tower

I had no notion what her age was When I was quite a young man she was a married woman a good deal older than I, but now she treated me as her contemporary She constantly said that she made no secret of her age, which was forty, and then added with a smile that all women took five years off She never sought to conceal the fact that she dyed her hair (it was a very pretty brown with reddish tints), and she said she did this because hair was hideous while it was going grey, as soon as hers was white she would cease to dye it

"Then they'll say what a young face I have"

Meanwhile it was painted, though with discretion, and her eyes owed not a little of their vivacity to art She was a handsome woman, exquisitely gowned, and in the sombre glow of the alabaster lamps did not look a day more than the forty she gave herself

"It is only at my dressing-table that I can suffer the naked brightness of a thirty-two-candle electric bulb," she added with smiling cynicism "There I need it to tell me first the hideous truth and then to enable me to take the necessary steps to correct it"

We gossiped pleasantly about our common friends and Mrs Tower brought me up to date in the scandal of the day After roughing it here and there it was very agreeable to sit in a comfortable chair, the fire burning brightly on the hearth, charming tea-things set out on a charming table, and talk with this amusing, attractive woman She treated me as a prodigal returned from his husks and was disposed to make much of me She prided herself on her dinner-parties, she took no less trouble to have her guests suitably assorted than to give them excellent food, and there were few persons who did not look upon it as a treat to be bidden to one of them Now she fixed a date and asked me whom I would like to meet

"There's only one thing I must tell you If Jane Fowler is still here I shall have to put it off"

"Who is Jane Fowler?" I asked

Mrs Tower gave a rueful smile

"Jane Fowler is my cross"

"Oh!"

"Do you remember a photograph that I used to have on the piano before I had my room done of a woman in a tight dress with tight sleeves and a gold locket, with her hair drawn back from a broad forehead and her ears showing and spectacles on a rather blunt nose? Well, that was Jane Fowler"

"You had so many photographs about the room in your unregenerate days," I said, vaguely

"It makes me shudder to think of them I've made them into a huge brown-paper parcel and hidden them in an attic"

"Well, who is Jane Fowler?" I asked again, smiling

"She's my sister-in-law She was my husband's sister and she married a manufacturer in the north She's been a widow for many years, and she's very well-to-do"

"And why is she your cross?"

"She's worthy, she's dowdy, she's provincial She looks twenty years older than I do and she's quite capable of telling anyone she meets that we were at school together She has an overwhelming sense of family affection, and because I am her only living connection she's devoted to me When she comes to London it never occurs to her that she should stay anywhere but here—she thinks it would hurt my feelings—and she'll pay me visits of three or four weeks We sit here and she knits and reads And sometimes she insists on taking me to dine at Claridge's and she looks like a funny old charwoman and everyone I particularly don't want to be seen by is sitting at the next table When we are driving home she says she loves giving me a little treat With her own hand she makes me tea-cozies that I am forced to use when she is here and doilies and centrepieces for the dining-room table"

Mrs Tower paused to take breath

"I should have thought a woman of your tact would find a way to deal with a situation like that"

"Ah, but don't you see, I haven't a chance She's so immeasurably kind She has a heart of gold She bores me to death, but I wouldn't for anything let her suspect it"

"And when does she arrive?"

"Tomorrow"

But the answer was hardly out of Mrs Tower's mouth when the bell rang There were sounds in the hall of a slight commotion and in a minute or two the butler ushered in an elderly lady

"Mrs Fowler," he announced

"Jane!" cried Mrs Tower, springing to her feet "I wasn't expecting you today"

"So your butler has just told me I certainly said today in my letter"

Mrs Tower recovered her wits

"Well, it doesn't matter I'm very glad to see you whenever you come Fortunately I'm doing nothing this evening"

"You mustn't let me give you any trouble If I can have a boiled egg for my dinner that's all I shall want"

A faint grimace for a moment distorted Mrs Tower's handsome features A boiled egg!

"Oh, I think we can do a little better than that"

I chuckled inwardly when I recollected that the two ladies were contemporaries Mrs Fowler looked a good fifty five She was a rather big woman, she wore a black straw hat with a wide brim, and from it a black lace veil hung over her shoulders, a cloak that oddly combined severity with fussiness, a long black dress, voluminous as though she wore several petticoats under it, and stout boots She was evidently short-sighted, for she looked at you through large gold-rimmed spectacles

"Won't you have a cup of tea?" asked Mrs Tower

"If it wouldn't be too much trouble I'll take off my mantle"

She began by stripping her hands of the black gloves she wore, and then took off her cloak Round her neck was a solid gold chain from which hung

a large gold locket in which I felt certain was a photograph of her deceased husband. Then she took off her hat and placed it neatly with her gloves and cloak on the sofa corner. Mrs. Tower pursed her lips. Certainly those garments did not go very well with the austere but sumptuous beauty of Mrs. Tower's redecorated drawing-room. I wondered where on earth Mrs. Fowler had found the extraordinary clothes she wore. They were not old, and the materials were expensive. It was astounding to think that dressmakers still made things that had not been worn for a quarter of a century. Mrs. Fowler's grey hair was very plainly done, showing all her forehead and her ears, with a parting in the middle. It had evidently never known the tongs of Monsieur Marcel. Now her eyes fell on the tea-table with its teapot of Georgian silver and its cups in old Worcester.

"What have you done with the tea-cozy I gave you last time I came up, Marion?" she asked. "Don't you use it?"

"Yes, I use it every day, Jane," answered Mrs. Tower glibly. "Unfortunately we had an accident with it a little while ago. It got burnt."

"But the last one I gave you got burnt."

"I'm afraid you'll think us very careless."

"It doesn't really matter," smiled Mrs. Fowler. "I shall enjoy making you another. I'll go to Liberty's tomorrow and buy some silks."

Mrs. Tower kept her face bravely.

"I don't deserve it, you know. Doesn't your vicar's wife need one?"

"Oh, I've just made her one," said Mrs. Fowler brightly.

I noticed that when she smiled she showed white, small and regular teeth. They were a real beauty. Her smile was certainly very sweet.

But I felt it high time for me to leave the two ladies to themselves, so I took my leave.

Early next morning Mrs. Tower rang me up, and I heard at once from her voice that she was in high spirits.

"I've got the most wonderful news for you," she said. "Jane is going to be married."

"Nonsense."

"Her fiancé is coming to dine here tonight to be introduced to me, and I want you to come too."

"Oh, but I shall be in the way."

"No, you won't. Jane suggested herself that I should ask you. Do come."

She was bubbling over with laughter.

"Who is he?"

"I don't know. She tells me he's an architect. Can you imagine the sort of man Jane would marry?"

I had nothing to do and I could trust Mrs. Tower to give me a good dinner.

When I arrived Mrs. Tower, very splendid in a tea-gown a little too young for her, was alone.

"Jane is putting the finishing touches to her appearance. I'm longing for you to see her. She's all in a flutter. She says he adores her. His name is Gilbert and when she speaks of him her voice gets all funny and tremulous. It makes me want to laugh."

"I wonder what he's like "

"Oh, I'm sure I know Very big and massive, with a bald head and an immense gold chain across an immense tummy A large, fat, clean shaven, red face and a booming voice "

Mrs Fowler came in She wore a very stiff black silk dress with a wide skirt and a train At the neck it was cut into a timid V and the sleeves came down to the elbows She wore a necklace of diamonds set in silver She carried in her hands a long pair of black gloves and a fan of black ostrich feathers She managed (as so few people do) to look exactly what she was You could never have thought her anything in the world but the respectable relict of a north country manufacturer of ample means

"You've really got quite a pretty neck, Jane," said Mrs Tower with a kindly smile

It was indeed astonishingly young when you compared it with her weather beaten face It was smooth and unlined and the skin was white And I noticed then that her head was very well placed on her shoulders

"Has Marion told you my news?" she said, turning to me with that really charming smile of hers as if we were already old friends

"I must congratulate you," I said

"Wait to do that till you've seen my young man "

"I think it's too sweet to hear you talk of your young man," smiled Mrs Tower

Mrs Fowler's eyes certainly twinkled behind her preposterous spectacles

"Don't expect anyone too old You wouldn't like me to marry a decrepit old gentleman with one foot in the grave, would you?"

This was the only warning she gave us Indeed there was no time for any further discussion, for the butler flung open the door and in a loud voice announced

"Mr Gilbert Napier "

There entered a youth in a very well cut dinner jacket He was slight, not very tall, with fair hair in which there was a hint of a natural wave, clean shaven and blue-eyed He was not particularly good-looking, but he had a pleasant, amiable face In ten years he would probably be wizened and sallow, but now, in extreme youth, he was fresh, and clean and blooming For he was certainly not more than twenty four My first thought was that this was the son of Jane Fowler's fiancé (I had not known he was a widower) come to say that his father was prevented from dining by a sudden attack of gout But his eyes fell immediately on Mrs Fowler, his face lit up, and he went towards her with both hands outstretched Mrs Fowler gave him hers, a demure smile on her lips, and turned to her sister-in law

"This is my young man, Marion," she said

He held out his hand

"I hope you'll like me, Mrs Tower," he said "Jane tells me you're the only relation she has in the world "

Mrs Tower's face was wonderful to behold I saw then to admiration how bravely good breeding and social usage could combat the instincts of the natural woman For the astonishment and then the dismay that for an instant

she could not conceal were quickly driven away, and her face assumed an expression of affable welcome. But she was evidently at a loss for words. It was not unnatural if Gilbert felt a certain embarrassment, and I was too busy preventing myself from laughing to think of anything to say. Mrs Fowler alone kept perfectly calm.

"I know you'll like him, Marion. There's no one enjoys good food more than he does." She turned to the young man. "Marion's dinners are famous."

"I know," he beamed.

Mrs Tower made some quick rejoinder and we went downstairs. I shall not soon forget the exquisite comedy of that meal. Mrs Tower could not make up her mind whether the pair of them were playing a practical joke on her or whether Jane by wilfully concealing her fiancé's age had hoped to make her look foolish. But then Jane never jested and she was incapable of doing a malicious thing. Mrs Tower was amazed, exasperated and perplexed. But she had recovered her self-control, and for nothing would she have forgotten that she was a perfect hostess whose duty it was to make her party go. She talked vivaciously, but I wondered if Gilbert Napier saw how hard and vindictive was the expression of her eyes behind the mask of friendliness that she turned to him. She was measuring him. She was seeking to delve into the secret of his soul. I could see that she was in a passion, for under her rouge her cheeks glowed with an angry red.

"You've got a very high colour, Marion," said Jane, looking at her amiably through her great round spectacles.

"I dressed in a hurry. I daresay I put on too much rouge."

"Oh, is it rouge? I thought it was natural. Otherwise I shouldn't have mentioned it." She gave Gilbert a shy little smile. "You know, Marion and I were at school together. You would never think it to look at us now, would you? But of course I've lived a very quiet life."

I do not know what she meant by these remarks, it was almost incredible that she made them in complete simplicity, but anyhow they goaded Mrs Tower to such a fury that she flung her own vanity to the winds. She smiled brightly.

"We shall neither of us see fifty again, Jane," she said.

If the observation was meant to discomfit the widow it failed.

"Gilbert says I mustn't acknowledge to more than forty-nine for his sake," she answered blandly.

Mrs Tower's hands trembled slightly, but she found a retort.

"There is of course a certain disparity of age between you," she smiled.

"Twenty-seven years," said Jane. "Do you think it's too much? Gilbert says I'm very young for my age. I told you I shouldn't like to marry a man with one foot in the grave."

I was really obliged to laugh, and Gilbert laughed too. His laughter was frank and boyish. It looked as though he were amused at everything Jane said. But Mrs Tower was almost at the end of her tether, and I was afraid that unless relief came she would for once forget that she was a woman of the world. I came to the rescue as best I could.

"I suppose you're very busy buying your trousseau," I said.

'No I wanted to get my things from the dressmaker in Liverpool I've been to ever since I was first married But Gilbert won't let me He's very masterful, and of course he has wonderful taste'

She looked at him with a little affectionate smile, demurely, as though she were a girl of seventeen

Mrs Tower went quite pale under her make up

"We're going to Italy for our honeymoon Gilbert has never had a chance of studying Renaissance architecture, and of course it's important for an architect to see things for himself And we shall stop in Paris on the way and get my clothes there"

"Do you expect to be away long?"

"Gilbert has arranged with his office to stay away for six months It will be such a treat for him, won't it? You see, he's never had more than a fortnight's holiday before"

"Why not?" asked Mrs Tower in a tone that no effort of will could prevent from being icy

"He's never been able to afford it, poor dear"

"Ah!" said Mrs Tower, and into the exclamation put volumes

Coffee was served and the ladies went upstairs Gilbert and I began to talk in the desultory way in which men talk who have nothing whatever to say to one another, but in two minutes a note was brought in to me by the butler It was from Mrs Tower and ran as follows

Come upstairs quickly and then go as soon as you can Take him with you Unless I have it out with Jane at once I shall have a fit

I told a facile lie

"Mrs Tower has a headache and wants to go to bed I think if you don't mind we'd better clear out"

'Certainly,' he answered

We went upstairs and five minutes later were on the doorstep I called a taxi and offered the young man a lift

"No, thanks," he answered "I'll just walk to the corner and jump on a bus"

Mrs Tower sprang to the fray as soon as she heard the front door close behind us

"Are you crazy, Jane?" she cried

"Not more than most people who don't habitually live in a lunatic asylum, I trust," Jane answered blandly

"May I ask why you're going to marry this young man?" asked Mrs Tower with formidable politeness

"Partly because he won't take no for an answer He's asked me five times I grew positively tired of refusing him"

"And why do you think he's so anxious to marry you?"

"I amuse him"

Mrs Tower gave an exclamation of annoyance

"He's an unscrupulous rascal I very nearly told him so to his face"

"You would have been wrong, and it wouldn't have been very polite "

"He's penniless and you're rich You can't be such a besotted fool as not to see that he's marrying you for your money "

Jane remained perfectly composed She observed her sister-in law's agitation with detachment

"I don't think he is, you know," she replied "I think he's very fond of me "

"You're an old woman, Jane "

"I'm at the same age as you are, Marion," she smiled

"I've never let myself go I'm very young for my age No one would think I was more than forty But even I wouldn't dream of marrying a boy twenty years younger than myself "

"Twenty-seven," corrected Jane

"Do you mean to tell me that you can bring yourself to believe that it's possible for a young man to care for a woman old enough to be his mother?"

"I've lived very much in the country for many years I daresay there's a great deal about human nature that I don't know They tell me there's a man called Freud, an Austrian, I believe—"

But Mrs Tower interrupted her without any politeness at all

"Don't be ridiculous, Jane It's so undignified It's so ungraceful I always thought you were a sensible woman Really you're the last person I should ever have thought likely to fall in love with a boy "

"But I'm not in love with him I've told him that Of course I like him very much or I wouldn't think of marrying him I thought it only fair to tell him quite plainly what my feelings were towards him "

Mrs Tower gasped The blood rushed to her head and her breathing oppressed her She had no fan, but she seized the evening paper and vigorously fanned herself with it

"If you're not in love with him why do you want to marry him?"

"I've been a widow a very long time and I've led a very quiet life I thought I'd like a change "

"If you want to marry just to be married why don't you marry a man of your own age?"

"No man of my own age has asked me five times In fact no man of my own age has asked me at all "

Jane chuckled as she answered It drove Mrs Tower to the final pitch of frenzy

"Don't laugh, Jane I won't have it I don't think you can be right in your mind It's dreadful "

It was altogether too much for her and she burst into tears She knew that at her age it was fatal to cry, her eyes would be swollen for twenty-four hours and she would look a sight But there was no help for it She wept Jane remained perfectly calm She looked at Marion through her large spectacles and reflectively smoothed the lap of her black silk dress

"You're going to be so dreadfully unhappy," Mrs Tower sobbed, dabbing her eyes cautiously in the hope that the black on her lashes would not smudge

"I don't think so, you know," Jane answered in those equable, mild tones of hers, as if there were a little smile behind the words "We've talked it over

very thoroughly I always think I'm a very easy person to live with I think I shall make Gilbert very happy and comfortable He's never had anyone to look after him properly We're only marrying after mature consideration And we've decided that if either of us wants his liberty the other will place no obstacles in the way of his getting it"

Mrs Tower had by now recovered herself sufficiently to make a cutting remark

"How much has he persuaded you to settle on him?"

"I wanted to settle a thousand a year on him, but he wouldn't hear of it He was quite upset when I made the suggestion He says he can earn quite enough for his own needs"

"He's more cunning than I thought," said Mrs Tower acidly

Jane paused a little and looked at her sister-in-law with kindly but resolute eyes

"You see, my dear, it's different for you," she said "You've never been so very much a widow, have you?"

Mrs Tower looked at her She blushed a little She even felt slightly uncomfortable But of course Jane was much too simple to intend an innuendo Mrs Tower gathered herself together with dignity

"I'm so upset that I really must go to bed," she said "We'll resume the conversation tomorrow morning"

"I'm afraid that won't be very convenient, dear Gilbert and I are going to get the license tomorrow morning"

Mrs Tower threw up her hands in a gesture of dismay, but she found nothing more to say

The marriage took place at a registrar's office Mrs Tower and I were the witnesses Gilbert in a smart blue suit looked absurdly young and he was obviously nervous It is a trying moment for any man But Jane kept her admirable composure She might have been in the habit of marrying as frequently as a woman of fashion Only a slight colour on her cheeks suggested that beneath her calm was some faint excitement It is a thrilling moment for any woman She wore a very full dress of silver grey velvet, in the cut of which I recognized the hand of the dressmaker in Liverpool (evidently a widow of unimpeachable character), who had made her gowns for so many years, but she had so far succumbed to the frivolity of the occasion as to wear a large picture hat covered with blue ostrich feathers Her gold-rimmed spectacles made it extraordinarily grotesque When the ceremony was over the registrar (somewhat taken aback, I thought, by the difference of age between the pair he was marrying) shook hands with her, tendering his strictly official congratulations, and the bridegroom, blushing slightly, kissed her Mrs Tower, resigned but implacable, kissed her, and then the bride looked at me expectantly It was evidently fitting that I should kiss her too I did I confess that I felt a little shy as we walked out of the registrar's office past loungers who waited cynically to see the bridal pairs, and it was with relief that I stepped into Mrs Tower's car We drove to Victoria Station, for the happy couple were to go over to Paris by the two o'clock train, and Jane had insisted

that the wedding-breakfast should be eaten at the station restaurant. She said it always made her nervous not to be on the platform in good time. Mrs. Tower, present only from a strong sense of family duty, was able to do little to make the party go off well, she ate nothing (for which I could not blame her, since the food was execrable, and anyway I hate champagne at luncheon) and talked in a strained voice. But Jane went through the menu conscientiously.

"I always think one should make a hearty meal before starting out on a journey," she said.

We saw them off, and I drove Mrs. Tower back to her house.

"How long do you give it?" she said. "Six months?"

"Let's hope for the best," I smiled.

"Don't be so absurd. There can be no best. You don't think he's marrying her for anything but her money, do you? Of course it can't last. My only hope is that she won't have to go through as much suffering as she deserves."

I laughed. The charitable words were spoken in such a tone as to leave me in small doubt of Mrs. Tower's meaning.

"Well, if it doesn't last you'll have the consolation of saying 'I told you so,'" I said.

"I promise you I'll never do that."

"Then you'll have the satisfaction of congratulating yourself on your self-control in not saying 'I told you so'."

"She's old and dowdy and dull."

"Are you sure she's dull?" I said. "It's true she doesn't say very much, but when she says anything it's very much to the point."

"I've never heard her make a joke in my life."

I was once more in the Far East when Gilbert and Jane returned from their honeymoon, and this time I remained away for nearly two years. Mrs. Tower was a bad correspondent and though I sent her an occasional picture-postcard I received no news from her. But I met her within a week of my return to London, I was dining out and found that I was seated next to her. It was an immense party—I think we were four-and-twenty like the blackbirds in the pie—and, arriving somewhat late, I was too confused by the crowd in which I found myself to notice who was there. But when we sat down, looking round the long table I saw that a good many of my fellow-guests were well known to the public from their photographs in the illustrated papers. Our hostess had a weakness for the persons technically known as celebrities, and this was an unusually brilliant gathering. When Mrs. Tower and I had exchanged the conventional remarks that two people make when they have not seen one another for a couple of years I asked about Jane.

"She's very well," said Mrs. Tower with a certain dryness.

"How has the marriage turned out?"

Mrs. Tower paused a little and took a salted almond from the dish in front of her.

"It appears to be quite a success."

"You were wrong, then?"

"I said it wouldn't last and I still say it won't last. It's contrary to human nature."

"Is she happy?"

"They're both happy."

"I suppose you don't see very much of them."

"At first I saw quite a lot of them. But now" Mrs. Tower pursed her lips a little. "Jane is becoming very grand."

"What *do* you mean?" I laughed.

"I think I should tell you that she's here tonight."

"Here?"

I was startled. I looked round the table again. Our hostess was a delightful and an entertaining woman, but I could not imagine that she would be likely to invite to a dinner such as this the elderly and dowdy wife of an obscure architect. Mrs. Tower saw my perplexity and was shrewd enough to see what was in my mind. She smiled thinly.

"Look on the left of our host."

I looked. Oddly enough the woman who sat there had by her fantastic appearance attracted my attention the moment I was ushered into the crowded drawing-room. I thought I noticed a gleam of recognition in her eye, but to the best of my belief I had never seen her before. She was not a young woman, for her hair was iron-grey, it was cut very short and clustered thickly round her well-shaped head in tight curls. She made no attempt at youth, for she was conspicuous in that gathering by using neither lipstick, rouge nor powder. Her face, not a particularly handsome one, was red and weather-beaten, but because it owed nothing to artifice had a naturalness that was very pleasing. It contrasted oddly with the whiteness of her shoulders. They were really magnificent. A woman of thirty might have been proud of them. But her dress was extraordinary. I had not seen often anything more audacious. It was cut very low, with short skirts, which were then the fashion, in black and yellow, it had almost the effect of fancy-dress and yet so became her that though on anyone else it would have been outrageous, on her it had the inevitable simplicity of nature. And to complete the impression of an eccentricity in which there was no pose and of an extravagance in which there was no ostentation she wore, attached by a broad black ribbon, a single eye-glass.

"You're not going to tell me *that* is your sister-in-law," I gasped.

"That is Jane Napier," said Mrs. Tower icily.

At that moment she was speaking. Her host was turned towards her with an anticipatory smile. A baldish white-haired man, with a sharp, intelligent face, who sat on her left, was leaning forward eagerly, and the couple who sat opposite, ceasing to talk with one another, listened intently. She said her say and they all, with a sudden movement, threw themselves back in their chairs and burst into vociferous laughter. From the other side of the table a man addressed Mrs. Tower. I recognized a famous statesman.

"Your sister-in-law has made another joke, Mrs. Tower," he said.

Mrs. Tower smiled.

"She's priceless, isn't she?"

"Let me have a long drink of champagne and then for heaven's sake tell me all about it," I said.

Well, this is how I gathered it had all happened. At the beginning of their honeymoon Gilbert took Jane to various dressmakers in Paris and he made no

objection to her choosing a number of "gowns" after her own heart, but he persuaded her to have a "frock" or two made according to his own design. It appeared that he had a knack for that kind of work. He engaged a smart French maid. Jane had never had such a thing before. She did her own mending and when she wanted "doing up" was in the habit of ringing for the housemaid. The dresses Gilbert had devised were very different from anything she had worn before, but he had been careful not to go too far too quickly, and because it pleased him she persuaded herself, though not without misgivings, to wear them in preference to those she had chosen herself. Of course she could not wear them with the voluminous petticoats she had been in the habit of using, and these, though it cost her an anxious moment, she discarded.

"Now, if you please," said Mrs. Tower, with something very like a sniff of disapproval, "she wears nothing but thin silk tights. It's a wonder to me she doesn't catch her death of cold at her age."

Gilbert and the French maid taught her how to wear her clothes, and, unexpectedly enough, she was very quick at learning. The French maid was in raptures over Madame's arms and shoulders. It was a scandal not to show anything so fine.

"Wait a little, Alphonsine," said Gilbert. "The next lot of clothes I design for Madame we'll make the most of her."

The spectacles of course were dreadful. No one could look really well in gold-rimmed spectacles. Gilbert tried some with tortoise-shell rims. He shook his head.

"They'd look all right on a girl," he said. "You're too old to wear spectacles, Jane." Suddenly he had an inspiration. "By George, I've got it. You must wear an eyeglass."

"Oh, Gilbert, I couldn't."

She looked at him, and his excitement, the excitement of the artist, made her smile. He was so sweet to her she wanted to do what she could to please him.

"I'll try," she said.

When they went to an optician and, suited with the right size, she placed an eyeglass jauntily in her eye. Gilbert clapped his hands. There and then, before the astonished shopman, he kissed her on both cheeks.

"You look wonderful," he cried.

So they went down to Italy and spent happy months studying Renaissance and Baroque architecture. Jane not only grew accustomed to her changed appearance but found she liked it. At first she was a little shy when she went into the dining-room of a hotel and people turned round to stare at her—no one had ever raised an eyelid to look at her before—but presently she found that the sensation was not disagreeable. Ladies came up to her and asked her where she got her dress.

"Do you like it?" she answered demurely. "My husband designed it for me." "I should like to copy it if you don't mind."

Jane had certainly for many years lived a very quiet life, but she was by no means lacking in the normal instincts of her sex. She had her answer ready.

"I'm so sorry, but my husband's very particular and he won't hear of anyone copying my frocks. He wants me to be unique."

She had an idea that people would laugh when she said this, but they didn't, they merely answered:

"Oh, of course I quite understand. You *are* unique."

But she saw them making mental notes of what she wore, and for some reason this quite "put her about." For once in her life when she wasn't wearing what everybody else did, she reflected, she didn't see why everybody else should want to wear what she did.

"Gilbert," she said, quite sharply for her, "next time you're designing dresses for me I wish you'd design things that people *can't* copy."

"The only way to do that is to design things that only you can wear."

"Can't you do that?"

"Yes, if you'll do something for me."

"What is it?"

"Cut off your hair."

I think this was the first time that Jane jibbed. Her hair was long and thick, and as a girl she had been quite vain of it, to cut it off was a very drastic proceeding. This really was burning her boats behind her. In her case it was not the first step that cost so much, it was the last, but she took it ("I know Marion will think me a perfect fool, and I shall *never* be able to go to Liverpool again," she said), and when they passed through Paris on their way home Gilbert led her (she felt quite sick, her heart was beating so fast) to the best hairdresser in the world. She came out of his shop with a jaunty, saucy, impudent head of crisp grey curls. Pygmalion had finished his fantastic masterpiece. Galatea was come to life.

"Yes," I said, "but that isn't enough to explain why Jane is here tonight amid this crowd of duchesses, cabinet ministers and such like, nor why she is sitting on one side of her host with an admiral of the Fleet on the other."

"Jane is a humorist," said Mrs. Tower. "Didn't you see them all laughing at what she said?"

There was no doubt now of the bitterness in Mrs. Tower's heart.

"When Jane wrote and told me they were back from their honeymoon I thought I must ask them both to dinner. I didn't much like the idea, but I felt it had to be done. I knew the party would be deadly and I wasn't going to sacrifice any of the people who really mattered. On the other hand I didn't want Jane to think I hadn't any nice friends. You know I never have more than eight, but on this occasion I thought it would make things go better if I had twelve. I'd been too busy to see Jane until the evening of the party. She kept us all waiting a little—that was Gilbert's cleverness—and at last she sailed in. You could have knocked me down with a feather. She made the rest of the women look dowdy and provincial. She made me feel like a painted old trollop."

Mrs. Tower drank a little champagne.

"I wish I could describe the frock to you. It would have been quite impossible on anyone else, on her it was perfect. And the eyeglass! I'd known her for thirty-five years and I'd never seen her without spectacles."

"But you knew she had a good figure."

"How should I? I'd never seen her except in the clothes you first saw her in. Did *you* think she had a good figure? She seemed not to be unconscious of the sensation she made but to take it as a matter of course. I thought of my dinner and I heaved a sigh of relief. Even if she was a little heavy in hand, with that appearance it didn't so very much matter. She was sitting at the other end of the table and I heard a good deal of laughter, I was glad to think that the other people were playing up well, but after dinner I was a good deal taken aback when no less than three men came up to me and told me that my sister-in-law was priceless, and did I think she would allow them to call on her. I didn't quite know whether I was standing on my head or my heels. Twenty-four hours later our hostess of tonight rang me up and said she had heard my sister-in-law was in London and she was priceless and would I ask her to luncheon to meet her. She has an infallible instinct, that woman. In a month everyone was talking about Jane. I am here tonight, not because I've known our hostess for twenty years and have asked her to dinner a hundred times, but because I'm Jane's sister-in-law."

Poor Mrs. Tower. The position was galling, and though I could not help being amused, for the tables were turned on her with a vengeance, I felt that she deserved my sympathy.

"People never can resist those who make them laugh," I said, trying to console her.

"She never makes *me* laugh."

Once more from the top of the table I heard a guffaw and guessed that Jane had said another amusing thing.

"Do you mean to say that you are the only person who doesn't think her funny?" I asked, smiling.

"Had it struck *you* that she was a humorist?"

"I'm bound to say it hadn't."

"She says just the same things as she's said for the last thirty-five years. I laugh when I see everyone else does because I don't want to seem a perfect fool, but I am not amused."

"Like Queen Victoria," I said.

It was a foolish jest and Mrs. Tower was quite right sharply to tell me so. I tried another tack.

"Is Gilbert here?" I asked, looking down the table.

"Gilbert was asked because she won't go out without him, but tonight he's at a dinner of the Architects' Institute or whatever it's called."

"I'm dying to renew my acquaintance with her."

"Go and talk to her after dinner. She'll ask you to her Tuesdays."

"Her Tuesdays?"

"She's at home every Tuesday evening. You'll meet there everyone you ever heard of. They're the best parties in London. She's done in one year what I've failed to do in twenty."

"But what you tell me is really miraculous. How has it been done?"

Mrs. Tower shrugged her handsome but adipose shoulders.

"I shall be glad if you'll tell me," she replied.

After dinner I tried to make my way to the sofa on which Jane was sitting,

but I was intercepted and it was not till a little later that my hostess came up to me and said

"I must introduce you to the star of my party Do you know Jane Napier? She's priceless She's much more amusing than your comedies"

I was taken up to the sofa The admiral who had been sitting beside her at dinner was with her still He showed no sign of moving, and Jane, shaking hands with me, introduced me to him

"Do you know Sir Reginald Frobisher?"

We began to chat It was the same Jane as I had known before, perfectly simple, homely and unaffected, but her fantastic appearance certainly gave a peculiar savour to what she said Suddenly I found myself shaking with laughter She had made a remark, sensible and to the point, but not in the least witty, which her manner of saying and the bland look she gave me through her eyeglass made perfectly irresistible I felt light-hearted and buoyant When I left her she said to me

"If you've got nothing better to do, come and see us on Tuesday evening Gilbert will be so glad to see you"

"When he's been a month in London he'll know that he *can* have nothing better to do," said the admiral

So, on Tuesday but rather late, I went to Jane's I confess I was a little surprised at the company It was quite a remarkable collection of writers, painters and politicians, actors, great ladies and great beauties Mrs Tower was right, it was a grand party, I had seen nothing like it in London since Stafford House was sold No particular entertainment was provided The refreshments were adequate without being luxurious Jane in her quiet way seemed to be enjoying herself, I could not see that she took a great deal of trouble with her guests, but they seemed to like being there, and the gay, pleasant party did not break up till two in the morning After that I saw much of her I not only went often to her house, but seldom went out to luncheon or to dinner without meeting her I am an amateur of humour and I sought to discover in what lay her peculiar gift It was impossible to repeat anything she said, for the fun, like certain wines, would not travel She had no gift for epigram She never made a brilliant repartee There was no malice in her remarks nor sting in her rejoinders There are those who think that impropriety, rather than brevity, is the soul of wit, but she never said a thing that could have brought a blush to a Victorian cheek I think her humour was unconscious and I am sure it was unpremeditated It flew like a butterfly from flower to flower, obedient only to its own caprice and pursuivant of neither method nor intention It depended on the way she spoke and on the way she looked Its subtlety gained by the flaunting and extravagant appearance that Gilbert had achieved for her, but her appearance was only an element in it Now of course she was the fashion and people laughed if she but opened her mouth They no longer wondered that Gilbert had married a wife so much older than himself They saw that Jane was a woman with whom age did not count They thought him a devilish lucky young fellow The admiral quoted Shakespeare to me "Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale her infinite variety" Gilbert was delighted with her success As I came to know him better I grew to like him It was quite evident that he was neither a rascal nor a

fortune hunter He was not only immensely proud of Jane but genuinely devoted to her His kindness to her was touching He was a very unselfish and sweet-tempered young man

"Well, what do you think of Jane now?" he said to me once, with boyish triumph

"I don't know which of you is more wonderful," I said "You or she "

"Oh, I'm nothing "

"Nonsense You don't think I'm such a fool as not to see that it's you, and you only, who've made Jane what she is "

"My only merit is that I saw what was there when it wasn't obvious to the naked eye," he answered

"I can understand your seeing that she had in her the possibility of that remarkable appearance, but how in the world have you made her into a humorist?"

"But I always thought the things she said a perfect scream She was always a humorist "

"You're the only person who ever thought so "

Mrs Tower, not without magnanimity, acknowledged that she had been mistaken in Gilbert She grew quite attached to him But notwithstanding appearances she never faltered in her opinion that the marriage could not last I was obliged to laugh at her

"Why, I've never seen such a devoted couple," I said

"Gilbert is twenty-seven now It's just the time for a pretty girl to come along Did you notice the other evening at Jane's that pretty little niece of Sir Reginald's? I thought Jane was looking at them both with a good deal of attention, and I wondered to myself "

"I don't believe Jane fears the rivalry of any girl under the sun "

"Wait and see," said Mrs Tower

"You gave it six months "

"Well, now I give it three years "

When anyone is very positive in an opinion it is only human nature to wish him proved wrong Mrs Tower was really too cocksure But such a satisfaction was not mine, for the end that she had always and confidently predicted to the ill-assorted match did in point of fact come Still, the fates seldom give us what we want in the way we want it, and though Mrs Tower could flatter herself that she had been right, I think after all she would sooner have been wrong For things did not happen at all in the way she expected

One day I received an urgent message from her and fortunately went to see her at once When I was shown into the room Mrs Tower rose from her chair and came towards me with the stealthy swiftness of a leopard stalking his prey I saw that she was excited

"Jane and Gilbert have separated," she said

"Not really? Well, you were right after all "

Mrs Tower looked at me with an expression I could not understand

"Poor Jane," I muttered

"Poor Jane!" she repeated, but in tones of such derision that I was dumb founded

She found some difficulty in telling me exactly what had occurred

Gilbert had left her a moment before she leaped to the telephone to summon me. When he entered the room, pale and distraught, she saw at once that something terrible had happened. She knew what he was going to say before he said it.

"Marion, Jane has left me."

She gave him a little smile and took his hand.

"I knew you'd behave like a gentleman. It would have been dreadful for her for people to think that *you* had left her."

"I've come to you because I knew I could count on your sympathy."

"Oh, I don't blame you, Gilbert," said Mrs. Tower, very kindly. "It was bound to happen."

He sighed.

"I suppose so. I couldn't hope to keep her always. She was too wonderful and I'm a perfectly commonplace fellow."

Mrs. Tower patted his hand. He was really behaving beautifully.

"And what is going to happen now?"

"Well, she's going to divorce me."

"Jane always said she'd put no obstacle in your way if ever you wanted to marry a girl."

"You don't think it's likely I should ever be willing to marry anyone else after being Jane's husband," he answered.

Mrs. Tower was puzzled.

"Of course you mean that *you've* left Jane."

"I? That's the last thing I should ever do."

"Then why is she divorcing you?"

"She's going to marry Sir Reginald Frobisher as soon as the decree is made absolute."

Mrs. Tower positively screamed. Then she felt so faint that she had to get her smelling salts.

"After all you've done for her?"

"I've done nothing for her."

"Do you mean to say you're going to allow yourself to be made use of like that?"

"We arranged before we married that if either of us wanted his liberty the other should put no hindrance in the way."

"But that was done on your account. Because you were twenty-seven years younger than she was."

"Well, it's come in very useful for her," he answered bitterly.

Mrs. Tower expostulated, argued, and reasoned, but Gilbert insisted that no rules applied to Jane, and he must do exactly what she wanted. He left Mrs. Tower prostrate. It relieved her a good deal to give me a full account of this interview. It pleased her to see that I was as surprised as herself, and if I was not so indignant with Jane as she was she ascribed that to the criminal lack of morality incident to my sex. She was still in a state of extreme agitation when the door was opened and the butler showed in—Jane herself. She was dressed in black and white as no doubt befitted her slightly ambiguous position, but in a dress so original and fantastic, in a hat so striking, that I posi-

tively gasped at the sight of her. But she was as ever bland and collected. She came forward to kiss Mrs. Tower, but Mrs. Tower withdrew herself with icy dignity.

"Gilbert has been here," she said.

"Yes, I know," smiled Jane. "I told him to come and see you. I'm going to Paris tonight and I want you to be very kind to him while I am away. I'm afraid just at first he'll be rather lonely and I shall feel more comfortable if I can count on your keeping an eye on him."

Mrs. Tower clasped her hands.

"Gilbert has just told me something that I can hardly bring myself to believe. He tells me that you're going to divorce him to marry Reginald Frobisher."

"Don't you remember, before I married Gilbert you advised me to marry a man of my own age. The admiral is fifty-three."

"But, Jane, you owe everything to Gilbert," said Mrs. Tower indignantly. "You wouldn't exist without him. Without him to design your clothes, you'll be nothing."

"Oh, he's promised to go on designing my clothes," Jane answered blandly.

"No woman could want a better husband. He's always been kindness itself to you."

"Oh, I know he's been sweet."

"How *can* you be so heartless?"

"But I was never in love with Gilbert," said Jane. "I always told him that I'm beginning to feel the need of the companionship of a man of my own age. I think I've probably been married to Gilbert long enough. The young have no conversation." She paused a little and gave us both a charming smile. "Of course I shan't lose sight of Gilbert. I've arranged that with Reginald. The admiral has a niece that would just suit him. As soon as we're married we'll ask them to stay with us at Malta—you know that the admiral is to have the Mediterranean Command—and I shouldn't be at all surprised if they fell in love with one another."

Mrs. Tower gave a little sniff.

"And have you arranged with the admiral that if you want your liberty neither should put any hindrance in the way of the other?"

"I suggested it," Jane answered with composure. "But the admiral says he knows a good thing when he sees it and he won't want to marry anyone else, and if anyone wants to marry me—he has eight twelve-inch guns on his flagship and he'll discuss the matter at short range." She gave us a look through her eyeglass which even the fear of Mrs. Tower's wrath could not prevent me from laughing at. "I think the admiral's a very passionate man."

Mrs. Tower indeed gave me an angry frown.

"I never thought you funny, Jane," she said, "I never understood why people laughed at the things you said."

"I never thought I was funny myself, Marion," smiled Jane, showing her bright, regular teeth. "I am glad to leave London before too many people come round to our opinion."

"I wish you'd tell me the secret of your astonishing success," I said.

She turned to me with that bland, homely look I knew so well.

"You know, when I married Gilbert and settled in London and people began

to laugh at what I said no one was more surprised than I was I'd said the same things for thirty years and no one ever saw anything to laugh at I thought it must be my clothes or my bobbed hair or my eyeglass Then I discovered it was because I spoke the truth It was so unusual that people thought it humorous One of these days someone else will discover the secret, and when people habitually tell the truth of course there'll be nothing funny in it "

"And why am I the only person not to think it funny?" asked Mrs Tower

Jane hesitated a little as though she were honestly searching for a satisfactory explanation

Perhaps you don't know the truth when you see it, Marion dear," she answered in her mild good natured way

It certainly gave her the last word I felt that Jane would always have the last word She *was* priceless

MY OLD MAN¹

by Ernest Hemingway

Ernest Hemingway (b 1898) is one of the few unquestionably major writers of contemporary America He is best known for *The Sun Also Rises* (1926), *A Fare well to Arms* (1929), and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940) among his novels and, among his short stories, "The Killers," "The Undeclared," "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber," and the one which follows

I GUESS looking at it, now, my old man was cut out for a fat guy, one of those regular little roly fat guys you see around, but he sure never got that way, except a little toward the last, and then it wasn't his fault, he was riding over the jumps only and he could afford to carry plenty of weight then I remember the way he'd pull on a rubber shirt over a couple of jerseys and a big sweat shirt over that, and get me to run with him in the forenoon in the hot sun He'd have, maybe, taken a trial trip with one of Razzo's skins early in the morning after just getting in from Torino at four o'clock in the morning and beating it out to the stables in a cab and then with the dew all over everything and the sun just starting to get going, I'd help him pull off his boots and he'd get into a pair of sneakers and all these sweaters and we'd start out

"Come on, kid," he'd say, stepping up and down on his toes in front of the jack's dressing room, "let's get moving"

Then we'd start off jogging around the infield once, maybe, with him ahead, running nice, and then turn out the gate and along one of those roads with all the trees along both sides of them that run out from San Siro I'd go ahead of him when we hit the road and I could run pretty stout and I'd look around and he'd be jogging easy just behind me and after a little while I'd look around again and he'd begun to sweat Sweating heavy and he'd just be dogging it along with his eyes on my back, but when he'd catch me looking at him he'd grin and say, "Sweating plenty" When my old man grinned, nobody could

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help but grin too We'd keep right on running out toward the mountains and then my old man would yell, "Hey, Joe!" and I'd look back and he'd be sitting under a tree with a towel he'd had around his waist wrapped around his neck

I'd come back and sit down beside him and he'd pull a rope out of his pocket and start skipping rope out in the sun with the sweat pouring off his face and him skipping rope out in the white dust with the rope going cloppetty, cloppetty, clop, clop, clop, and the sun hotter, and him working harder up and down a patch of the road Say, it was a treat to see my old man skip rope, too He could whirr it fast or lop it slow and fancy Say, you ought to have seen wops look at us sometimes, when they'd come by, going into town walking along with big white steers hauling the cart They sure looked as though they thought the old man was nuts He'd start the rope whirring till they'd stop dead still and watch him, then give the steers a cluck and a poke with the goad and get going again

When I'd sit watching him working out in the hot sun I sure felt fond of him He sure was fun and he done his work so hard and he'd finish up with a regular whirring that'd drive the sweat out of his face like water and then sling the rope at the tree and come over and sit down with me and lean back against the tree with the towel and a sweater wrapped around his neck

"Sure is hell keeping it down, Joe," he'd say and lean back and shut his eyes and breathe long and deep, "it ain't like when you're a kid " Then he'd get up before he started to cool and we'd jog along back to the stables That's the way it was keeping down to weight He was worried all the time Most jocks can just about ride off all they want to A jock loses about a kilo every time he rides, but my old man was sort of dried out and he couldn't keep down his kilos without all that running

I remember once at San Siro, Regoli, a little wop that was riding for Buzoni, came out across the paddock going to the bar for something cool, and flicking his boots with his whip, after he'd just weighed in and my old man had just weighed in too, and came out with the saddle under his arm looking red-faced and tired and too big for his silks and he stood there looking at young Regoli standing up at the outdoors bar, cool and kid-looking, and I says, "What's the matter, Dad?" 'cause I thought maybe Regoli had bumped him or something and he just looked at Regoli and said, "Oh, to hell with it," and went on to the dressing room

Well, it would have been all right, maybe, if we'd stayed in Milan and ridden at Milan and Torino, 'cause if there ever were any easy courses, it's those two "Pianola, Joe," my old man said when he dismounted in the winning stall after what the wops thought was a hell of a steeplechase I asked him once "This course rides itself It's the pace you're going at that makes riding the jumps dangerous, Joe We ain't going any pace here, and they ain't any really bad jumps either But it's the pace always—not the jumps that makes the trouble "

San Siro was the swellest course I'd ever seen but the old man said it was a dog's life Going back and forth between Mirafiore and San Siro and riding just about every day in the week with a train ride every other night

I was nuts about the horses, too There's something about it, when they come out and go up the track to the post Sort of dancy and tight looking with the jock keeping a tight hold on them and maybe easing off a little and letting them

run a little going up Then once they were at the barrier it got me worse than anything Especially at San Siro with that big green infield and the mountains way off and the fat wop starter with his big whip and the jocks fiddling them around and then the barrier snapping up and that bell going off and them all getting off in a bunch and then commencing to string out You know the way a bunch of skins gets off If you're up in the stand with a pair of glasses all you see is them plunging off and then that bell goes off and it seems like it rings for a thousand years and then they come sweeping round the turn There wasn't ever anything like it for me

But my old man said one day, in the dressing room, when he was getting into his street clothes, "None of these things are horses, Joe They'd kill that bunch of skates for their hides and hoofs up at Paris" That was the day he'd won the Premio Commercio with Lantorna shooting her out of the field the last hundred meters like pulling a cork out of a bottle

It was right after the Premio Commercio that we pulled out and left Italy My old man and Holbrook and a fat wop in a straw hat that kept wiping his face with a handkerchief were having an argument at a table in the Galleria They were all talking French and the two of them were after my old man about something Finally he didn't say anything any more but just sat there and looked at Holbrook, and the two of them kept after him, first one talking and then the other, and the fat wop always butting in on Holbrook

"You go out and buy me a *Sportsman*, will you, Joe?" my old man said, and handed me a couple of soldi without looking away from Holbrook

So I went out of the Galleria and walked over to in front of the Scala and bought a paper and came back and stood a little way away because I didn't want to butt in and my old man was sitting back in his chair looking down at his coffee and fooling with a spoon and Holbrook and the big wop were standing and the big wop was wiping his face and shaking his head And I came up and my old man acted just as though the two of them weren't standing there and said, "Want an ice, Joe?" Holbrook looked down at my old man and said slow and careful, "You son of a b——," and he and the fat wop went out through the tables

My old man sat there and sort of smiled at me, but his face was white and he looked sick as hell and I was scared and felt sick inside because I knew something had happened and I didn't see how anybody could call my old man a son of a b——, and get away with it My old man opened up the *Sportsman* and studied the handicaps for a while and then he said, "You got to take a lot of things in this world, Joe" And three days later we left Milan for good on the Turin train for Paris, after an auction sale out in front of Turner's stables of everything we couldn't get into a trunk and a suit case

We got into Paris early in the morning in a long, dirty station the old man told me was the Gare de Lyon Paris was an awful big town after Milan Seems like in Milan everybody is going somewhere and all the trams run somewhere and there ain't any sort of a mix up, but Paris is all balled up and they never do straighten it out I got to like it, though, part of it, anyway, and, say, it's got the best race courses in the world Seems as though that were the thing that keeps it all going and about the only thing you can figure on is that every day the buses will be going out to whatever track they're running at,

going right out through everything to the track I never really got to know Paris well, because I just came in about once or twice a week with the old man from Maisons and he always sat at the Café de la Paix on the Opera side with the rest of the gang from Maisons and I guess that's one of the busiest parts of the town. But, say, it is funny that a big town like Paris wouldn't have a Galleria, isn't it?

Well, we went out to live at Maisons-Lafitte, where just about everybody lives except the gang at Chantilly, with a Mrs Meyers that runs a boarding house. Maisons is about the swellest place to live I've ever seen in all my life. The town ain't so much, but there's a lake and a swell forest that we used to go off bumming in all day, a couple of us kids, and my old man made me a sling shot and we got a lot of things with it but the best one was a magpie. Young Dick Atkinson shot a rabbit with it one day and we put it under a tree and were all sitting around and Dick had some cigarettes and all of a sudden the rabbit jumped up and beat it into the brush and we chased it but we couldn't find it. Gee, we had fun at Maisons. Mrs Meyers used to give me lunch in the morning and I'd be gone all day. I learned to talk French quick. It's an easy language.

As soon as we got to Maisons, my old man wrote to Milan for his license and he was pretty worried till it came. He used to sit around the Café de Paris in Maisons with the gang, there were lots of guys he'd known when he rode up at Paris, before the war, lived at Maisons, and there's a lot of time to sit around because the work around a racing stable, for the jocks, that is, is all cleaned up by nine o'clock in the morning. They take the first batch of skins out to gallop them at 5:30 in the morning and they work the second lot at 8 o'clock. That means getting up early all right and going to bed early, too. If a jock's riding for somebody too, he can't go boozing around because the trainer always has an eye on him if he's a kid and if he ain't a kid he's always got an eye on himself. So mostly if a jock ain't working he sits around the Café de Paris with the gang and they can all sit around about two or three hours in front of some drink like a vermouth and seltz and they talk and tell stories and shoot pool and it's sort of like a club or the Galleria in Milan. Only it ain't really like the Galleria because there everybody is going by all the time and there's everybody around at the tables.

Well, my old man got his license all right. They sent it through to him without a word and he rode a couple of times. Amiens, up country and that sort of thing, but he didn't seem to get any engagement. Everybody liked him and whenever I'd come in to the Café in the forenoon I'd find somebody drinking with him because my old man wasn't tight like most of these jockeys that have got the first dollar they made riding at the World's Fair in St. Louis in nineteen ought four. That's what my old man would say when he'd kid George Burns. But it seemed like everybody steered clear of giving my old man any mounts.

We went out to wherever they were running every day with the car from Maisons and that was the most fun of all. I was glad when the horses came back from Deauville and the summer. Even though it meant no more bumming in the woods, 'cause then we'd ride to Enghien or Tremblay or St. Cloud and watch them from the trainers' and jockeys' stand. I sure learned about

racing from going out with that gang and the fun of it was going every day

I remember once out at St Cloud It was a big two hundred thousand franc race with seven entries and Kzar a big favorite I went around to the paddock to see the horses with my old man and you never saw such horses This Kzar is a great big yellow horse that looks like just nothing but run I never saw such a horse He was being led around the paddocks with his head down and when he went by me I felt all hollow inside he was so beautiful There never was such a wonderful, lean, running-built horse And he went around the paddock putting his feet just so and quiet and careful and moving easy like he knew just what he had to do and not jerking and standing up on his legs and getting wild eyed like you see these selling platers with a shot of rope in them The crowd was so thick I couldn't see him again except just his legs going by and some yellow and my old man started out through the crowd and I followed him over to the jock's dressing room back in the trees and there was a big crowd around there, too, but the man at the door in a derby nodded to my old man and we got in and everybody was sitting around and getting dressed and pulling shirts over their heads and pulling boots on and it all smelled hot and sweaty and linimenty and outside was the crowd looking in

The old man went over and sat down beside George Gardner that was getting into his pants and said, "What's the dope, George?" just in an ordinary tone of voice 'cause there ain't any use him feeling around because George either can tell him or he can't tell him

"He won't win," George says very low, leaning over and buttoning the bottoms of his pants

"Who will?" my old man says, leaning over close so nobody can hear

"Kircubbin," George says, "and if he does, save me a couple of tickets"

My old man says something in a regular voice to George and George says, "Don't ever bet on anything, I tell you," kidding like, and we beat it out and through all the crowd that was looking in over to the 100 franc mutuel machine But I knew something big was up because George is Kzar's jockey On the way he gets one of the yellow odds-sheets with the starting prices on and Kzar is only paying 5 for 10, Cefisdote is next at 3 to 1 and fifth down the list this Kircubbin at 8 to 1 My old man bets five thousand on Kircubbin to win and puts on a thousand to place and we went around back of the grandstand to go up the stairs and get a place to watch the race

We were jammed in tight and first a man in a long coat with a gray tall hat and a whip folded up in his hand came out and then one after another the horses, with the jocks up and a stable boy holding the bridle on each side and walking along, followed the old guy That big yellow horse Kzar came first He didn't look so big when you first looked at him until you saw the length of his legs and the whole way he's built and the way he moves Gosh, I never saw such a horse George Gardner was riding him and they moved along slow, back of the old guy in the gray tall hat that walked along like he was the ring master in a circus Back of Kzar, moving along smooth and yellow in the sun, was a good-looking black with a nice head with Tommy Archibald riding him, and after the black was a string of five more horses all moving along slow in a procession past the grandstand and the pesage My old man said the black was

Kircubbin and I took a good look at him and he was a nice-looking horse, all right, but nothing like Kzar

Everybody cheered Kzar when he went by and he sure was one swell-looking horse. The procession of them went around on the other side past the pelouse and then back up to the near end of the course and the circus master had the stable boys turn them loose one after another so they could gallop by the stands on their way up to the post and let everybody have a good look at them. They weren't at the post hardly any time at all when the gong started and you could see them way off across the infield all in a bunch starting on the first swing like a lot of little toy horses. I was watching them through the glasses and Kzar was running well back, with one of the bays making the pace. They swept down and around and came pounding past and Kzar was way back when they passed us and this Kircubbin horse in front and going smooth. Gee, it's awful when they go by you and then you have to watch them go farther away and get smaller and smaller and then all bunched up on the turns and then come around towards into the stretch and you feel like swearing and goddamming worse and worse. Finally they made the last turn and came into the straight-away with this Kircubbin horse way out in front. Everybody was looking funny and saying "Kzar" in sort of a sick way and them pounding nearer down the stretch, and then something came out of the pack right into my glasses like a horse-headed yellow streak and everybody began to yell "Kzar" as though they were crazy. Kzar came on faster than I'd ever seen anything in my life and pulled up on Kircubbin that was going fast as any black horse could go with the jock flogging hell out of him with the gad and they were right dead neck and neck for a second but Kzar seemed going about twice as fast with those great jumps and that head out—but it was while they were neck and neck that they passed the winning post and when the numbers went up in the slots the first one was 2 and that meant Kircubbin had won.

I felt all trembly and funny inside, and then we were all jammed in with the people going downstairs to stand in front of the board where they'd post what Kircubbin paid. Honest, watching the race I'd forgot how much my old man had bet on Kircubbin. I'd wanted Kzar to win so damned bad. But now it was all over it was swell to know we had the winner.

"Wasn't it a swell race, Dad?" I said to him.

He looked at me sort of funny with his derby on the back of his head. "George Gardner's a swell jockey, all right," he said. "It sure took a great jock to keep that Kzar horse from winning."

Of course I knew it was funny all the time. But my old man saying that right out like that sure took the kick all out of it for me and I didn't get the real kick back again ever, even when they posted the numbers up on the board and the bell rang to pay off and we saw that Kircubbin paid 67 50 for 10. All round people were saying, "Poor Kzar! Poor Kzar!" And I thought, I wish I were a jockey and could have rode him instead of that son of a b——. And that was funny, thinking of George Gardner as a son of a b—— because I'd always liked him and besides he'd given us the winner, but I guess that's what he is, all right.

My old man had a big lot of money after that race and he took to coming into Paris oftener. If they raced at Tremblay he'd have them drop him in town

on their way back to Maisons, and he and I'd sit out in front of the Café de la Paix and watch the people go by. It's funny sitting there. There's streams of people going by and all sorts of guys come up and want to sell you things, and I loved to sit there with my old man. That was when we'd have the most fun. Guys would come by selling funny rabbits that jumped if you squeezed a bulb and they'd come up to us and my old man would kid with them. He could talk French just like English and all those kind of guys knew him 'cause you can always tell a jockey—and then we always sat at the same table and they got used to seeing us there. There were guys selling matrimonial papers and girls selling rubber eggs that when you squeezed them a rooster came out of them and one old wormy-looking guy that went by with post cards of Paris, showing them to everybody, and, of course, nobody ever bought any, and then he would come back and show the under side of the pack and they would all be smutty post-cards and lots of people would dig down and buy them.

Gee, I remember the funny people that used to go by. Girls around supper time looking for somebody to take them out to eat and they'd speak to my old man and he'd make some joke at them in French and they'd pat me on the head and go on. Once there was an American woman sitting with her kid daughter at the next table to us and they were both eating ices and I kept looking at the girl and she was awfully good looking and I smiled at her and she smiled at me but that was all that ever came of it because I looked for her mother and her every day and I made up ways that I was going to speak to her and I wondered if I got to know her if her mother would let me take her out to Auteuil or Tremblay but I never saw either of them again. Anyway, I guess it wouldn't have been any good, anyway, because looking back on it I remember the way I thought out would be best to speak to her was to say, "Pardon me, but perhaps I can give you a winner at Enghien today?" and, after all, maybe she would have thought I was a tout instead of really trying to give her a winner.

We'd sit at the Café de la Paix, my old man and me, and we had a big drag with the waiter because my old man drank whisky and it cost five francs, and that meant a good tip when the saucers were counted up. My old man was drinking more than I'd ever seen him, but he wasn't riding at all now and besides he said that whisky kept his weight down. But I noticed he was putting it on, all right, just the same. He'd busted away from his old gang out at Maisons and seemed to like just sitting around on the boulevard with me. But he was dropping money every day at the track. He'd feel sort of doleful after the last race, if he'd lost on the day, until we'd get to our table and he'd have his first whisky and then he'd be fine.

He'd be reading the *Paris-Sport* and he'd look over at me and say, "Where's your girl, Joe?" to kid me on account I had told him about the girl that day at the next table. And I'd get red, but I liked being kidded about her. It gave me a good feeling. "Keep your eye peeled for her, Joe," he'd say, "she'll be back."

He'd ask me questions about things and some of the things I'd say he'd laugh. And then he'd get started talking about things. About riding down in Egypt, or at St. Moritz on the ice before my mother died, and about during the war when they had regular races down in the south of France without any purses or betting or crowd or anything just to keep the breed up. Regular races

with the jocks riding hell out of the horses Gee, I could listen to my old man talk by the hour, especially when he'd had a couple or so of drinks He'd tell me about when he was a boy in Kentucky and going coon hunting, and the old days in the States before everything went on the bum there And he'd say, "Joe, when we've got a decent stake, you're going back there to the States and go to school"

"What've I got to go back there to go to school for when everything's on the bum there?" I'd ask him

"That's different," he'd say and get the waiter over and pay the pile of saucers and we'd get a taxi to the Gare St Lazare and get on the train out to Maisons

One day at Auteuil, after a selling steeplechase, my old man bought in the winner for 30,000 francs He had to bid a little to get him but the stable let the horse go finally and my old man had his permit and his colors in a week Gee, I felt proud when my old man was an owner He fixed it up for stable space with Charles Drake and cut out coming in to Paris, and started his running and sweating out again, and him and I were the whole stable gang Our horse's name was Gilford, he was Irish bred and a nice, sweet jumper My old man figured that training him and riding him, himself, he was a good investment I was proud of everything and I thought Gilford was as good a horse as Kzar He was a good, solid jumper, a bay, with plenty of speed on the flat, if you asked him for it, and he was a nice-looking horse, too

Gee, I was fond of him The first time he started with my old man up, he finished third in a 2,500-meter hurdle race and when my old man got off him, all sweating and happy in the place stall, and went in to weigh, I felt as proud of him as though it was the first race he'd ever placed in You see, when a guy ain't been riding for a long time, you can't make yourself really believe that he has ever rode The whole thing was different now, 'cause down in Milan, even big races never seemed to make any difference to my old man, if he won he wasn't ever excited or anything, and now it was so I couldn't hardly sleep the night before a race and I knew my old man was excited, too, even if he didn't show it Riding for yourself makes an awful difference

Second time Gilford and my old man started, was a rainy Sunday at Auteuil, in the Prix du Marat, a 4,500 meter steeplechase As soon as he'd gone out I beat it up in the stand with the new glasses my old man had bought for me to watch them They started way over at the far end of the course and there was some trouble at the barrier Something with goggle blinders on was making a great fuss and rearing around and busted the barrier once, but I could see my old man in our black jacket, with a white cross and a black cap, sitting up on Gilford, and patting him with his hand Then they were off in a jump and out of sight behind the trees and the gong going for dear life and the pari-mutuel wickets rattling down Gosh, I was so excited, I was afraid to look at them, but I fixed the glasses on the place where they would come out back of the trees and then out they came with the old black jacket going third and they all sailing over the jump like birds Then they went out of sight again and then they came pounding out and down the hill and all going nice and sweet and easy and taking the fence smooth in a bunch, and moving away from us all solid Looked as though you could walk across on their backs they were all so bunched and going so smooth Then they bellied over the big double Bullfinch and something came down I couldn't see who it was, but in a minute the horse

was up and galloping free and the field, all bunched still, sweeping around the long left turn into the straightaway. They jumped the stone wall and came jammed down the stretch toward the big water-jump right in front of the stands. I saw them coming and hollered at my old man as he went by, and he was leading by about a length and riding way out, and light as a monkey, and they were racing for the water-jump. They took off over the big hedge of the water-jump in a pack, and then there was a crash, and two horses pulled sideways out off it, and kept on going and three others were piled up. I couldn't see my old man anywhere. One horse kneeled himself up and the jock had hold of the bridle and mounted and went slamming on after the place money. The other horse was up and away by himself, jerking his head and galloping with the bridle rein hanging and the jock staggered over to one side of the track against the fence. Then Gilford rolled over to one side off my old man and got up and started to run on three legs with his off hoof dangling and there was my old man laying there on the grass flat out with his face up and blood all over the side of his head. I ran down the stand and bumped into a jam of people and got to the rail and a cop grabbed me and held me and two big stretcher-bearers were going out after my old man and around on the other side of the course I saw three horses, strung way out, coming out of the trees and taking the jump.

My old man was dead when they brought him in and while a doctor was listening to his heart with a thing plugged in his ears, I heard a shot up the track that meant they'd killed Gilford. I lay down beside my old man, when they carried the stretcher into the hospital room, and hung onto the stretcher and cried and cried, and he looked so white and gone and so awfully dead, and I couldn't help feeling that if my old man was dead maybe they didn't need to have shot Gilford. His hoof might have got well. I don't know. I loved my old man so much.

Then a couple of guys came in and one of them patted me on the back and then went over and looked at my old man and then pulled a sheet off the cot and spread it over him, and the other was telephoning in French for them to send the ambulance to take him out to Maisons. And I couldn't stop crying, crying and choking, sort of, and George Gardner came in and sat down beside me on the floor and put his arm around me and says, "Come on, Joe, old boy. Get up and we'll go out and wait for the ambulance."

George and I went out to the gate and I was trying to stop bawling and George wiped off my face with his handkerchief and we were standing back a little ways while the crowd was going out of the gate and a couple of guys stopped near us while we were waiting for the crowd to get through the gate and one of them was counting a bunch of mutuel tickets and he said, "Well Butler got his, all right."

The other guy said, "I don't give a good goddam if he did, the crook. He had it coming to him on the stuff he's pulled."

"I'll say he had," said the other guy, and tore the bunch of tickets in two.

And George Gardner looked at me to see if I'd heard and I had all right and he said, "Don't you listen to what those bums said, Joe. Your old man was one swell guy."

But I don't know. Seems like when they get started they don't leave a guy nothing.

BENNY AND THE BIRD DOGS¹

by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings

Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings was born in Washington, D.C., and graduated from the University of Wisconsin. She now lives in Florida. Her writing is characterized by her interest in the South, her reproduction of Florida scenes and speech, and by her sense of the dramatic. She is the author of *Jacob's Ladder* (a long short story), and of three novels, *South Moon Under* (1933), *Golden Apples* (1935), and the 1938 Pulitzer Prize novel, *The Yearling*. She has also written about her home state in *Cross Creek* and *Cross Creek Cookery*.

YOU CAN'T change a man, no ways. By the time his mammy turns him loose and he takes up with some innocent woman and marries her, he's what he is. If it's his nature to set by the hearth-fire and scratch hisself, you just as good to let him set and scratch. If it's his nature, like Will Dover, my man, to go to the garage in his Sunday clothes and lay down under some backwoods Cracker's old greasy Ford and tinker with it, you just as good to let him lay and tinker. And if it's his nature, like Uncle Benny, to prowl, if it's his nature to cut the fool, why, it's interfering in the ways of Providence even to stop to quarrel with him about it. Some women is born knowing that. Sometimes a woman, like the Old Hen (Uncle Benny's wife, poor soul!), has to quarrel a lifetime before she learns it. Then when it does come to her, she's like a cow has tried to jump a high fence and has got hung up on it—she's hornswoggled.

The Old Hen's a mighty fine woman—one of the finest I know. She looks just the way she did when she married Uncle Benny Mathers thirty years ago, except her hair has turned gray, like the feathers on a Gray Hackle game hen. She's plump and pretty and kind of pale from thirty years' fretting about Uncle Benny. She has a disposition, by nature, as sweet as new cane syrup. When she settled down for a life-time's quarreling at him, it was for the same reason syrup sours—the heat had just been put to her too long.

I can't remember a time when the Old Hen wasn't quarreling at Uncle Benny. It begun a week after they was married. He went off prowling by hisself, to a frolic or such as that, and didn't come home until four o'clock in the morning. She was setting up waiting for him. When she crawled him about it, he said, "Bless Katy, wife, let's sleep now and quarrel in the morning." So she quarreled in the morning and just kept it up. For thirty years. Not for meanness—she just kept hoping she could change him.

Change him? When he taken notice of the way she was fussing and clucking and ruffing her feathers, he quit calling her by her given name and begun calling her the Old Hen. That's all I could ever see she changed him.

Uncle Benny's a sight. He's been constable here at Oak Bluff, Florida, for twenty years. We figure it keeps him out of worse trouble to let him be con-

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stable He's the quickest shot in three counties and the colored folks is all as superstitious of him as if he was the devil hisself He's a comical appearing somebody He's small and quick and he don't move—he prances He has a little bald sun tanned head with a rim of white hair around the back of it Where the hair ends at the sides of his head, it sticks straight up over his ears in two little white tufts like goat horns He's got bright blue eyes that look at you quick and wicked, the way a goat looks That's exactly what he looks and acts like—a mischievous little old billy goat And he's been popping up under folks' noses and playing tricks on them as long as Oak Bluff has knowed him Doc in particular He loved to torment Doc

And stay home? Uncle Benny don't know what it is to stay home The Old Hen'll cook hot dinner for him and he won't come She'll start another fire in the range and warm it up for him about dusk dark and he won't come She'll set up till midnight, times till daybreak, and maybe just about the time the east lightens and the birds gets to whistling good, he'll come home Where's he been? He's been with somebody 'gatoring, or with somebody catching crabs to Salt Springs, he's been to a square-dance twenty miles away in the flat woods, he's been on the highway in that Ford car, just rambling as long as his gas held out—and them seven pried bird-dogs setting up in the back keeping him company

It was seven years ago, during the Boom, that he bought the Model T and begun collecting bird-dogs Everybody in Florida was rich for a while, selling gopher holes to the Yankees Now putting an automobile under Uncle Benny was like putting wings on a wild-cat—it just opened up new territory Instead of rambling over one county, he could ramble over ten And the way he drove—like a bat out of Torment He's one of them men just loves to cover the ground And that car and all them bird-dogs worked on the Old Hen like a quart of gasoline on a camp-fire She really went to raring I tried to tell her then 'twasn't no use to pay him no mind, but she wouldn't listen

I said, "It's just his nature You can't do a thing about it but take it for your share and go on You and Uncle Benny is just made different You want him home and he don't want to be home You're a barn yard fowl and he's a wild fowl"

"Mis' Dover," she said, "it's easy for you to talk Your man runs a garage and comes home nights You don't know how terrible it is to have a man that prowls"

I said, "Leave him prowls"

She said, "Yes, but when he's on the prowls, I don't no more know where to look for him than somebody's tom cat"

I said, "If 'twas me, I wouldn't look for him"

She said, "Moonlight nights he's the worst Just like the varmints"

I said, "Don't that tell you nothing?"

She said, "If he'd content hisself with prowling— But he ain't content until he cuts the fool He takes that Ford car and them seven bird-dogs and maybe a pint of moonshine, and maybe picks up Doc to prowls with him, and he don't rest until he's done something crazy What I keep figuring is, he'll kill hisself in that Ford car, cutting the fool"

I said, "You don't need to fret about him and that Ford. What's unnatural for one man is plumb natural for another. And cutting the fool is so natural for Uncle Benny, it's like a bird in the air or a fish in water—there won't no harm come to him from it."

She said, "Mis' Dover, what the devil throws over his back has got to come down under his belly."

I said, "Uncle Benny Mathers is beyond rules and sayings. I know men-folks, and if you'll listen to me, you'll settle down and quit quarreling and leave him go his way in quiet."

I happened to be in on it this spring, the last time the Old Hen ever quarreled at Uncle Benny. Me and Doc was both in on it. It was the day of old lady Weller's burying. Doc carried me in his car to the cemetery. My Will couldn't leave the garage, because the trucks hauling the Florida oranges north was bringing in pretty good business. Doc felt obliged to go to the burying. He's a patent-medicine salesman—a big fat fellow with a red face and yellow hair. He sells the Little Giant line of remedies. Old lady Weller had been one of his best customers. She'd taken no nourishment the last week of her life except them remedies, and Doc figured he ought to pay her the proper respect and show everybody he was a man was always grateful to his customers.

Uncle Benny and the Old Hen went to the burying in the Model-T. And the seven bird-dogs went, setting up in the back seat. They always went to the buryings.

Uncle Benny said, "Walls nor chains won't hold 'em. Better to have 'em go along riding decent and quiet, than to bust loose and foller the Model-T like a daggone pack of bloodhounds."

That was true enough. Those bird-dogs could hear that old Ford crank up and go off in low gear, clear across the town. They'd always hope it was time to go bird hunting again, and here they'd come, trailing it. So there were the bird dogs riding along to old lady Weller's burying, with their ears flopping and their noses in the air for quail. As constable, Uncle Benny sort of represented the town, and he was right in behind the hearse. I mean, that car was a pain, to be part of a funeral procession. In the seven years he'd had it, he'd all but drove it to pieces, and it looked like a rusty, mangy razor-back hog. The hood was thin and narrow, like a shoat's nose—you remember the way all Model-T Fords were built. It had no top to it, nor no doors to the front seat, and the back seat rose up in a hump where the bird-dogs had squeezed the excelsior chitlin's out of it.

The Old Hen sat up stiff and proud, not letting on she minded. Doc and I figured she'd been quarreling at Uncle Benny about the bird-dogs, because when one of them put his paws on her shoulders and begun licking around her ears, she turned and smacked the breath out of him.

The funeral procession had just left the Oak Bluff dirt road and turned onto No. 9 Highway, when the garage keeper at the bend ran out.

He hollered, "I just got a 'phone call for Uncle Benny Mathers from the high sheriff!"

So Uncle Benny cut out of the procession and drove over to the pay station.

by the kerosene tank to take the message. He caught up again in a minute and called to Doc, "A drunken nigger is headed this way in a Chevrolet and the sheriff wants I should stop him."

About that time here come the Chevrolet and started to pass the procession, wobbling back and forth as if it had the blind staggers. You may well know the nigger was drunk or he wouldn't have passed a funeral. Uncle Benny cut out of line and took out after him. When he saw who was chasing him, the nigger turned around and headed back the way he'd come from. Uncle Benny was gaining on him when they passed the hearse. The bird dogs begun to take an interest and rared up, barking. What does Uncle Benny do but go to the side of the Chevrolet so the nigger turns around—and then Uncle Benny crowded him so all he could do was to shoot into line in the funeral procession. Uncle Benny cut right in after him and the nigger shot out of line and Uncle Benny crowded him in again.

I'll declare, I was glad old lady Weller wasn't alive to see it. She'd had no use for Uncle Benny, she'd hated a nigger, and she'd despised dogs so to where she kept a shotgun by her door to shoot at them if one so much as crossed her cornfield. And here on the way to her burying, where you'd figure she was entitled to have things the way she liked them, here was Uncle Benny chasing a nigger in and out of line, and seven bird-dogs were going *Ki-yippity yi! Ki-yippity-yi! Ki-yippity-yi!* I was mighty proud the corpse was no kin to me.

The Old Hen was plumb mortified. She put her hands over her face and when the Ford would swerve by or cut in ahead of us, Doc and me could see her swaying back and forth and suffering. I don't scarcely need to say Uncle Benny was enjoying hisself. If he'd looked sorrowful like, as if he was just doing his duty, you could of forgive him. Near a filling-station the Chevrolet shot ahead and stopped and the nigger jumped out and started to run. Uncle Benny stopped and climbed out of the Ford and drew his pistol and called "Stop!" The nigger kept on going.

Now Uncle Benny claims that shooting at niggers in the line of duty is what keeps him in practice for bird-shooting. He dropped a ball to the right of the nigger's heel and he dropped a ball to the left of it. He called "Stop!" and the nigger kept on going. Then Uncle Benny took his pistol in both hands and took a slow aim and he laid the third ball against the nigger's shin bone. He dropped like a string-haltered mule.

Uncle Benny said to the man that ran the filling-station, "Get your gun. That there nigger is under arrest and I deputize you to keep him that-a-way. The sheriff'll be along to pick him up direckly."

He cut back into the funeral procession between us and the hearse, and we could tell by them wicked blue eyes he didn't know when he'd enjoyed a burying like old lady Weller's. When we got back from the burying, he stopped by Will's garage. The Old Hen was giving him down the-country.

She said, "That was the most scandalous thing I've ever knowed you to do, chasing that nigger in and out of Mis' Weller's funeral."

Uncle Benny's eyes begun to dance and he said, "I know it, wife, but I couldn't help it. 'Twasn't me done the chasing—it was the Model-T."

Doc got into it then and sided with the Old Hen. He gets excited, the way fat men do, and he swelled up like a spreading adder.

"Benny," he said, "you shock my modesty. This ain't no occasion for laughing nor lying."

Uncle Benny said, "I know it, Doc. I wouldn't think of laughing nor lying. You didn't know I've got that Ford trained? I've got it trained to where it'll do two things. It's helped me chase so many niggers, I've got it to where it just naturally takes out after 'em by itself."

Doc got red in the face and asked, real sarcastic, "And what's the other piece of training?"

Uncle Benny said, "Doc, that Ford has carried me home drunk so many times, I've got it trained to where it'll take care of me and carry me home safe when I ain't fitten."

Doc spit halfway across the road and he said, "You lying old jay-bird."

Uncle Benny said, "Doc, I've got a pint of moonshine, and if you'll come go camping with me to Salt Springs this evening, I'll prove it."

The Old Hen spoke up and she said, "Benny, Heaven forgive you for I won't, if you go on the prowl again before you've cleared the weeds out of my old pindar field. I'm a month late now, getting it planted."

Doc loves Salt Spring crab and mullet as good as Uncle Benny does, and I could see he was tempted.

But he said, "Benny, you go along home and do what your wife wants, and when you're done—when she says you're done—then we'll go to Salt Springs."

So Uncle Benny and the Old Hen drove off. Doc watched after them.

He said, "Anyways, cutting the fool at a burying had ought to last Benny quite a while."

I said, "You don't know him. Cutting the fool don't last him no time at all."

I was right. I ain't no special wise a woman, but if I once know a man, I can come right close to telling you what he'll do. Uncle Benny hadn't been gone hardly no time, when somebody come by the garage hollering that he'd done set the Old Hen's pindar field on fire.

I said to Doc, "What did I tell you? The last thing in the world was safe for that woman to do, was to turn him loose on them weeds. He figured firing was the quickest way to get shut of them."

Doc said, "Let's go see."

We got in his car and drove out to Uncle Benny's place. Here was smoke rolling up back of the house, and the big live oak in the yard was black with soldier blackbirds. The grass fire had drove out of the pindar field. The field hadn't had peanuts in it since fall, but bless Katy, it was full of something else. Uncle Benny's wife had it plumb full of setting guinea hens. She hadn't told him, because he didn't like guineas.

Far off to the west corner of the field was the Old Hen, trying to run the guineas into a coop. They were flying every which way and hollering *Pod-rac! Pod-rac!* the way guineas holler. All the young uns in the neighborhood were in the middle of the field, beating out the grass fire with palmettos. And setting up on top of the east gate, just as unconcerned, was Uncle Benny, with them two little horns of white hair curling in the heat. Now what do you

reckon he was doing? He had all seven of them bird dogs running back and forth retrieving guinea eggs. He'd say now and again, "Dead—fetch!" and they'd wag their tails and go hunt up another nest and here they'd come, with guinea eggs carried gentle in their mouths. He was putting the eggs in a basket.

When the commotion was over, and the fire out, and everybody gone on but Doc and me, we went to the front porch to set down and rest. The Old Hen was wore out. She admitted it was her fault not letting Uncle Benny know about the setting guinea-hens. She was about to forgive him setting the field a fire, because him and the bird-dogs had saved the guinea eggs. But when we got to the porch, here lay the bird-dogs in the rocking chairs. There was one to every chair, rocking away and cutting their eyes at her. Their coats and paws were smuttied from the burnt grass—and the Old Hen had put clean sugar-sacking covers on every blessed chair that morning. That settled it. She was stirred up anyway about the way he'd cut the fool at the burying, and she really set in to quarrel at Uncle Benny. And like I say, it turned out to be the last piece of quarreling she ever done.

She said to him, "You taught them bird-dogs to rock in a rocking chair just to torment me. Ever' beast or varmint you've brought home, you've learned to cut the fool as bad as you do."

"Now, wife, what beast or varmint did I ever learn to cut the fool?"

"You learned the 'coon to screw the tops off my syrup cans. You learned the 'possum to hang upside down in my cupboards, and I'd go for a jar of maybe pepper relish and put my hand on him. There's been plenty of such as that I've raised ever'thing in the world for you but a stallion horse."

Doc said, "Give him time, he'll have one of them stabled in the kitchen."

"Bird-dogs is natural to have around," she said. "I was raised to bird-dogs. But it ain't natural for 'em to rock in a rocking-chair. There's so terrible many of them, and when they put in the night on the porch laying in the rocking chairs and rocking, I don't close my eyes for the fuss."

Uncle Benny said, "You see, Doc? You see, Mis' Dover? She's always quarreling that me and the dogs ain't never home at night. Then when we do come in, she ain't willing we should all be comfortable."

"We just as good to go on to Salt Springs, Doc. Wait while I go in the house and get my camping outfit and we'll set out."

He went in the house and came out with his camping stuff. She knowed he was gone for nobody knew how long.

We walked on down to the gate and the Old Hen followed, sniffing a little and twisting the corner of her apron.

"Benny," she said, "please don't go to Salt Springs. You always lose your teeth in the Boil."

"I ain't lost 'em but three times," he said, and he cranked up the Model-T and climbed in. "I couldn't help losing 'em the first time. That was when I was laughing at the Yankee casting for bass, and his plug caught me in the open mouth and lifted my teeth out. Nor I couldn't help it the second time, when Doc and me was rassling in the rowboat and he pushed me in."

"Yes," she said, "and how'd you lose 'em the third time?"

His eyes twinkled and he shoved the Ford in low "Cuttin' the fool," he said "That's just it," she said, and the tears began to roll out of her eyes "Anybody with false teeth hadn't ought to cut the fool!"

Now I always thought it was right cute, the way Uncle Benny fooled Doc about the trained Ford You know how the old-tuney Fords get the gas—it feeds from the hand-throttle on the wheel Well, Uncle Benny had spent the day before old lady Weller's funeral at Will's garage, putting in a foot accelerator He didn't say a word to anybody, and Will and me was the only ones knowed he had it Doc and Uncle Benny stayed three-four days camping at Salt Springs Now the night they decided to come home, they both had something to drink, but Uncle Benny let on like he was in worse shape than he was

Doc said, "Benny, you better leave me drive"

Uncle Benny pretended to rock on his feet and roll his head and he said, "I've got that Model-T trained to carry me home, drunk or sober"

Doc said, "Never mind that lie again You get up there in the seat and whistle in the dogs I'm fixing to drive us home"

Well, I'd of give a pretty to of been in the back seat with them bird-dogs that night when Doc drove the Ford back to Oak Bluff It's a treat, anyways, to see a fat man get excited The first thing Doc knowed, the Ford was running away with him The Ford lights were none too good, and Doc just did clear a stump by the road-side, and he run clean over a black-jack sapling He looked at the hand throttle on the wheel and here it was where the car had ought to be going about twenty miles an hour and it was going forty-five That rascal of an Uncle Benny had his foot on the foot accelerator

Doc shut off the gas altogether and the Ford kept right on going

He said, "Something's the matter"

Uncle Benny seemed to be dozing and didn't pay no mind The Ford whipped back and forth in the sand road like a 'gator's tail Directly they got on to the hard road and the Model-T put on speed They begun to get near a curve It was a dark night and the car-lights wobbling, but Doc could see it coming He took a tight holt of the wheel and begun to sweat He felt for the brakes, but Uncle Benny never did have any

He said, "We'll all be kilt"

When they started to take the curve, the Model-T was going nearly fifty-five—and then just as they got there, all of a sudden it slowed down as if it knowed what it was doing, and went around the curve as gentle as a day-old kitten Uncle Benny had eased his foot off the accelerator Doc drew a breath again

It's a wonder to me that trip didn't make Doc a nervous wreck On every straightaway the Ford would rare back on its haunches and stretch out like a greyhound Every curve they come to, it would go to it like a jackrabbit Then just as the sweat would pour down Doc's face and the drops would splash on the wheel, and he'd gather hisself together ready to jump, the Ford would slow down It was a hot spring night, but Uncle Benny says Doc's teeth were chattering The Model-T made the last mile lickety brindle with the gas at the

hand throttle shut off entirely—and it coasted down in front of Will's garage and of its own free will come to a dead stop

It was nine o'clock at night Will was just closing up and I had locked the candy and cigarette counter and was waiting for him There was a whole bunch of the men and boys around, like always, because the garage is the last place in Oak Bluffs to put the lights out Doc climbed out of the Ford trembling like a dish of custard Uncle Benny eased out after him and I looked at him and right away I knowed he'd been up to mischief

Doc said, "I don't know how he done it—but dogged if he wasn't telling the truth when he said he had that blankety-blank Model-T trained to carry him home when he ain't fitten"

Will asked, "How come?" and Doc told us Will looked at me and began to chuckle and we knowed what Uncle Benny had done to him I think maybe I would of let Uncle Benny get away with it, but Will couldn't keep it "Come here, Doc," he said "Here's your training"

I thought the bunch would laugh Doc out of town He swelled up like a toad fish and he got in his car without a word and drove away

It's a wonderful thing just to set down and figure out how many different ways there are to be crazy We never thought of Uncle Benny as being really crazy We'd say, "Uncle Benny's cutting the fool again," and we'd mean he was just messing around some sort of foolishness like a daggone young un We figured his was what you might call the bottom kind of craziness The next would be the half-witted The next would be the senseless The next would be what the colored folks call "mindless" And clear up at the top would be what you'd call cold-out crazy With all his foolishness, we never figured Uncle Benny was cold-out crazy

Well, we missed Uncle Benny from Oak Bluff a day or two When I came to ask questions, I found he'd gone on a long prow and was over on the Withlacoochie River camping with some oyster fishermen I didn't think much about it, because he was liable to stay off that-a-way But time rocked on and he didn't show up I dropped by his house to ask the Old Hen about him She didn't know a blessed thing

She said, "Ain't it God's mercy we've got no young uns? The pore things would be as good as fatherless"

And then a few days later Doc came driving up to the garage He got out and blew his nose and we could see his eyes were red

He said, "Ain't it awful! I can't hardly bear to think about it"

Will said, "Doc, if you know bad news, you must be carrying it Ain't nothing sorrowful I know of, except the Prohi's have found Philbin's still"

Doc said, "Don't talk about such little accidents at a time like this You don't mean you ain't heard about Benny?"

The bunch was there and they all perked up, interested They knowed if it was Uncle Benny, they could expect 'most any news

I said, "We ain't heard a word since he went off to the west coast"

"You ain't heard about him going crazy?"

I said, "Doc, you mean being crazy He's always been that a-way"

"I mean being crazy and going crazy Pore ol' Benny Mathers has gone really cold-out crazy "

Well, we all just looked at him and we looked at one another And it came over the whole bunch of us that we weren't surprised A nigger setting by the free air hose said, "Do, Jesus!" and eased away to tell the others

Doc blew his nose and wiped his eyes and he said, "I'm sure we all forgive the pore ol' feller all the things he done He wasn't responsible I feel mighty bad, to think the hard way I've often spoke to him "

Will asked, "How come it to finally happen?"

Doc said, "He'd been up to some foolishness all night, raring through some of them Gulf coast flatwoods Him and the fellers he was camping with was setting on the steps of the camp-house after breakfast All of a sudden Uncle Benny goes to whistling, loud and shrill like a jay-bird Then he says, 'I'm Sampson,' and he begun to tear down the camp-house "

Will asked, "What'd they do with him?"

Doc said, "You really ain't heard? I declare, I can't believe the news has come so slow They had a terrible time holding him and tying him They got in the doctors and the sheriff and they takened pore ol' Uncle Benny to the lunatic asylum at Chattahoochie "

Doc wiped his eyes and we all begun to sniffle and our eyes to burn I declare, it was just as if Uncle Benny Mathers had died on us

I said, "Oh, his pore wife—"

Will said, "We'll have to be good to him and go see him, and take him cigarettes and maybe slip him a pint of 'shine now and again "

I said, "The way he loved his freedom—shutting him up in the crazy-house will be like putting a wildcat in a crocus sack "

Doc said, "Oh, he ain't in the asylum right now He's broke loose That's what makes me feel so bad He's headed this way, and no telling the harm he'll do before he's ketched again "

Everybody jumped up and begun feeling in their hip pockets for their guns

Doc said, "No use to try to put no guns on him He's got his'n and they say he's shooting just as accurate as ever "

That was enough for me I ran back of the counter at the garage and begun locking up

I said, "Doc, you're a sight 'Tain't no time to go to feeling sorry for Uncle Benny and our lives and property in danger "

Doc said, "I know, but I knowed him so long and I knowed him so good I can't help feeling bad about it "

I said, "Do something about it Don't just set there, and him liable to come shooting his way in any minute "

Doc said, "I know, but what can anybody do to stop him? Pore man, with all them deputies after him "

Will said, "Deputies?"

Doc said, "Why, yes The sheriff at Ocala asked me would I stop along the road and leave word for all the deputies to try and ketch him Pore ol' Benny, I'll swear I hated doing it the worst way "

I scooped the money out of the cash register and I told them, "Now, men,

I'm leaving I've put up with Uncle Benny Mathers when he was drunk and I've put up with him when he was cutting the fool But the reckless way he drives that Ford and the way he shoots a pistol, I ain't studying on messing up around him and him gone cold out crazy"

Doc said, "Ain't a thing in the world would stop him when he goes by, and all them deputies after him, but a barricade acrost the road"

I said, "Then for goodness' sake, you sorry, low down, no-account, varminty white men tear down the wire fence around my chicken yard and fix Uncle Benny a barricade"

Doc said, "I just hated to suggest it"

Will said, "He'd slow down for the barricade and we could come in from behind and hem him in"

Doc said, "It'll be an awful thing to hem him in and have to see him sent back to Chattahoochie"

Will said, "I'll commence pulling out the posts and you all can wind up the fencing"

They worked fast and I went out and looked up the road now and again to see if Uncle Benny was coming Doc had stopped at the Standard filling station on his way, to leave the news, and we could see the people there stirring around and going out to look, the same as we were doing When we dragged the roll of wire fencing out into the road we hollered to them so they could see what we were doing and they all cheered and waved their hats The word had spread, and the young uns begun traipsing bare-footed down to the road, until some of their mummies ran down and cuffed them and hurried them back home out of the way of Uncle Benny The men strung the fencing tight across the road between the garage on one side and our smoke house on the other They nailed it firm at both ends

Doc said, "Leave me drive the last nail, men—it may be the last thing I can do for Benny this side of Chattahoochie"

I talked the men into unloading their guns

"He'll have to stop when he sees the barricade," I said, "and then you can all go in on him with your guns drawed and capture him I just can't hear to a loaded gun being drawed on him, for fear of somebody getting excited and shooting him"

Doc wiped the sweat off his forehead and he said, "Men, this is a mighty serious occasion I'd be mighty proud if you'll all have a little snort on me," and he passed the bottle

"Here's to Uncle Benny, the way we all knowed him before he went cold-out crazy," he said

And then we heard a shouting up the dirt road and young uns whistling and women and girls screaming and chickens scattering

"Yonder comes Uncle Benny!"

And yonder he came

The Model-T was swooping down like a bull-bat after a mosquito The water was boiling up out of the radiator in a foot high stream The seven pried bird-dogs were hanging out of the back seat and trembling as if they craved to tell the things they'd seen And behind Uncle Benny was a string of

deputy sheriffs in Fords and Chevrolets and motorcycles that had gathered together from every town between Oak Bluff and Ocala And Uncle Benny was hunched over the steering wheel with them two tufts of goat horn hair sticking up in the breeze—and the minute I laid eyes on him I knowed he wasn't one mite crazier than he ever had been I knowed right then Doc had laid out to get even with him and had lied on him all the way down the road

It was too late then I knowed, whatever happened, there'd be people to the end of his life would always believe it I knowed there'd be young uns running from him and niggers hiding And I knowed there wasn't a thing in the world now could keep him out of Chattahoochie for the time being I knowed he'd fight when he was taken, and all them mad and hot and dusty deputies would get him to the lunatic asylum quicker than a black snake can cross hot ashes And once a man that has cut the fool all his life, like Uncle Benny, is in the crazy-house, there'll be plenty of folks to say to keep him there

It was too late Uncle Benny was bearing down toward the garage and right in front of him was the barricade

Doc hollered, "Be ready to jump on him when he stops!"

Stop? Uncle Benny stop? He kept right on coming The sight of that chicken-wire barricade was no more to him than an aggravation Uncle Benny and the Model T dived into the barricade like a water-turkey into a pool The barricade held And the next thing we knowed, the Ford had somersaulted over the fencing and crumpled up like a paper shoebox and scattered bird dogs over ten acres and laid Uncle Benny in a heap over against the wall of the smoke-house I was raised to use the language of a lady, but I couldn't hold in

"Doc," I said, "you low-down son of a—"

He said, "Mis' Dover, the name's too good I've killed my friend"

Killed him? Killed Uncle Benny? It can't be done until the Almighty Hisself hollers "Sooeey!" Uncle Benny was messed up considerable, but him nor none of the bird-dogs was dead

The doctor took a few stitches in him at the garage before he come to, and tied up his head right pretty in a white bandage We left Will to quiet the deputies and we put Uncle Benny in Doc's car and carried him home to the Old Hen Naturally, I figured it would set her to quarreling Instead, it just brought out all her sweetness I can guess a man, but I can't guess another woman

"The pore ol' feller," she said "I knowed he had it coming to him What the devil throws over his back— I knowed he'd kill hisself in that Ford car, cutting the fool and prowling The biggest load is off my mind Now," she said, "now, by God's mercy, when it did come to him, he got out alive"

She began fanning him with a palmetto fan where he lay on the bed, and Doc poured out a drink of 'shine to have ready for him when he come to Doc's hand was trembling Uncle Benny opened his eyes He eased one hand up to the bandage across his head and he groaned and grunted He looked at Doc as if he couldn't make up his mind whether or not to reach for his pistol Doc put the 'shine to his mouth and Uncle Benny swallowed Them wicked blue eyes begun to dance

"Doc," he said, "how will I get home when I'm drunk, now you've tore up my trained Ford?"

Doc broke down and cried like a little baby

"I ain't got the money to replace it," he said, "but I'll give you my car I'll carry the Little Giant line of remedies on foot"

Uncle Benny said, "I don't want your car It ain't trained"

Doc said, "Then I'll tote you on my back, anywheres you say"

The Old Hen let in the bird-dogs, some of them limping a little, and they climbed on the bed and beat their tails on the counterpane and licked Uncle Benny We felt mighty relieved things had come out that way

Uncle Benny was up and around in a few days, with his head bandaged, and him as pert as a woodpecker He just about owned Oak Bluff—all except the people that did like I figured, never did get over the idea he'd gone really crazy Most people figured he'd had a mighty good lesson and it would learn him not to cut the fool The Old Hen was as happy as a bride She was so proud to have the Ford torn up, and no money to get another, that she'd even now and again pet one of the bird dogs She waited on Uncle Benny hand and foot and couldn't do enough to please him

She said to me, "The pore ol' feller sure stays home nights now"

Stay home? Uncle Benny stay home? Two weeks after the accident the wreck of the Model-T disappeared from behind the garage where Will had dragged it The next day the seven bird dogs disappeared The day after that Doc and Uncle Benny went to Ocala in Doc's car Will wouldn't answer me when I asked him questions The Old Hen stopped by the garage and got a Coca Cola and she didn't know any more than I did Then Will pointed down the road

He said, "Yonder he comes"

And yonder he came You could tell him way off by the white bandage with the tufts of hair sticking up over it He was scrooched down behind the wheel of what looked like a brand-new automobile Doc was following behind him They swooped into the garage

Will said, "It's a new second hand body put on the chassis and around the engine of the old Ford"

Uncle Benny got out and he greeted us

He said, "Will, it's just possible it was the motor of the Model T that had takened the training The motor ain't hurt, and me and Doc are real hopeful"

The Old Hen said, "Benny, where'd you get the money to pay for it?"

He said, "Why, a daggone bootlegger in a truck going from Miami to New York bought the bird-dogs for twenty five dollars apiece The low down rascal knowed good and well they was worth seventy-five"

She brightened some Getting shut of the bird-dogs was a little progress She walked over to the car and began looking around it

"Benny," she said, and her voice come kind of faintified, "if you sold the bird-dogs, what's this place back here looks like it was fixed for 'em?"

We all looked, and here was a open compartment like in the back, fixed up with seven crocus sacks stuffed with cornshucks About that time here come

a cloud of dust down the road It was the seven bird-dogs They were about give out Their tongues were hanging out and their feet looked blistered

Uncle Benny said, "I knowed they'd jump out of that bootlegger's truck I told him so "

I tell you, what's in a man's nature you can't change It takened the Old Hen thirty years and all them goings on to learn it She went and climbed in the front seat of the car and just sat there waiting for Uncle Benny to drive home for his dinner He lifted the bird-dogs up and set them down to rest on the cornshucks cushion, and he brought them a pan of water

He said, "I figure they busted loose just about Lawtey "

The Old Hen never opened her mouth She hasn't quarreled at him from that day to this She was hornswoggled

DOC MELLHORN AND THE PEARLY GATES¹

by Stephen Vincent Benét

The name of Stephen Vincent Benét (1898 1943), poet, essayist, and short story writer, stands secure in the first rank of contemporary authors His Pulitzer prize poem, *John Brown's Body* (1928), is the great American epic, and his two volumes of short stories, *Thirteen O'Clock* (1937) and *Tales before Midnight* (1939), are, in their own field, of an equal caliber

DOC MELLHORN had never expected to go anywhere at all when he died So, when he found himself on the road again, it surprised him But perhaps I'd better explain a little about Doc Mellhorn first He was seventy-odd when he left our town, but when he came, he was as young as Bates or Filsinger or any of the boys at the hospital Only there wasn't any hospital when he came He came with a young man's beard and a brand-new bag and a lot of newfangled ideas about medicine that we didn't take to much And he left, forty-odd years later, with a first-class county health record and a lot of people alive that wouldn't have been alive if he hadn't been there Yes, a country doctor And nobody ever called him a man in white or a death grappler that I know of, though they did think of giving him a degree at Pewauket College once But then the board met again and decided they needed a new gymnasium, so they gave the degree to J Prentiss Parmalee instead

They say he was a thin young man when he first came, a thin young man with an Eastern accent who'd wanted to study in Vienna But most of us remember him chunky and solid, with white hair and a little bald spot that always got burned bright red in the first hot weather He had about four card tricks that he'd do for you, if you were a youngster—they were always the same ones—and now and then, if he felt like it, he'd take a silver half dollar out of the back of your neck And that worked as well with the youngsters who were

¹ From *Selected Works of Stephen Vincent Benét* published by Rinehart & Company, Inc Copyright, 1938, by Stephen Vincent Benét

going to build rocket ships as it had with the youngsters who were going to be railway engineers. It always worked. I guess it was Doc Mellhorn more than the trick.

But there wasn't anything unusual about him, except maybe the card tricks. Or, anyway, he didn't think so. He was just a good doctor and he knew us inside out. I've heard people call him a pigheaded, obstinate old mule—that was in the fight about the water supply. And I've heard a weepy old lady call him a saint. I took the tale to him once, and he looked at me over his glasses and said, "Well, I've always respected a mule. Got ten times the sense of a—horse." Then he took a silver half dollar out of my ear.

Well, how do you describe a man like that? You don't—you call him up at three in the morning. And when he sends in his bill, you think it's a little steep.

All the same, when it came to it, there were people who drove a hundred and fifty miles to the funeral. And the Masons came down from Bluff City, and the Poles came from across the tracks, with a wreath the size of a house, and you saw cars in town that you didn't often see there. But it was after the funeral that the queer things began for Doc Mellhorn.

The last thing he remembered, he'd been lying in bed, feeling pretty sick, on the whole, but glad for the rest. And now he was driving his Model T down a long straight road between rolling, misty prairies that seemed to go from nowhere to nowhere.

It didn't seem funny to him to be driving the Model T again. That was the car he'd learned on, and he kept to it till his family made him change. And it didn't seem funny to him not to be sick any more. He hadn't had much time to be sick in his life—the patients usually attended to that. He looked around for his bag, first thing, but it was there on the seat beside him. It was the old bag, not the presentation one they'd given him at the hospital, but that was all right too. It meant he was out on a call and, if he couldn't quite recollect at the moment just where the call was, it was certain to come to him. He'd wakened up often enough in his buggy, in the old days, and found the horse was taking him home, without his doing much about it. A doctor gets used to things like that.

All the same, when he'd driven and driven for some time without raising so much as a traffic light, just the same rolling prairies on either hand, he began to get a little suspicious. He thought, for a while, of stopping the car and getting out, just to take a look around, but he'd always hated to lose time on a call. Then he noticed something else. He was driving without his glasses. And yet he hadn't driven without his glasses in fifteen years.

"H'm," said Doc Mellhorn. "I'm crazy as a June bug. Or else—Well, it might be so, I suppose."

But this time he did stop the car. He opened his bag and looked inside it, but everything seemed to be in order. He opened his wallet and looked at that, but there were his own initials, half rubbed away, and he recognized them. He took his pulse, but it felt perfectly steady.

"H'm," said Doc Mellhorn. "Well."

Then, just to prove that everything was perfectly normal, he took a silver half dollar out of the steering wheel of the car

"Never did it smother," said Doc Mellhorn "Well, all the same, if this is the new highway, it's longer than I remember it."

But just then a motorcycle came roaring down the road and stopped with a flourish, the way motor cops do

"Any trouble?" said the motor cop Doc Mellhorn couldn't see his face for his goggles, but the goggles looked normal

"I am a physician," said Doc Mellhorn, as he'd said a thousand times before to all sorts of people, "on my way to an urgent case" He passed his hand across his forehead "Is this the right road?" he said

"Straight ahead to the traffic light," said the cop "They're expecting you, Doctor Mellhorn Shall I give you an escort?"

"No, thanks all the same," said Doc Mellhorn, and the motor cop roared away The Model T ground as Doc Mellhorn gassed her "Well, they've got a new breed of traffic cop," said Doc Mellhorn, "or else—"

But when he got to the light, it was just like any light at a crossroads He waited till it changed and the officer waved him on There seemed to be a good deal of traffic going the other way, but he didn't get a chance to notice it much, because Lizzie bucked a little, as she usually did when you kept her waiting Still, the sight of traffic relieved him, though he hadn't passed anybody on his own road yet

Pretty soon he noticed the look of the country had changed It was parkway now and very nicely landscaped There was dogwood in bloom on the little hills, white and pink against the green, though, as Doc Mellhorn remembered it, it had been August when he left his house And every now and then there'd be a nice little white-painted sign that said TO THE GATES

"H'm," said Doc Mellhorn "New State Parkway, I guess Well, they've fixed it up pretty But I wonder where they got the dogwood Haven't seen it bloom like that since I was East"

Then he drove along in a sort of dream for a while, for the dogwood reminded him of the days when he was a young man in an Eastern college He remembered the look of that college and the girls who'd come to dances, the girls who wore white gloves and had rolls of hair They were pretty girls, too, and he wondered what had become of them "Had babies, I guess," thought Doc Mellhorn "Or some of them, anyway" But he liked to think of them as the way they had been when they were just pretty, and excited at being at a dance

He remembered other things too—the hacked desks in the lecture rooms, and the trees on the campus, and the first pipe he'd ever broken in, and a fellow called Paisley Grew that he hadn't thought of in years—a rawboned fellow with a gift for tall stories and playing the jew's-harp

"Ought to have looked up Paisley," he said "Yes, I ought Didn't amount to a hill of beans, I guess, but I always liked him I wonder if he still plays the jew's-harp Pshaw, I know he's been dead twenty years"

He was passing other cars now and other cars were passing him, but he didn't pay much attention, except when he happened to notice a license you

didn't often see in the state, like Rhode Island or Mississippi. He was too full of his own thoughts. There were foot passengers, too, plenty of them—and once he passed a man driving a load of hay. He wondered what the man would do with the hay when he got to the Gates. But probably there were arrangements for that.

"Not that I believe a word of it," he said, "but it'll surprise Father Kelly. Or maybe it won't. I used to have some handsome arguments with that man, but I always knew I could count on him, in spite of me being a heretic."

Then he saw the Wall and the Gates, right across the valley. He saw them, and they reached to the top of the sky. He rubbed his eyes for a while, but they kept on being there.

"Quite a sight," said Doc Mellhorn.

No one told him just where to go or how to act, but it seemed to him that he knew. If he'd thought about it, he'd have said that you waited in line, but there wasn't any waiting in line. He just went where he was expected to go and the reception clerk knew his name right away.

"Yes, Doctor Mellhorn," he said. "And now, what would you like to do first?"

"I think I'd like to sit down," said Doc Mellhorn. So he sat, and it was a comfortable chair. He even bounced the springs of it once or twice, till he caught the reception clerk's eye on him.

"Is there anything I can get you?" said the reception clerk. He was young and brisk and neat as a pin, and you could see he aimed to give service and studied about it. Doc Mellhorn thought, "He's the kind that wipes off your windshield no matter how clean it is."

"No," said Doc Mellhorn. "You see, I don't believe this. I don't believe any of it. I'm sorry if that sounds cranky, but I don't."

"That's quite all right, sir," said the reception clerk. "It often takes a while." And he smiled as if Doc Mellhorn had done him a favor.

"Young man, I'm a physician," said Doc Mellhorn, "and do you mean to tell me—"

Then he stopped, for he suddenly saw there was no use arguing. He was either there or he wasn't. And it felt as if he were there.

"Well," said Doc Mellhorn, with a sigh, "how do I begin?"

"That's entirely at your own volition, sir," said the reception clerk briskly. "Any meetings with relatives, of course. Or if you would prefer to get yourself settled first. Or take a tour, alone or conducted. Perhaps these will offer suggestions," and he started to hand over a handful of leaflets. But Doc Mellhorn put them aside.

"Wait a minute," he said. "I want to think. Well, naturally, there's Mother and Dad. But I couldn't see them just yet. I wouldn't believe it. And Grandma—well, now, if I saw Grandma—and me older than she is—was—used to be—well, I don't know what it would do to me. You've got to let me get my breath. Well, of course, there's Uncle Frank—he'd be easier." He paused. "Is he here?" he said.

The reception clerk looked in a file. "I am happy to say that Mr. Francis V. Mellhorn arrived July 12, 1907," he said. He smiled winningly.

"Well!" said Doc Mellhorn "Uncle Frank! Well, I'll be—well! But it must have been a great consolation to Mother We heard—well, never mind what we heard—I guess it wasn't so No, don't reach for that phone just yet, or whatever it is I'm still thinking"

"We sometimes find," said the reception clerk eagerly, "that a person not a relative may be the best introduction Even a stranger sometimes—a distinguished stranger connected with one's own profession—"

"Well, now, that's an idea," said Doc Mellhorn heartily, trying to keep his mind off how much he disliked the reception clerk He couldn't just say why he disliked him, but he knew he did

It reminded him of the time he'd had to have his gall bladder out in the city hospital and the young, brisk interns had come to see him and called him "Doctor" every other word

"Yes, that's an idea," he said He reflected "Well, of course, I'd like to see Koch," he said "And Semmelweiss Not to speak of Walter Reed But, shucks, they'd be busy men But there is one fellow—only he lived pretty far back—"

"Hippocrates, please," said the reception clerk into the telephone or whatever it was "*H* for Horse—"

"No!" said Doc Mellhorn quite violently "Excuse me, but you just wait a minute I mean if you can wait I mean, if Hippocrates wants to come, I've no objection But I never took much of a fancy to him, in spite of his oath It's Aesculapius I'm thinking about George W Oh, glory!" he said "But he won't talk English I forgot"

"I shall be happy to act as interpreter," said the reception clerk, smiling brilliantly

"I haven't a doubt," said Doc Mellhorn "But just wait a shake" In a minute, by the way the clerk was acting, he was going to be talking to Aesculapius "And what in time am I going to say to the man?" he thought "It's too much" He gazed wildly around the neat reception room—distempered, as he noticed, in a warm shade of golden tan Then his eyes fell on the worn black bag at his feet and a sudden warm wave of relief flooded over him

"Wait a minute," he said, and his voice gathered force and authority "Where's my patient?"

"Patient?" said the reception clerk, looking puzzled for the first time

"Patient," said Doc Mellhorn "*P* for phlebitis" He tapped his bag

"I'm afraid you don't quite understand, sir," said the reception clerk

"I understand this," said Doc Mellhorn "I was called here And if I wasn't called professionally, why have I got my bag?"

"But, my dear Doctor Mellhorn—" said the reception clerk

"I'm not your dear doctor," said Doc Mellhorn "I was called here, I tell you I'm sorry not to give you the patient's name, but the call must have come in my absence and the girl doesn't spell very well But in any well-regulated hospital—"

"But I tell you," said the reception clerk, and his hair wasn't slick any more, "nobody's ill here Nobody can be ill If they could, it wouldn't be He—"

"Humph," said Doc Mellhorn He thought it over, and felt worse "Then what does a fellow like Koch do?" he said "Or Pasteur?" He raised a hand

"Oh, don't tell me," he said "I can see they'd be busy Yes, I guess it'd be all right for a research man But I never was Oh, well, shucks, I've published a few papers And there's that clamp of mine—always meant to do something about it But they've got better ones now Mean to say there isn't so much as a case of mumps in the whole place?"

"I assure you," said the reception clerk, in a weary voice "And now, once you see Doctor Aesculapius—"

"Funny," said Doc Mellhorn "Lord knows there's plenty of times you'd be glad to be quit of the whole thing And don't talk to me about the healer's art or grateful patients Well, I've known a few a few But I've known others All the same, it's different, being told there isn't any need for what you can do"

"A for Ararat," said the reception clerk into his instrument "E for Eden"

"Should think you'd have a dial," said Doc Mellhorn desperately "We've got 'em down below" He thought hard and frantically "Wait a shake It's coming back to me," he said "Got anybody named Grew here? Paisley Grew?"

"S for serpent" said the reception clerk "What was that?"

"Fellow that called me," said Doc Mellhorn "G-r e-w First name, Paislev"

"I will consult the index," said the reception clerk

He did so, and Doc Mellhorn waited, hoping against hope

"We have 94,183 Grews, including 83 Prescotts and one Penobscot," the reception clerk said at last "But I fail to find Paisley Grew Are you quite sure of the name?"

"Of course," said Doc Mellhorn briskly "Paisley Grew Chronic indigestion Might be appendix—can't say—have to see But anyhow, he's called" He picked up his bag "Well, thanks for the information," he said, liking the reception clerk better than he had yet "Not your fault, anyway"

"But—but where are you going?" said the reception clerk

"Well, there's another establishment, isn't there?" said Doc Mellhorn "All ways heard there was Call probably came from there Crossed wires, I expect"

"But you can't go there!" said the reception clerk "I mean—"

"Can't go?" said Doc Mellhorn "I'm a physician A patient's called me"

"But if you'll only wait and see Aesculapius!" said the reception clerk, running his hands wildly through his hair "He'll be here almost any moment"

"Please give him my apologies," said Doc Mellhorn "He's a doctor He'll understand And if any messages come for me, just stick them on the spike Do I need a road map? Noticed the road I came was all one way"

"There is, I believe, a back road in rather bad repair," said the reception clerk icily "I can call Information if you wish"

"Oh, don't bother," said Doc Mellhorn "I'll find it And I never saw a road beat Lizzie yet" He took a silver half dollar from the doorknob of the door "See that?" he said "Slick as a whistle Well, good-bye, young man"

But it wasn't till he'd cranked up Lizzie and was on his way that Doc Mellhorn really felt safe He found the back road and it was all the reception clerk had said it was and more But he didn't mind—in fact, after one particularly bad rut, he grinned

"I suppose I ought to have seen the folks," he said "Yes, I know I ought

But—not so much as a case of mumps in the whole abiding dominion! Well, it's lucky I took a chance on Paisley Grew'

After another mile or so, he grinned again

"And I'd like to see old Aesculapius' face Probably rang him in the middle of dinner—they always do But shucks, it's happened to all of us"

Well, the road got worse and worse and the sky above it darker and darker, and what with one thing and another, Doc Mellhorn was glad enough when he got to the other gates They were pretty impressive gates, too, though of course in a different way, and reminded Doc Mellhorn a little of the furnaces outside Steeltown, where he'd practiced for a year when he was young

This time Doc Mellhorn wasn't going to take any advice from reception clerks and he had his story all ready All the same, he wasn't either registered or expected, so there was a little fuss Finally they tried to scare him by saying he came at his own risk and that there were some pretty tough characters about But Doc Mellhorn remarked that he'd practiced in Steeltown So after he'd told them what seemed to him a million times that he was a physician on a case, they finally let him in and directed him to Paisley Grew Paisley was on Level 346 in Pit 68,953, and Doc Mellhorn recognized him the minute he saw him He even had the jew's-harp, stuck in the back of his overalls

"Well, Doc," said Paisley finally, when the first greetings were over, "you certainly are a sight for sore eyes! Though, of course, I'm sorry to see you here," and he grinned

"Well, I can't see that it's so different from a lot of places," said Doc Mellhorn, wiping his forehead "Warmish, though"

"It's the humidity, really," said Paisley Grew "That's what it really is"

"Yes, I know," said Doc Mellhorn "And now tell me, Paisley, how's that indigestion of yours?"

"Well, I'll tell you, Doc," said Paisley "When I first came here, I thought the climate was doing it good I did for a fact But now I'm not so sure I've tried all sorts of things for it—I've even tried being transferred to the boiling asphalt lakes But it just seems to hang on, and every now and then, when I least expect it, it catches me Take last night I didn't have a thing to eat that I don't generally eat—well, maybe I did have one little snort of hot sulphur, but it wasn't the sulphur that did it All the same, I woke up at four, and it was just like a knife Now"

He went on from there and it took him some time And Doc Mellhorn listened, happy as a clam He never thought he'd be glad to listen to a hypochondriac, but he was And when Paisley was all through, he examined him and prescribed for him It was just a little soda bicarb and pepsin, but Paisley said it took hold something wonderful And they had a fine time that evening, talking over the old days

Finally, of course, the talk got around to how Paisley liked it where he was And Paisley was honest enough about that

"Well, Doc," he said, "of course this isn't the place for you, and I can see you're just visiting But I haven't many real complaints It's hot, to be sure, and they work you, and some of the boys here are rough But they've had some pretty interesting experiences, too, when you get them talking—yes, sir And

anyhow, it isn't Peabodyville, New Jersey," he said with vehemence "I spent five years in Peabodyville, trying to work up in the leather business After that I bust out, and I guess that's what landed me here But it's an improvement on Peabodyville" He looked at Doc Mellhorn sidewise "Say, Doc," he said, "I know this is a vacation for you, but all the same there's a couple of the boys—nothing really wrong with them of course—but—well, if you could just look them over—"

"I was thinking the office hours would be nine to one," said Doc Mellhorn

So Paisley took him around and they found a nice little place for an office in one of the abandoned mine galleries, and Doc Mellhorn hung out his shingle And right away patients started coming around They didn't get many doctors there, in the first place, and the ones they did get weren't exactly the cream of the profession, so Doc Mellhorn had it all to himself It was mostly sprains, fractures, bruises and dislocations, of course, with occasional burns and scalds—and, on the whole, it reminded Doc Mellhorn a good deal of his practice in Steeltown, especially when it came to foreign bodies in the eye Now and then Doc Mellhorn ran into a more unusual case—for instance, there was one of the guards that got part of himself pretty badly damaged in a rock slide Well, Doc Mellhorn had never set a tail before, but he managed it all right, and got a beautiful primary union, too, in spite of the fact that he had no X-ray facilities He thought of writing up the case for the State Medical Journal, but then he couldn't figure out any way to send it to them, so he had to let it slide And then there was an advanced carcinoma of the liver—a Greek named Papadoupoulos or Prometheus or something Doc Mellhorn couldn't do much for him, considering the circumstances, but he did what he could, and he and the Greek used to have long conversations The rest was just everyday practice—run of the mine—but he enjoyed it

Now and then it would cross his mind that he ought to get out Lizzie and run back to the other place for a visit with the folks But that was just like going back East had been on earth—he'd think he had everything pretty well cleared up, and then a new flock of patients would come in And it wasn't that he didn't miss his wife and children and grandchildren—he did But there wasn't any way to get back to them, and he knew it And there was the work in front of him and the office crowded every day So he just went along, hardly noticing the time

Now and then, to be sure, he'd get a suspicion that he wasn't too popular with the authorities of the place But he was used to not being popular with authorities and he didn't pay much attention But finally they sent an inspector around The minute Doc Mellhorn saw him, he knew there was going to be trouble

Not that the inspector was uncivil In fact, he was a pretty high-up official—you could tell by his antlers And Doc Mellhorn was just as polite, showing him around He showed him the free dispensary and the clinic and the nurse—Scotch girl named Smith, she was—and the dental chair he'd rigged up with the help of a fellow named Ferguson, who used to be an engineer before he was sentenced And the inspector looked them all over, and finally he came back to Doc Mellhorn's office The girl named Smith had put up curtains in the

office, and with that and a couple of potted gas plants it looked more homelike than it had. The inspector looked around it and sighed.

"I'm sorry, Doctor Mellhorn," he said at last, "but you can see for yourself, it won't do."

"What won't do?" said Doc Mellhorn, stoutly. But, all the same, he felt afraid.

"Any of it," said the inspector. "We could overlook the alleviation of minor suffering—I'd be inclined to do so myself—though these people are here to suffer, and there's no changing that. But you're playing merry Hades with the whole system."

"I'm a physician in practice," said Doc Mellhorn.

"Yes," said the inspector. "That's just the trouble. Now, take these reports you've been sending," and he took out a sheaf of papers. "What have you to say about that?"

"Well, seeing as there's no county health officer, or at least I couldn't find one—" said Doc Mellhorn.

"Precisely," said the inspector. "And what have you done? You've condemned fourteen levels of this pit as unsanitary nuisances. You've recommended 2136 lost souls for special diet, remedial exercise, hospitalization—Well—I won't go through the list."

"I'll stand back of every one of those recommendations," said Doc Mellhorn. "And now we've got the chair working, we can handle most of the dental work on the spot. Only Ferguson needs more amalgam."

"I know," said the inspector patiently, "but the money has to come from somewhere—you must realize that. We're not a rich community, in spite of what people think. And these unauthorized requests—oh, we fill them, of course, but—"

"Ferguson needs more amalgam," said Doc Mellhorn. "And that last batch wasn't standard. I wouldn't use it on a dog."

"He's always needing more amalgam!" said the inspector bitterly, making a note. "Is he going to fill every tooth in Hades? By the way, my wife tells me I need a little work done myself—but we won't go into that. We'll take just one thing—your entirely unauthorized employment of Miss Smith. Miss Smith has no business working for you. She's supposed to be gnawed by a never-dying worm every Monday, Wednesday and Friday."

"Sounds silly to me," said Doc Mellhorn.

"I don't care how silly it sounds," said the inspector. "It's regulations. And, besides, she isn't even a registered nurse."

"She's a practical one," said Doc Mellhorn. "Of course, back on earth a lot of her patients died. But that was because when she didn't like a patient, she poisoned him. Well, she can't poison anybody here and I've kind of got her out of the notion of it anyway. She's been doing A-1 work for me and I'd like to recommend her for—"

"Please!" said the inspector. "Please! And as if that wasn't enough, you've even been meddling with the staff. I've a note here on young Asmodeus—Asmodeus XIV—"

"Oh, you mean Mickey!" said Doc Mellhorn, with a chuckle. "Short for

Mickey Mouse We call him that in the clinic And he's a young imp if I ever saw one "

"The original Asmodeus is one of our most prominent citizens," said the inspector severely "How do you suppose he felt when we got your report that his fourteenth great grandson had rickets?"

"Well," said Doc Mellhorn, "I know rickets And he had 'em And you're going to have rickets in these youngsters as long as you keep feeding 'em low grade coke I put Mickey on the best Pennsylvania anthracite, and look at him now!"

"I admit the success of your treatment," said the inspector, "but, naturally—well, since then we've been deluged with demands for anthracite from as far south as Sheol We'll have to float a new bond issue And what will the tax payers say?"

"He was just cutting his first horns when he came to us," said Doc Mellhorn reminiscently, "and they were coming in crooked Now, I ask you, did you ever see a straighter pair? Of course, if I'd had cod liver oil— My gracious, you ought to have somebody here that can fill a prescription, I can't do it all "

The inspector shut his papers together with a snap "I'm sorry, Doctor Mellhorn," he said, "but this is final You have no right here, in the first place, no local license to practice in the second—"

"Yes, that's a little irregular," said Doc Mellhorn, "but I'm a registered member of four different medical associations—you might take that into account And I'll take any examination that's required "

"No," said the inspector violently "No, no, no! You can't stay here! You've got to go away! It isn't possible!"

Doc Mellhorn drew a long breath "Well," he said, "there wasn't any work for me at the other place And here you won't let me practice So what's a man to do?"

The inspector was silent

"Tell me," said Doc Mellhorn presently "Suppose you do throw me out? What happens to Miss Smith and Paisley and the rest of them?"

"Oh, what's done is done," said the inspector impatiently, "here as well as anywhere else We'll have to keep on with the anthracite and the rest of it And Hades only knows what'll happen in the future If it's any satisfaction to you, you've started something "

"Well, I guess Smith and Ferguson between them can handle the practice," said Doc Mellhorn "But that's got to be a promise "

"It's a promise," said the inspector

"Then there's Mickey—I mean Asmodeus," said Doc Mellhorn "He's a smart youngster—smart as a whip—if he is a hellion Well, you know how a youngster gets Well, it seems he wants to be a doctor But I don't know what sort of training he'd get—"

"He'll get it," said the inspector feverishly "We'll found the finest medical college you ever saw, right here in West Baal We'll build a hospital that'll knock your eye out You'll be satisfied But now, if you don't mind—"

"All right," said Doc Mellhorn, and rose

The inspector looked surprised "But don't you want to—" he said "I mean

my instructions are were to give you a banquet, if necessary—after all, the community appreciates—”

“Thanks,” said Doc Mellhorn, with a shudder, “but if I’ve got to go, I’d rather get out of town. You hang around and announce your retirement, and pretty soon folks start thinking they ought to give you a testimonial. And I never did like testimonials.”

All the same, before he left he took a silver half dollar out of Mickey Asmodeus’ chin.

When he was back on the road again and the lights of the gates had faded into a low ruddy glow behind him, Doc Mellhorn felt alone for the first time. He’d been lonely at times during his life, but he’d never felt alone like this before. Because, as far as he could see, there was only him and LIZZIE now.

“Now, maybe if I’d talked to Aesculapius—” he said. “But pshaw, I always was pigheaded.”

He didn’t pay much attention to the way he was driving and it seemed to him that the road wasn’t quite the same. But he felt tired for a wonder—bone-tired and beaten—and he didn’t much care about the road. He hadn’t felt tired since he left earth, but now the loneliness tired him.

“Active—always been active,” he said to himself. “I can’t just lay down on the job. But what’s a man to do?”

“What’s a man to do?” he said. “I’m a doctor. I can’t work miracles.”

Then the black fit came over him and he remembered all the times he’d been wrong and all the people he couldn’t do anything for. “Never was much of a doctor, I guess,” he said. “Maybe, if I’d gone to Vienna. Well, the right kind of man would have gone. And about that Bigelow kid,” he said. “How was I to know he’d hemorrhage? But I should have known.”

“I’ve diagnosed walking typhoid as appendicitis. Just the once, but that’s enough. And I still don’t know what held me back when I was all ready to operate. I used to wake up in a sweat, six months afterward, thinking I had.”

“I could have saved those premature twins, if I’d known as much then as I do now. I guess that guy Dafoe would have done it anyway—look at what he had to work with. But I didn’t. And that finished the Gorhams’ having children. That’s a dandy doctor, isn’t it? Makes you feel fine.”

“I could have pulled Old Man Halsey through. And Edna Biggs. And the little Lauriat girl. No, I couldn’t have done it with her. That was before insulin. I couldn’t have cured Ted Allen. No, I’m clear on that. But I’ve never been satisfied about the Collins woman. Bates is all right—good as they come. But I knew her, inside and out—ought to, too—she was the biggest nuisance that ever came into the office. And if I hadn’t been down with the flu.”

“Then there’s the flu epidemic. I didn’t take my clothes off, four days and nights. But what’s the good of that, when you lose them? Oh, sure, the statistics looked good. You can have the statistics.”

“Should have started raising hell about the water supply two years before I did.”

“Oh, yes, it makes you feel fine, pulling babies into the world. Makes you feel you’re doing something. And just fine when you see a few of them, twenty-three years later, not worth two toots on a cow’s horn. Can’t say I ever

delivered a Dillinger But there's one or two in state's prison And more that ought to be Don't mind even that so much as a few of the fools Makes you wonder

"And then, there's incurable cancer That's a daisy What can you do about it Doctor? Well, Doctor, we can alleviate the pain in the last stages Some Ever been in a cancer ward, Doctor? Yes, Doctor, I have

"What do you do for the common cold, Doctor? Two dozen clean linen handkerchiefs Yes, it's a good joke—I'll laugh And what do you do for a boy when you know he's dying, Doctor? Take a silver half dollar out of his ear But it kept the Lane kid quiet and his fever went down that night I took the credit, but I don't know why it went down

"I've only got one brain And one pair of hands

"I could have saved I could have done I could have

"Guess it's just as well you can't live forever You make fewer mistakes And sometimes I'd see Bates looking at me as if he wondered why I ever thought I could practice

"Pigheaded, opinionated, ineffective old imbecile! And yet, Lord, Lord, I'd do it all over again"

He lifted his eyes from the pattern of the road in front of him There were white markers on it now and Lizzie seemed to be bouncing down a residential street There were trees in the street and it reminded him of town He rubbed his eyes for a second and Lizzie rolled on by herself—she often did It didn't seem strange to him to stop at the right house

"Well, Mother," he said rather gruffly to the group on the lawn "Well, Dad

Well, Uncle Frank" He beheld a small, stern figure advancing, hands outstretched "Well, Grandma," he said meekly

Later on he was walking up and down in the grape arbor with Uncle Frank Now and then he picked a grape and ate it They'd always been good grapes, those Catawbass, as he remembered them

"What beats me," he said, not for the first time, "is why I didn't notice the Gates The second time, I mean"

"Oh, that Gate," said Uncle Frank, with the easy, unctuous roll in his voice that Doc Mellhorn so well remembered He smoothed his handle bar mustaches "That Gate, my dear Edward—well, of course it has to be there in the first place Literature, you know And then, it's a choice," he said richly

"I'll draw cards," said Doc Mellhorn He ate another grape

"Fact is," said Uncle Frank, "that Gate's for one kind of person You pass it and then you can rest for all eternity Just fold your hands It suits some"

"I can see that it would," said Doc Mellhorn

"Yes," said Uncle Frank, "but it wouldn't suit a Mellhorn I'm happy to say that very few of our family remain permanently on that side I spent some time there myself" He said, rather self-consciously, "Well, my last years had been somewhat stormy So few people cared for refined impersonations of our feathered songsters, including lightning sketches I felt that I'd earned a rest But after a while—well, I got tired of being at liberty"

"And what happens when you get tired?" said Doc Mellhorn

"You find out what you want to do," said Uncle Frank

"My kind of work?" said Doc Mellhorn

"Your kind of work," said his uncle "Been busy, haven't you?"

"Well," said Doc Mellhorn "But here If there isn't so much as a case of mumps in—"

"Would it have to be mumps?" said his uncle "Of course, if you're aching for mumps, I guess it could be arranged But how many new souls do you suppose we get here a day?"

"Sizable lot, I expect"

"And how many of them get here in first class condition?" said Uncle Frank triumphantly "Why, I've seen Doctor Rush—Benjamin Rush—come back so tired from a day's round he could hardly flap one pinion against the other Oh, if it's work you want— And then, of course, there's the earth"

"Hold on," said Doc Mellhorn "I'm not going to appear to any young intern in wings and a harp Not at my time of life And anyway, he'd laugh himself sick"

"'Tain't that," said Uncle Frank "Look here You've left children and grandchildren behind you, haven't you? And they're going on?"

"Yes," said Doc Mellhorn

"Same with what you did," said Uncle Frank "I mean the inside part of it—that stays I don't mean any funny business—voices in your ear and all that But haven't you ever got clean tuckered out, and been able to draw on some thing you didn't know was there?"

"Pshaw, any man's done that," said Doc Mellhorn "But you take the adrenal—"

"Take anything you like," said Uncle Frank placidly "I'm not going to argue with you Not my department But you'll find it isn't all adrenalin Like it here?" he said abruptly "Feel satisfied?"

"Why, yes," said Doc Mellhorn surprisedly, "I do" He looked around the grape arbor and suddenly realized that he felt happy

"No, they wouldn't all arrive in first-class shape," he said to himself "So there'd be a place" He turned to Uncle Frank "By the way," he said diffidently, "I mean, I got back so quick—there wouldn't be a chance of my visiting the other establishment now and then? Where I just came from? Smith and Ferguson are all right, but I'd like to keep in touch"

"Well," said Uncle Frank, "you can take that up with the delegation" He arranged the handkerchief in his breast pocket "They ought to be along any minute now," he said "Sister's been in a stew about it all day She says there won't be enough chairs, but she always says that"

'Delegation?" said Doc Mellhorn "But—"

"You don't realize," said Uncle Frank, with his rich chuckle "You're a famous man You've broken pretty near every regulation except the fire laws, and refused the Gate first crack They've got to do something about it"

"But—" said Doc Mellhorn, looking wildly around for a place of escape

"Sh-h!" hissed Uncle Frank "Hold up your head and look as though money were bid for you It won't take long—just a welcome" He shaded his eyes with his hand "My," he said with frank admiration, "you've certainly brought them out There's Rush, by the way"

"Where?" said Doc Mellhorn

"Second from the left, third row, in a wig," said Uncle Frank "And there's—"

Then he stopped, and stepped aside. A tall gaue figure was advancing down the grape arbor—a bearded man with a wise, majestic face who wore robes as if they belonged to him, not as Doc Mellhorn had seen them worn in college commencements. There was a small fillet of gold about his head and in his left hand, Doc Mellhorn noticed without astonishment, was a winged staff entwined with two fangless serpents. Behind him were many others. Doc Mellhorn stood straighter.

The bearded figure stopped in front of Doc Mellhorn. "Welcome, Brother," said Aesculapius.

"It's an honor to meet you, Doctor," said Doc Mellhorn. He shook the outstretched hand. Then he took a silver half dollar from the mouth of the left hand snake.

MUSIC ON THE MUSCATATUCK¹

by Jessamyn West

With the publication in 1945 of *The Friendly Persuasion*, it became evident that a new and notable short story writer had made an appearance. The author, Jessamyn West, was born in Indiana of Quaker parents, her two grandmothers were Quaker ministers. *The Friendly Persuasion* in which "Music on the Muscatatuck" is the first of fourteen linked stories, tells, with deft wit and a sympathetic touch, of the life of a family of Indiana Quakers about the time of the Civil War.

NEAR the banks of the Muscatatuck where once the woods had stretched, dark row on row, and where the fox grapes and wild mint still flourished, Jess Birdwell, an Irish Quaker, built his white clapboard house. Here he lacked for very little. On a peg by the front door hung a starling in a wooden cage and at the back door stood a spring house, the cold spring water running between crocks of yellow-skinned milk. At the front gate a moss rose said welcome and on a trellis over the parlor window a Prairie Queen nodded at the roses in the parlor carpet—blossoms no nurseryman's catalogue had ever carried and gay company for the sober Quaker volumes. Fox's life, Penn's "Fruits of Solitude," Woolman's "Journal," which stood in the parlor secretary.

Jess had a good wife, a Quaker minister, Eliza Cope before she was wed, and a houseful of children. Eliza was a fine woman, pious and work-brickel and good-looking as female preachers are apt to be—a little, black-haired, glossy woman with a mind of her own.

He had a good business, too. He was a nurseryman with the best stock of berries and fruits west of Philadelphia, in the apple line. Rambo, Maiden Blush, Early Harvest, Northern Spy, a half dozen others, May Duke cherries, Stump

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the World, a white fleshed peach, the Lucretia dewberry, a wonder for pies and cobblers Pears, currant bushes, gooseberries, whatever the land could support or fancy demand in the way of fruits, Jess had them

There were extras to be had, too, there on the banks of the Muscatatuck black bass, catfish that weren't choosy, that would come out of the water with their jaws clamped about a piece of cotton batting Pawpaws smooth and sweet as nectar, persimmons with an October flavor, service berries tart as spring

In spring, meadow and roadside breathed flowers, in summer there was a shimmer of sunlight onto the great trees whose shadows still dappled the farmland sycamore, oak, tulip, shagbark hickory When fall came a haze lay across the cornfields, across the stands of goldenrod and farewell summer, until heaven and earth seemed bound together—and Jess, standing on a little rise at the back of the house, looking across the scope of land which fell away to the river, would have, in pure content, to wipe his eyes and blow his nose before he'd be in a fit state to descend to the house

Yet, in spite of this content, Jess wasn't completely happy, and for no reason anyone could have hit upon at first guess It certainly wasn't having Eliza ride every First Day morning to the Grove Meeting House, there to sit on the elevated minister's bench and speak when the spirit moved her Jess knew Eliza had had a call to the ministry and was proud to hear her preach in her gentle way of loving-kindness and the brotherhood of man

No, it wasn't Eliza's preaching nor any outward lack the eye could see that troubled Jess It was music Jess pined for music, though it would be hard to say how he'd come by any such longing To the Quakers music was a popish dido, a sop to the senses, a hurdle waiting to trip man in his upward struggle They kept it out of their Meeting Houses and out of their homes, too Oh, there were a few women who'd hum a little while polishing their lamp chimneys, and a few men with an inclination to whistle while dropping corn, but as to real music, sung or played, Jess had no more chance to hear it than a woodchuck

What chances there were, though, he took He'd often manage to be around the Methodist Church when they had their mid-week services and he felt a kind of glory in his soul that wasn't entirely religious when the enthusiastic Methodists hit into "Old Hundred" And when on the Fourth of July, Amanda Prentis soared upwards on the high notes of "The Star-Spangled Banner" only Eliza's determined nudgings could bring Jess back to earth

This seemed for some time about the best Jess would be able to do in the way of music without having Eliza and her whole congregation buzzing about his ears, the best he could do anyway until he took that trip to Philadelphia and met Waldo Quigley, though of course he had no way of knowing when he was planning the trip that it would turn out as it did

Jess had been hearing for some time about a new early cherry and he'd made up his mind to go to Philadelphia, and if they were all he'd heard, order some for the Maple Grove Nursery There wasn't, perhaps, any real need of his going as far as Philadelphia, but to a Quaker, Philadelphia was the place to go if nothing more than a pocket handkerchief was needed So Eliza packed his valise for him, drove him to Vernon herself and saw him on the train

The first word Eliza had from Jess was a letter mailed a couple of days after he left. He didn't mention Waldo Quigley in that letter, though as a matter of fact he was already hand in glove with him as Eliza discovered later. The letter was short—health good, scenery pleasant, that was about the whole of it with the exception of a postscript saying, "Thank thee, dear Eliza, for the little packet thee put in my nightshirt pocket."

The "little packet" contained peppermints, and it was through offering one of these to Waldo Quigley that Jess made his acquaintance. Jess was always sociable when he traveled. He used to say that sun, moon and stars were the same everywhere and only the people different and if you didn't get to know them you'd as well have stayed home and milked the cows.

After Waldo Quigley put the peppermint in his mouth he settled his big, portly, black-suited frame onto the seat opposite Jess.

"Well, sir," he said, "you a Hoosier?"

Jess said he was and the big man went on, "Got a president shaping up out your way. Got an up-and-comer there on your prairies, a man who can out-talk a trumpet and out-see a telescope. He's a little giant. Man to elevate somewhat and he'll set our country on its feet. He's the man we need."

Jess sniffed. He was a fiery Republican, as fiery at least as a Quaker's apt to be. "Friend," said he, "the man we need is no little giant, but a big one. Not a man busy rousing up the countryside, setting state against state, but a man with the interest of all at heart, little farmer as well as plantation owner, black as well as white."

Jess could see, "That's Stephen A. Douglas," work up Waldo Quigley's gullet as far as his back teeth but there he stopped the words, said, "Them's my sentiments precisely, Brother Birdwell, them's my very thoughts, only better said."

Jess wrinkled up his big nose. "I see thee's a man of harmony, friend."

"Brother," replied the big man, "you put your tongue to the right word. Harmony's what I preach and harmony's what I practice."

Jess listened to these words, took another look at the big man's black suit and decided that he was a preacher of some sort.

"Is thee, perhaps," he asked mildly, "a minister of the gospel? Though thy habit for a man of the cloth is perhaps a mite unorthodox."

Mr. Quigley cleared his throat, swallowing the last of his first peppermint. "I can't say as I've ever been ordained," he admitted, "but my work's been so much with them that has that I've fallen into a sedate manner of dressing. It strikes me as being a more seemly thing to do. Helps business, too," he added.

"Business?" asked Jess.

"You named it yourself, Mr. Birdwell. Harmony is my business. Do-re-mi. Also la-ti-do. Not forgetting fa-sol. Harmony. The music of the spheres. God's way of speaking to his children. The power that soothes the savage beast, the song that quiets newborn babes and eases the pangs of the dying man. In a word, music."

"In several words in fact," ruminated Jess. "Is thee then, Brother Quigley, a musician?" he asked.

"Musician? Yes. But I," said he frankly, "am that rather unusual combina-

tion, a musical businessman, or perhaps more truly a businesslike musician. There's plenty of men can keep a double entry set of books and there's a number more, though fewer, can tell a grace note from a glissando, but I," handing Jess a card, "can do both."

Jess took the card and read aloud, 'Professor Waldo Quigley, Traveling Representative, Payson and Clarke The World's Finest Organs Also Sheet Music and Song Books.'

Brother Quigley reached out, took the card from Jess and wrote "Personal Compliments" on it.

"I note from your speech you're a Quaker, and knowing the way that sect—not that it ain't the finest in the world," he said politely—"feels about music I wouldn't want you to think I was trying to work against your prejudices—convictions rather. So," he said, handing the card back to Jess, "I write 'Personal Compliments,' to show I'm free of any profit-making motives, that we meet man to man. Pays to be delicate like where religion is concerned. Pays every time," he said, nodding to Jess.

Jess tried Payson and Clarke over once or twice on his tongue. "Payson and Clarke," he said. "So thee sells Payson and Clarke's. They've got one unless I disremember in the Methodist meeting house at Rush Branch."

"Sure they have," said Brother Quigley. "Sure they have." He took a little red book from an inner pocket and flipped a few pages. "Yes, sir. I sold them that organ three years ago April 19. One more strawberry festival and they'll have it paid for."

"Thee sells a good instrument then. I've heard that organ now and again in passing."

"Good? Mr. Birdwell, it's better than good. Three years ago after them Methodists at Rush Branch heard my concert and song recital, they said to me, 'Professor Quigley, we don't ever calculate to hear the voice of God any more plain while here on earth.'"

Jess said, "That's carrying it a little far, mebbe," but he was really burning to hear more about the Payson and Clarke.

"Well, of course," Brother Quigley reminded him, "you got to remember they's Methodists. Tending toward the shouting order. But this organ, Methodists aside, is pure gumbo, absolutely pure gumbo."

"Gumbo," Jess repeated.

"Rich Satisfying Deep Gumbo, pure gumbo."

Jess knew a thing or two about organs though it would be hard to say how perhaps from reading Chalmers' "Universal Encyclopedia," perhaps from an inspection of the Methodist organ. Perhaps in neither way. Knowledge of what you love somehow comes to you, you don't have to read nor analyze nor study. If you love a thing enough, knowledge of it seeps into you, with particulars more real than any chart can furnish. Maybe it was that way with Jess and organs.

So he asked, "How many reeds in a Payson and Clarke?"

"Forty eight, Brother Birdwell, not counting the tuba mirabilis. But in the Payson and Clarke, number ain't what counts—it's the quality. Those reeds

duplicate the human throat They got tumbre" And he landed on the French word the way a hen lands on the water, skeptical, but hoping for the best

"How many stops?" Jess asked

"Eight And that vox humana! The throat of an angel It cries, it sighs, it sings You can hear the voice of your lost child in it Did you ever lose a child, Brother Birdwell?"

"No," said Jess shortly

"You can hear the voice of your old mother calling to you from the further shore"

"Ma lives in Germantown," said Jess

If the conversation had followed in this direction, Jess would never have come home with a Payson and Clarke, but in every nerve Brother Quigley could feel a prospect retreating and he changed his tack

"The Payson and Clarke comes in four different finishes," he said "Oak, maple, walnut and mahogany Got a cabinet that's purely elegant Most organ's got two swinging brackets This one's got four Two for lamps, two for vases Has a plate mirror over the console There's not a square inch of unornamented wood in the whole cabinet No, sir, there's not an inch of dingy, unembellished wood the length and breadth of the cabinet But, Brother Birdwell, you're a musician yourself You're not interested in cabinets You're interested in tone Tone's what the artist looks for Tone's what Payson and Clarke's got"

He began to hum under his breath Low at first, then louder, with occasional words "Tum te tum—the riverside—tum te tum—upon its tide"

"That's a likely tune," Jess said

"Can't do justice to it singing"

But he stopped humming, launched into the words He had a fine baritone Flatted a little, Jess thought, but not bad When he exhaled heavily on a high note, Jess was sorry to find he'd had a nip or two, but before the piece was finished Jess was beating time with his forefinger on the red plush arm of the seat, completely forgetful of the spirits Brother Quigley had surely had

"What's the piece called?" Jess asked

"The Old Musician and His Harp" It was written to be played on an organ Mortifies me that you have to hear it first time sung, mercy"

"Thee's a good voice," Jess said

"Fair to middling Fair to middling, only"

He sank a fat hand in one of his big black pockets and brought up a leather-covered flask He wiped the mouth carefully on his coat tail and held it toward Jess

"Wet your whistle and we'll sing it through together"

Jess shook his head

"Well, I didn't suppose you would, but it's a pity Cleans your pipes Extends your range Gives you gumbo" He took a long swig himself

"Try it with me, Brother Birdwell"

Jess said afterward he didn't have the slightest intention of making a show of himself in a B & O parlor car singing "The Old Musician and His Harp," or any other song, for that matter But that tune was a hard thing to give the go-by, the mind said the words and the toe tapped the time, with the whole

body already singing it, that way, opening the mouth to let the words out seemed a mighty small matter and before Jess knew it he was taking the high notes in his fine, clear tenor Jess had the nose for a really first-class tenor—there never was a first-class tenor with a button nose, and Jess, with his, high-bridged, more Yankee than Quaker, had just the nose for it Before he and Brother Quigley had finished a couple of verses half the parlor car was joining in the chorus

Bring my harp to me again,
Let me hear its gentle strain,
Let me hear its chords once more
Ere I pass to yon bright shore

When they finished Brother Quigley had another nip "Got to cool the pipes," he said "Now, Brother Birdwell, when you get to Philly, when you get them cherries located, you stop in at Payson and Clarke's and hear that the way it was meant to be heard Hear it on the organ No obligation whatever Privilege to play for a fellow artist"

Jess hadn't a notion in the world of buying an organ when he went into Payson and Clarke's He'd got the cherry stock he'd come after, had had a nice visit with his mother, and was ready to start homeward when he thought he'd as well hear "The Old Musician and His Harp," on a Payson and Clarke Brother Quigley had been clever to him and it was no more than humanly decent to let the man show him what the organ could do That was the way he had it figured out to himself before he went in, anyway

When he'd walked out, the organ was his He didn't know what he'd do with it, he didn't think Eliza would hear to keeping it, he thought he'd like as not slipped clean away from grace, but he had the papers for the organ in his pocket He'd paid half cash, the rest to be in nursery stock Clarke of Payson and Clarke was an orchardist

As soon as Jess heard Waldo Quigley run his fingers over that organ's keys with a sound as liquid as the Muscatatuck after a thaw he'd known he was sunk And when he'd found he could chord "The Old Musician" himself, when Waldo Quigley said, "Never knew a man with a better tremolo," when he pumped the air into the organ with his feet and drew it out with his fingers, sounding like an echo of eternity, he began casting up his bank balance in his mind He was past figuring out the right and wrong of the matter, all he was interested in was getting it, having that organ where he could lay his hands across it, hear whenever he liked those caressing tones

He managed to get home a few days before the organ arrived He didn't say a word to Eliza about what he'd done He figured it was a thing which would profit by being led up to gradually He talked a good deal in those few days about music, how God must like it or He wouldn't have put songbirds in the world, and how the angels were always pictured with harp and zithern

Eliza was not receptive "Thee's neither bird nor angel, Jess Birdwell, and had the Lord wanted thee, either singing or plucking a harp, thee would be feathered now one way or another"

There'd been an early snow the day the organ arrived, a foot or two on the level, much more in the drifts Jess himself brought the organ home from Vernon on the sled

Eliza knew what it was the minute she laid eyes on the box, for all Jess' care in covering it over with an old rag carpet Jess' talk about birds and angels had made her fearful of something of the kind, only she hadn't thought it'd be as bad as an organ, a flute, or maybe a French harp he could go down cellar and play had been the worst her imaginings had pictured for her But she knew it was an organ before Jess had got the covering off the crate, and was out in the snow by the time Enoch had the horses out of the traces

"What's this thee's bringing home, Jess Birdwell?"

Though she knew well enough She just wanted to hear him put his tongue to it

"It's a Payson and Clarke," Jess said, still trying to be gradual

But it was no use "It's an organ," Eliza said "Jess, Jess, what's thee thinking of? Bringing this thing here? Me, a recorded minister and the house full of growing children What's the neighbors to think? What's the Grove Meeting to think?"

If she'd kept on in this sorrowful strain Jess would like as not have got shut of the organ, but Eliza didn't stop there

"Jess Birdwell," she said, "if thee takes that organ in the house, I stay out Thee can make thy choice Thee can have thy wife or thee can have that instrument, but both, thee cannot have "

Jess had a heart as soft as pudding, and if Eliza'd said Please, if she'd let a tear slide out of her soft black eye, that organ would have been done for, but commands, threats, that was a different matter entirely

Jess called to the hired man who'd taken the horses to the barn, "Come and give me a hand with this organ, Enoch "

A heart soft as pudding, till someone took it on himself to tell Jess which way to turn, then the pudding froze, and if you weren't careful you'd find yourself cut to the bone on an ice splinter A mild man until pushed, but Jess solidified fast with pushing

Eliza saw the granite coming, but she was of martyr stock herself and felt the time had come to suffer for the right She sat flat down in the snow, or as flat as petticoats and skirts would let her There in the snow she sat and said, "Jess Birdwell, here I stay until that organ is taken away "

Jess said, "We'll uncrate it where it stands, Enoch, then carry it up to the house No use having the weight of the crate to move, too "

So they went to work on it, got it out of its case and the excelsior packing Enoch kept his eye on Eliza sitting there in the snow She made him feel uncomfortable, as if the least he could do would be to give her his coat to sit on

"Well, let's not dally here, Enoch," Jess said, seeming not to even see Eliza "Let's get it up to the house "

As they went up the path to the house, straining and puffing through the snow, Enoch said, "Ain't she liable to catch her death of cold there?"

"I figure," said Jess, "that when the snow melts through the last petticoat she'll move "

He was wrong about that. Eliza was wet to the skin before she came up to the house. She had sat there casting up the matter in her mind, but she knew that when Jess was set he was a problem for the Lord. And she had enough respect for both to leave them to each other. There was nothing ever to be gained, she thought, by dissension. Perce, she could at least have Jess had just finished dusting the organ when Eliza came in, went to the stove and stood there steaming.

"Jess," she asked, "is thee set on having this organ? Remembering thy children and my ministry, is thee still set?"

"Yes, Eliza," Jess said, "I'm set."

"Well," she said, "that's settled", and being on the whole a reasonable as well as a pious woman, she added, "It will have to go in the attic."

"I'd thought of that," Jess said, "and I'm willing."

So that's the way it was done. The organ was put in the attic and from there it could be heard downstairs, but not in any full-bodied way. It took the gumbo out of it—having it in the attic—and besides Jess was careful not to play it when anyone was in the house. He was careful, that is, until the day the Ministry and Oversight Committee called. He was careful that day, too, it was Mattie who wasn't careful, though unluckily's more the word for it.

Jess had noted right off that Mattie had a musical turn. She'd learned to pick out "The Old Musician" by herself, with one hand, and when Jess discovered this, he taught her the bass chords so that she could play for him to sing. That was a bitter pill for Eliza to swallow, and just what she'd feared: the children becoming infected with Jess' weakness for music. Still, she couldn't keep herself from listening when the deep organ notes with Jess' sweet tenor flying above them came seeping down through the ceiling into the sitting-room below.

But in spite of Jess' being careful, in spite of Eliza's being twice as strict as usual, and speaking at the Hopewell Meeting House with increased gravity, the matter got noised about. Not that there was an organ at Birdwells'—there wasn't anything definite known, anything you could put your finger on. It was just a feeling that Friend Birdwell wasn't standing as squarely in the light as he'd done at one time. Perhaps someone had heard a strain of organ music coming out of an attic window some spring evening, but more than likely it was just the guilty look Eliza had.

However that may be, the Ministry and Oversight Committee came one night to call. It was evening seven, supper had been over for some time, the dishes were washed and the table was set for breakfast. Jess and Eliza were in the sitting-room resting after the heat and work of the day and listening to the children who were playing duck-on-rock down by the branch.

The Committee drove up in Amos Pease's surrey, but by the back way, leaving the rig at the carriage-house, so that the first sign Jess and Eliza had of visitors was the smell of tiodden mint. Amos Pease wasn't a man to note where he put his feet down when duty called.

Eliza smelled it first and stepped over to the west window to see who was coming. She saw, and in a flash she knew why. "It's the Ministry and Oversight," she said, and her voice shook, but when Amos Pease knocked at the

door she was sitting in her rocker, her feet on a footstool, one hand lying loose and easy in the other

Jess answered the knock "Good evening, Amos Good evening, Ezra Good evening, Friend Hooper"

The Committee said its good evenings to Jess and Eliza, found chairs, adjusted First Day coat-tails—it wasn't First Day, but they'd put on their best since what they had to do was serious. But before they could even ease into their questions with some remark upon the weather or how the corn was shaping up—Jess heard it—the faint kind of leathery sigh the organ made when the foot first touched the bellows. That sound was like a pain hitting him in the heart and he thought, I've sold my birthright for a mess of pottage. For Jess was a Quaker through and through, no misdoubting that. For two hundred years his people had been Quakers, sometimes suffering for that right, and now he thought, I've gone and lost it all for a wheezing organ.

It was Mattie at the organ and Jess knew her habits there. They were like his own. She never began to play a piece at once, but touched the organ here and there, slowly pumped in the air, then lovingly laid her fingers across upon keys. After that the music Jess looked across at Eliza and he saw by the way her hands had tightened round each other that she'd heard, too. I'm a far worse man than Esau, he thought, for he sold only his own birthright, and I've sold my wife as well as my own.

Jess remembered how Eliza loved to bring the Lord's message to the Lord's people and how his own love for pushing air through a set of reeds was going to lose her all this. And before his lips moved his heart began to pray, "Lord, deliver thy servant from the snare of his own iniquity."

By the time Mattie was ready to touch the first key he was on his feet saying, "Friends, let us lift our hearts to God in prayer." This was nothing startling to a gathering of Quakers. They'd any of them take to praying at the drop of a hat. So some knelt and others didn't, but all bowed their heads and shut their eyes.

All except Jess. He stood with face uplifted to the ceiling, facing his God and his sin. By the time Mattie had got into "The Old Musician," and a few faint wisps of music were floating into the room, Jess was talking to God in a voice that shook the studding. He was talking to Him in the voice of a man whose sins have come home to roost. He was reminding Him of all the other sinners to whom His mercy had nevertheless been granted.

He went through the Bible book by book and sinner by sinner. He prayed in the name of Adam, who had sinned and fallen short of grace, of Moses, who had lost the Promised Land, of David, who had looked with desire on another man's wife. He prayed in the name of Solomon, his follies, of Abraham and his jealousies, and Jephthah, who kept his word in cruelty, he made a music of his own out of his contrition, his revulsion mounted up in melody.

He left the Old Testament and prayed for them all, sinners alike, in the name of Paul, who what he would not, he did, and of Peter, who said he knew the Man not, and of Thomas who doubted and Judas who betrayed and of that Mary who repented.

He stood with his red head lifted up while his long Irish lip wrapped itself around the good Bible names. He prayed until the light had left the room and

his hair in the dark had become as colorless as Amos Pease's dun thatch. He prayed until all the mint smell had left the room and the only smell left was that of a penitent man seeking forgiveness.

Now Jess was no hypocrite and if his prayer swelled a little, if it boomed out a little stronger when Mattie pulled the fortissimo stop, it was through none of his planning, it was the Lord's doing entirely. And if his prayer wasn't finished until Mattie'd finished playing after going five times through "The Old Musician," that was the Lord's hand, too, and nothing of Jess' contriving.

Finally, when he'd made an end, and the visiting men had taken their faces out from behind their hands and looked around the dark room with dazed eyes, Jess dropped down into his chair and rubbed his forefinger across his lips, the way a man will when he's been speaking. Eliza lit them a candle, then went out to bring in the lamps.

Amos Pease picked up the candle and held it so the light fell on to Jess' face. "Friend," he said, "thee's been an instrument of the Lord this night. Thee's risen to the throne of grace and carried us all upwards on thy pinions. Thy prayer carried us so near to heaven's gates that now and again I thought I could hear angels' voices choiring and the sound of heavenly harps."

And with that he set the candle back down, put his hat on his head and said, "Praise God." Friend Griffith and Friend Hooper said, "Amen, brother. Amen to that," and with great gravity followed Amos Pease out of the door.

When Eliza came back in with the lamp, Jess was sitting there alone in the candlelight. There was a smell of trod-on mint again in the room and the children had stopped playing duck-on rock and were whooping after lightning-bugs to put in bottles. Jess was huddled over, his eyes shut, like a man who has felt the weight of the Lord's hand between his shoulder blades. But before Eliza could clear her throat to say "Amen" to the edifying sight he made, down from the attic floated "The Old Musician" once again, and Jess' foot began to tap.

Tap, tap—the riverside,
Tap, tap—upon its tide

A Novel

THE RETURN OF THE NATIVE

by Thomas Hardy

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Appreciating the Novel

THE ILLUSION OF REALITY

The novel as a literary form developed late in history mainly because men were not willing to believe narrative in prose worth their reading unless it were the record of actual fact. Before the novel could attain respectability readers had to recognize that the novel is frankly fiction, not false history, and that its world is the world of the imagination. Prior to the middle of the eighteenth century writers of stories had either to pretend that they were writing facts or else had to excuse their fictions as allegory. Defoe, in the early eighteenth century, made *Robinson Crusoe*, *Moll Flanders* and his other tales sound as though the events told in them had actually occurred. Addison and Steele maintained an elaborate picture of factual accuracy in their anecdotes of Sir Roger de Coverley and his friends. The novel began as serious literary art when it received the privilege which all art must enjoy, the privilege of claiming the free imaginative play of the author's mind upon actuality, the right of the author to abandon the facts as they did occur so that he can fashion an imaginative picture of facts as they might have occurred.

The novel, then, presents not a record of reality—like biography and history—but an illusion of reality. The reader of novels does not ask that the characters in a novel should once have actually had names in a birth-register and a mailing address, he asks that they live in his imagination as he reads. He asks of the novelists not actuality, but plausibility. Though the events in which the reader is absorbed may never actually have happened, he must feel that, if they had happened, they would have been as the novelist presents them.

This illusion of reality is the foundation of the novelist's art. All his energies go toward securing it. If he is successful he creates something far more real than actuality. It is strange to think that many people who live only in the pages of books are more real than historical personages. The illusion of life in the novel has more vitality than life itself because death ends life, but there is no death for the characters of fiction. The kings and queens of history are people who have lived and died, parts of a world and age that have passed. They are chained by dates. On the other hand Becky Sharp (*Vanity Fair*), Emma Bovary, Oliver Twist, Irene Forsythe, and the Alice who went to Wonderland are dateless, and belong always to the present. One says, "Queen Elizabeth was," but "Becky Sharp is."

Thomas Hardy in *The Return of the Native* has created a little world of his own imagining. He has peopled this world with men and women who never actually lived but who preserve the illusion of life. Because he is freed

from the necessity of being faithful to actual happenings he can make Egdon Heath far more impressive than any actual heath in Dorset. If we had known Eustacia Vye and Wildeve in the flesh we should probably have found them insignificant. By the magic illusion of Hardy's art they and other characters take on dignity and even grandeur. Their lives seem pathetic, tragic, mysterious, moving, passionate, gay or ironical because a great artist has given them the illusion of human significance. Through Hardy's art they rise above the trivial, occasional, and accidental into a realm where suddenly we see through Hardy's eyes what life is all about and how simple people in a remote country district can bring to readers in other times and other places "thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

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In securing the illusion of reality, the novelist uses a vast welter of impressions emerging from his experience as raw material out of which he builds his finished structure. Hardy knew that if his readers had been interested in the facts about the English district which he called Wessex, they would have consulted a guide book. He knew that they were interested in people, in emotions, in character, in the meaning of life, in that wonderful imaginative excitement which only art can give. Hardy used what he knew of Wessex to give shape and form to his ideas of life. In other words, he imposed upon a mass of raw material a significance and a pattern which no one had ever seen quite as he did. This significance and pattern resulted from Hardy's selection of material to suit his inner vision and his view of life. He saw Wessex and his characters in his own peculiar way, and by bringing his imagination to bear upon causes, results, actions, and reactions he has conveyed his inner vision and his view of life to us, his readers. Strangely enough, no novelist can create the illusion of reality by transferring to paper as much of the actual routine of life as he can see and remember. No, he must concentrate upon those thoughts and experiences which bear upon his purposes. What a temptation it must have been to Hardy to make more than he did of Diggory Venn, the reddleman, with his mysterious trade and his seemingly accidental comings and goings! But Venn had to serve a purpose in the main design and Hardy was forced to select only what fitted into the design.

The student of the novel, then, must not only understand the fact of selection in art, he must also try to find out by what principle the artist selects his material in the way he does.

Thornton Wilder in *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* gives to Brother Juniper, when the good friar sees the breaking of the bridge, the true novelist's mind:

Any one else would have said to himself with secret joy "Within ten minutes myself!" But it was another thought that visited Brother Juniper "Why did this happen to *those* five?" If there were any plan in the universe at all, if there were any pattern in a human life, surely it could be discovered mysteriously latent in those lives so mysteriously cut off. Either we live by accident and die by accident, or we

live by plan and die by plan. And on that instant Brother Juniper made the resolve to inquire into the secret lives of those five persons, that moment falling through the air, and to surprise the reason of their taking off.

Pattern, plan, selection, simplification, motive, cause, result—concentration upon these makes the artist. Stevenson said:

And as the root of the whole matter, let him [the writer] bear in mind that his novel is not a transcript of life, to be judged by its exactitude, but a simplification of some side or point of life, to stand or fall by its significant simplicity. For although, in great men, working upon great motives, what we observe and admire is often their complexity, yet underneath appearances the truth remains unchanged: that simplification was their method, and that simplicity is their excellence.

In seeking to understand this transmutation of the actual into the artistic the student has to work by means of the dominant impression which the novel makes upon him. Sometimes he remembers chiefly the story which the novelist has told. That means that, for him at least, the novelist has selected as much of life as brings out into high relief a chain of events. Sometimes a book leaves in the reader's mind chiefly a vivid memory of a character. The novelist evidently selected material so that the reader would see the varieties and complexities of human nature, the motives for human conduct, human hopes, fears, disappointments, and triumphs. Sometimes, again, a novel is built upon such a large scale that a reader feels that he has come to know a whole historical period or has realized the peculiarities, the charm, the faults, the virtues of a certain social group. And sometimes the novelist apparently has tried to reproduce a mood or an idea.

Of course, most novelists do not limit themselves to one thing. Hardy, for example, almost always tells a complete and interesting story. *The Return of the Native* might conceivably be read only as the account of what happened when Clym Yeobright and Eustacia Vye fell in love and married. How did they get on with each other, what people crossed their path, what sorrows and misunderstandings did they have, why did they have them, why were they unhappy rather than happy? Whose fault was it all?

Some readers again conceivably may find their chief interest in the characters. What kind of a girl was Eustacia Vye? Do I like her? Do I sympathize with her? Do I blame her? Why do I know her as well as I do? Such questions can be asked of all the characters in the book and all will have their answer.

Still other readers will see *The Return of the Native* as a picture of a social group bound together by the unforgettable, mysterious, looming Heath. What a picture one remembers of the conflict between youth and age, the old and the new, the sophisticated city man, and the timeless, ageless peasantry! Still others will feel that all the characters and incidents in the book fall into a complete picture of Hardy's answer to the formidable questions, "Can we really understand life at all? Is there not some mysterious fate that hovers above us and determines our little destinies? Are not the only happy people those who live in harmony with their environment?"

At any rate, the most informing question that a student can ask is "What do I remember of a novel?" If one remembers something merely curious, clever, odd, or trifling, the chances are that the novelist has not made his picture of life significant, if, on the other hand, one remembers something which filled the entire novel, something of large scope, something which comprehended the lives of living people, the chances are that the novelist has, by his powers of selection and emphasis, created a genuine illusion of reality.

Selection for Incident It is clear that many novelists aim primarily at interesting their readers by concentrating upon a series of incidents. The attention of the reader is centered upon incident. He reads in order to lose himself in what is happening. He remembers the book as a good story. This is a legitimate and universal interest. To satisfy it readers demand an endless succession of detective, mystery, and adventure stories. Such stories usually die after a brief popularity, but there are stories dominated wholly by incident which seem never to lose their charm.

A tale like Bram Stoker's *Dracula* simply will not wear out. It deals with the old legend of the vampire, the dreadful creature who is dead but cannot die, a legend which common sense and modern science should by now have burned to ashes, yet readers still find their flesh creeping as they think of red lips and mocking laughter, the savage bulk of ghastly Count Dracula, and the long pursuit over sea and land to save a human soul from the eternal doom of the un-dead.

The Count of Monte Cristo has only one interest, the escape of Dantes from imprisonment and his long and exhaustive revenge. The people are puppets, Monte Cristo is a non-human being, the world in which the people move is no more like France than is cloudland, and the idea of revenge which runs throughout the book is abhorrent to all morality. Yet so powerful is the impression left by the story that the book remains a classic.

Of Dumas' *Vicomte de Bragelonne*, Stevenson says "I carried the thread of that epic into my slumbers, I woke with it unbroken, I rejoiced to plunge into the book again at breakfast, it was with a pang that I must lay it down and turn to my own labors, for no part of the world has ever seemed to me so charming as these pages, and not even my friends are quite so real, perhaps quite so dear, as d'Artagnan."

In securing the dominance of incident the novelist works by a process of simplification. The setting of the action is reduced to a minimum, it has no more reality than a painted backdrop in a theatre. The careful, intimate zest with which Thomas Hardy individualizes Egdon Heath in *The Return of the Native* sets the reader brooding upon the permanence of nature in a world of change, and makes the incidents in the story of little importance in a scale of cosmic values. The novel of incident, seeking to avoid such distraction, makes setting, therefore, merely the place in which events happen.

If incident is dominant, it overrides all considerations of reality of setting, characterization, and idea. The novelist of incident must, with nose a-quiver, be hot on the trail of scenes that have in them something vehement, stirring, critical, incidents which are the result of violent human action and which lead to violent human action. How Stevenson rejoices in the rush of incident

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in his beloved *Vicomte de Biagelonne*! "What a feast is spread! Monk kidnapped, d'Artagnan enriched, Mazarin's death, the ever delectable adventure of Belle Isle, wherein Aramis outwits d'Artagnan, with its epilogue where d'Artagnan regains the moral superiority, the love adventures at Fontainebleau, with St. Aignan's story of the dryad and the business of de Guiche, de Warville, and Manicamp, Aramis made general of the Jesuits, Aramis at the Bastille, the night talk in the forest of Sénart, Belle Isle again, with the death of Porthos, and last, but not least, the taming of d'Artagnan the untamable, under the lash of the young King. What other novel has such epic variety and nobility of incident?"

One may smile at such naive delight in action for its own sake and think slightly of tired business men and shopgirls, but all novels in which the dominant interest is incident are not detective stories, "novelized movies," or "Westerns," as Scott and Sabatini amply demonstrate.

Selection for Character Novelists who have thought much about life feel justly that, after all, the dominance of incident is less important than the dominance of character. Inventiveness, even on a grand scale, they believe less important than insight into the human mind. Like George Eliot, they have an intense curiosity about the reasons why people behave as they do.

"What is the best way of telling a story?" George Eliot wrote in her *Leaves from a Notebook*.

Since the standard must be the interest of the audience, there must be several or many good ways rather than one best. For we get interested in the stories life presents to us through divers orders and modes of presentation. Very commonly our first awakening to a desire of knowing a man's past or future comes from our seeing him as a stranger in some unusual or pathetic or humorous situation, or manifesting some remarkable characteristics. We make inquiries in consequence, or we become observant and attentive whenever opportunities of knowing more may happen to present themselves without our search. You have seen a refined face among the prisoners picking tow in a jail, you afterwards see the same unforgettable face in a pulpit; he must be of dull fibre who would not care to know more about a life which showed such contrasts, though he might gather his knowledge in a fragmentary and unchronological way.

Sometimes, apparently, a character seems to dominate a book by sheer force of personality, though careful examination of the book will show plenty of technical reasons for the dominance.

Galsworthy's *The Forsyte Saga*, which is a series of novels, is perhaps the most remarkable example in modern fiction of the dominance of a single character over an extraordinary range of people, events, and ideas. It is the more remarkable because the character, Soames Forsyte, began as an unattractive and even repellent figure with whom the writer had apparently little sympathy. The first novel of the series, *The Man of Property*, was a study of the possessive instinct represented by an English family, the Forsytes. Somewhere the ideas in the novel had to be drawn together into single characters or the novel would have been so diffuse as to possess no dominant interest, and, hence, no vitality, as with another of Galsworthy's novels, *Fraternity*. Hence Soames

Forsythe comes to be the man of property, the quintessence of Forsyatism. To make the idea of possessiveness concrete, it must be shown in action. Hence Soames Forsythe's wife, Irene, is made the embodiment of disturbing beauty, of all the elusive joy which money can neither buy nor hold. The futility of possessiveness is shown in Soames's failure to hold Irene although he uses every resource which the possessive instinct can use. So *The Man of Property* ended, its dominating interest an idea, the futility of possessiveness. Then apparently the figure of Soames began to interest the novelist, and in the succession of novels which followed, the idea of possessiveness receded, Irene became more and more shadowy, and the life of Soames, firm in a changing world, became the dominating interest. His divorce, his remarriage, and the birth of his daughter become interesting not for the old idea—though that remains in the background—but because readers had begun to know Soames as an old acquaintance and wanted to know more about him. In the post-war kaleidoscope of English life he began to acquire some of the mellow charm of a sturdily built antique. The love affair of his daughter and Irene's son seemed mere romance beside the tragedy of his dead past. One began to respect the figure who at least stood for something in the cheap, new life of England. The last novel, *Swan Song*, is all Soames. The last flicker of the romance of Fleur and Jon seems trivial beside the approaching end of one who had suffered before these two children had been thought of.

Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady* is an admirable example of dominance by character, because the author knew exactly what he was doing and marshaled every resource in an extremely flexible and delicate art to make the reader feel the character. The opening scene of the book makes a perfect "entrance" for the heroine, Isabel Archer. James describes the beautiful lawn of an old English country house, at the most beautiful hour of the day. Seated on the lawn are old Mr. Touchett, an American long resident in England, his son Ralph, and Lord Warburton, a young man whose residence is near. Into the conversation comes news of Mrs. Touchett, who has been traveling in America, and of her niece whom she is bringing to England. Suddenly the niece herself appears, quite unannounced, "a tall girl in a black dress, who at first sight looked pretty." There is the natural conversation of meeting, and the scene ends with Lord Warburton's saying to Ralph, "You wished a while ago to see my idea of an interesting woman. There it is."

Then comes a section explaining how erratic Mrs. Touchett came to take Isabel under her wing. The reader feels Isabel's charm, he knows her history, he has seen her immediate effect upon three men in England. It is no wonder, then, in later pages that Lord Warburton wishes to marry her, no wonder that Caspar Goodwood, an American who has been in love with her, has hastened to England to propose to her. The wonder is that she refuses both these admirable young men. The reader is now thoroughly aroused. What will happen to this girl? Her cousin Ralph wonders, too. He urges his dying father to leave Isabel a fortune so that money will be no bar to her full development. Himself in love with her, he becomes an interested spectator of her progress.

But it is not a series of adventures which Isabel is to have, it is a growth in

character. She goes to Italy, she marries unhappily, she visits her dying cousin against her husband's will, she returns to Italy to a life of pain and weariness. But all these and scores of minor incidents serve not to complicate a story or develop an idea but to explain Isabel's character and to add to her comprehension of how her frankness and independence have been mocked by the guile and baseness of those whom she trusted. The reader's greatest interest lies in finding out something, not in seeing it happen. In the end the reader feels that he has stood by Isabel Archer's side and has learned life as she has learned it, knowing most things only as she has known them.

The means by which a reader gains a sense of the dominance of character are various. Usually the character is frankly the most important element in the book. He is the center of the story, whatever happens makes a difference to the kind of man he is or throws light upon his character. In *The Count of Monte Cristo* Edmond Dantes is in a sense the center of the story, but he is of no account because he is merely a convenient agent in bringing things to pass. The incidents dominate him. In Howells's *The Rise of Silas Lapham*, on the other hand, everything that happens is a ray of light upon Lapham's character. His personality is always present.

Sometimes the dominance of character is secured by limiting the point of view from which the story is told so that the reader knows nothing until the main character finds it out. This method is used in Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady* and even more rigidly in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* where the point of view is so limited that letters to Elizabeth Bennet have to be used to give her information so that the reader may have it too.

Sometimes dominance of character comes from sheer charm and interest of personality. This is certainly true of Thackeray's *The Newcomes*, in which Colonel Newcome emerges from a bewildering crowd of people as the one thoroughly vivid character. He is absent from the story for long periods, many incidents never affect him, he is not in any sense an heroic character, yet years after the details of the book have faded, the charm of his personality remains.

Sometimes the reader feels the dominance of character because the author sets out deliberately to analyze a character or to subject him to a variety of situations carefully planned to expose every fiber of his mind. This is Flaubert's method in *Madame Bovary*. Flaubert sets out to expose his victim. She was complete in his mind, apparently, before the book was begun. There only remained the relatively simple task of devising a series of episodes which would adequately display her degradation. Many novels of character like *The Portrait of a Lady* are in a way experimental. One feels that the author is living with the character, learning as he goes the variety and depth of a human mind. But Flaubert has nothing to learn. He is making a neat, cool, ruthless demonstration. One pities Emma Bovary as one might pity the object of a vivisection.

An interesting modern experiment is the attempt to secure dominance of character in the novel by removing the story completely and studying a character not by action but by the careful exploration of that spreading, undefined, unlimited, illogical free flow of ideas which is called daydream or reverie. This is the so-called stream of consciousness method, well illustrated by James

Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and *Ulysses*, and by Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*. The novelist's aim is to show a character by showing a section of his unregulated, undirected mental life. In *Mrs Dalloway* the mind of a gentle, thoughtful woman is explored for one day. Other characters cross her path and are explored, too, but the book is definitely centered upon Mrs Dalloway. Not all her thoughts, dreams, and imaginings are of present things: a green dress sets her mind recalling the sea, the announcement that an old friend is to call upon her throws her mind back to her association with him in days long past. Memories play a very large part in this kind of novel, so that the characters live mostly in a dream world, disjointed, incoherent, shadowy, and purposeless. This kind of novel has only one aim: to make the reader feel a character living not in his actions but in his thoughts. There are, of course, actions even here; a character need not be static to have a reverie. Here, as always, the novelist selects his material to build his picture; the "total recall" of a character's mind would be as lacking in interest as the record of all a character's acts. The method certainly has great interest, but it does not reveal a character as does the method of action, just as in life, what a man thinks he is, is less real than what his actions show him to be. This method supplies an immense amount of psychological data and it certainly reveals completely a character's undirected mental life. It may sometimes even throw no light upon the character at all, but may have its sole interest in the revelation of psychological aberrations.

Selection for Setting Some novelists select their material primarily to emphasize the modern idea that men's lives are conditioned by their environment. Nowadays man is seldom regarded as the "captain of his soul"; he is the last product of his ancestors, a fragment of an encompassing family, the creature of an implacable, uninterested Nature or the plaything of an impersonal Fate.

Theodore Dreiser in *An American Tragedy* regards his characters as the sport of the forces of degeneration in American life. In such a novel there is no chance for heroic action or for individual initiative within the clutch of social circumstance. Given a certain inheritance and a certain training in youth, the chief character's fate is determined. Slowly, dully, but inevitably, he is moved through the sequence of events caused inexorably by his environment until he comes to a wretched end. He does not matter, only the social forces which make him matter. But they are intangible, the sum total of thousands of people who do not even know of their existence and who play puny parts in life deluded into thinking that as individuals they have freedom.

Nature and people who are close to the soil furnish the dominant feature of many novels. Thomas Hardy's novels are full of a sense of the brooding, immutable Earth upon which human beings end in futility. His few happy characters like Diggory Venn in *The Return of the Native* and Gabriel Oak in *Far from the Madding Crowd* recognize that the only hope of human happiness lies in calm, resigned adjustment to the Nature which is Hardy's chief character. Knut Hamsun's *The Growth of the Soil* is a novel dominated by the Land. Impersonal, without sense or will, implacable, it makes happiness or unhappiness as the characters do or do not yield to its power.

Those who are in harmony with the Land are well adjusted and achieve a kind of peace, those who try to escape from the Land fail

A variant in the novels dominated by setting is the new emphasis upon community life as the force which conditions both characters and incident. The center of Sinclair Lewis's *Main Street* is the spirit of the small town, Gopher Prairie. Carol Kennicott fights the town but it beats her in the end and brings her into complete subjection. A most interesting comparison may be made between *Main Street* and *Madame Bovary*. Both treat the bored woman in the small town seeking an escape, but Flaubert's novel is the story of the woman, Lewis's the story of the town. Gradually in modern life the mass is swallowing the individual. The result is that the historical novel is being rewritten to minimize personal achievement and to emphasize social background. *Main Street* is being pushed back into history.

Selection for an Idea Some novelists aim primarily at bringing incidents, character, and setting under the control of an idea which seems to them more important than anything else. Novels of ideas frequently aim at the reform of social abuses. A vivid story makes evil and good concrete, and men can understand by a parable what they could not understand if it remained abstract. Writers therefore often adjust characters and manipulate incidents to demonstrate a thesis. Generally speaking "thesis novels" are short-lived, because social abuses sooner or later are remedied and forgotten. Frequently, however, the author in his zeal has caught so much human nature in his characters, so much real interest in his incidents, and so much color and life in his background, that his novel outlives his thesis and takes on a life of its own.

All novels of idea are not, however, thesis novels. Often an author's reflection upon life gives him a philosophic idea which, affecting the deepest and most permanent human relations, remains perennially interesting. Thomas Hardy's idea of the relentless pursuit of fate is as old as man's thinking, eternally challenging, eternally incapable of solution. His *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* is a demonstration of his idea that a human being who is pure in heart may nevertheless come to disaster through the sheer malignity of fate. Tess Durbeyfield's life is ruined before she is born by the decadence of her family. She is born into misfortune. Blind evil chance pursues her at every step until finally she is hanged, and Hardy closed the record of her ill-starred career with the idea of which the book is a demonstration. "The President of the Immortals (in Æschylean phrase) had ended his sport with Tess."

The Bridge of San Luis Rey is an excellent example of the dominance of an idea. The initial impulse to the examination of the lives of the five who fell with the bridge is the question "Why did this happen to *those five*?" and all the material is marshaled to make of their taking off "perhaps an intention." And the book ends with the dominant idea stated: "There is a land of the living and a land of the dead and the bridge is love, the only survival, the only meaning."

PROGRESSION

Once a reader clearly understands how and why a novelist has selected his material he is ready to study the second element which governs the art of the novel *progression*, that element which gives to a story energy, movement, and vigor. Progression is the animating power which makes the lives of men and women unfold on the printed page, which moves events so that one leads to another, eventually reaching a completion satisfying to the reader and in harmony with the author's view of life. Progression is the power which makes the reader turn the page, eager to see how everything "comes out." Many readers cannot begin a book until they have looked at the final pages. This curiosity satisfied, they enjoy watching the author manipulate life to secure a given end. Progression is most obvious in novels which move swiftly and deftly through a series of climaxes to a neat ending and which depend upon suspense for their interest. Writers of detective, mystery, and adventure stories rely wholly upon their power of making events move. On a far higher plane are writers like Stevenson and Kipling. Kipling's *Kim* has become a classic not because of its picture of India or its power of characterization, but because of its power to enthrall the attention. Kim is looking for his red bull on a green field, the lama is looking for his river of healing. Once the reader begins the search with Kim and the lama he must follow it too, he has no choice. Of course he knows that the bull and the river will be found, the pleasure is in the seeking. Movement is dear to the mind of all men from childhood to old age, everybody wants to be doing something. What he does may be simple like unraveling a crime with Sherlock Holmes or finding treasure with Jim Hawkins in Stevenson's *Treasure Island*. Or it may be more complex like watching a vengeful fate pursue Tito Melema in George Eliot's *Romola*. Or the movement of fiction may be so complex, as in some of Henry James's novels, that it seems to revolve in slow circles like "laborious orient ivory sphere in sphere" until there seems to be no movement at all. The difficulty which many readers find in such novels as James's *The Golden Bowl* is not due to any intrinsic dullness in the material. The novel in other hands would be melodramatic. The trouble is that James cared little for progression in this and later novels, he went exploring into intricacies of subtle motives until the very exciting situations in which his characters are involved become thoroughly obscured.

Unity of Structure The reader's first task in understanding the progression of a novel is to determine the basic plan of the book, the unifying structure which holds events and characters in their setting and erects the limits within which the novel moves. All stories begin somewhere, they end somewhere. In other words, all novelists impose some kind of unity upon their material, so that by a process of simplification the reader's interest will be centered and not diffused.

In general, there have been three types of unity in the novel: the unity of a series of related episodes, the unity of a life, and the unity of an action.

The first type of unity is sometimes called "picaresque" (from the Spanish *pícaro*, a rogue) because the Spanish writers of stories about rogues employed

it in their tales. An excellent example is the sixteenth century Spanish picaresque tale *Lazarillo de Tormes*. The story begins with an account of the birth and childhood of Lazarillo. Then comes the first episode, his service with a blind man. He runs away and enters the service of a priest. The priest throws him out of his house, and Lazarillo becomes a gentleman's servant. This is the third episode. The gentleman deserts him, and he finds a friar for his fourth master. But the friar does not suit him and he attaches himself to a seller of papal indulgences for his fifth master. After four months' service with a chaplain, he finds his sixth master profitable. He leaves him and in the seventh episode secures a government appointment, marries, and lives happily ever after.

It is clear that *Lazarillo de Tormes* has unity, all the episodes happen to one person. But they have no causal connection, one episode happens *after* the other, not *because* of it. Each episode *precedes* the next but it does not cause it. The episodes are beads, each separate, strung upon the thread of Lazarillo's life. They begin with his birth, but they might have begun any where. They end with his marriage, but they might have ended anywhere. The looseness and incoherence of such a story of adventures are obvious.

The second type, the unity of a life, is well illustrated by Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*. We see Becky Sharp first as she leaves school with her friend Amelia Sedley. Then we follow her career to her marriage and to her establishment as a fashionable figure in London society. We see her friendship with the great Lord Steyne and her presentation at court. Then comes the climax of her life and her disgrace when her husband discovers her presumed infidelity. Finally we see her wandering about Europe as a seedy adventuress and, after her husband's death, returning to England to a calmly respectable old age, devoted to church and charity.

It is clear that the structure of *Vanity Fair* is very different from the episodic structure. Everything is centered upon the career of Becky Sharp. Her career has a beginning, a rise to a climax, and a decline to a static end when the action is over. There is a minor plot, the career of Becky's amiable and self-effacing little friend, Amelia Sedley, but this is merely a foil to the main plot. There are digressions and interludes, there are numbers of clearly defined characters, but the progress of interest is steady, and events happen, not merely before and after each other, but because of each other. The action has real unity, the unity of a life.

The third type of unity, the unity of action, is far more compact and restricted in scope. A novel with this type of structure emphasizes a chain of events which begin, interact, advance to a climax, and then are resolved into a conclusion. Only those portions of lives are included which bear upon the complications, the climax, and the solution.

The Return of the Native has a structure of this type. It is the story of Clym Yeobright and Eustacia Vye. Clym proposes to settle on Egdon Heath and find peace by becoming one with his somber environment. Eustacia, completely at variance with her environment, attempts to escape it by marrying Clym. The result is tension, misunderstanding, unhappiness. The two cannot work out their destiny by their own wills. They must reckon with malevolent Fate in the person of the Heath, with Clym's mother, with malicious chance,

with other people who intrude upon their lives. At last comes the climax in Book Fourth when Clym's mother finds the door of his cottage closed against her. Then follow misery and Eustacia's death. In the end, Clym, his life in ruins, has to wander about dragging on a meaningless existence.

Everything in *The Return of the Native* fills out this structure. Such minor characters as Wildeve, Venn, Mrs. Yeobright, and Thomasin all bear upon the plot or act as a foil to it. The Heath is a character, the peasantry are a kind of Greek chorus, the dark philosophy of Hardy gives the action dignity and plausibility.

Development When one understands the basic plan of the novel, one is ready to examine the way in which the author develops his story. One is ready to seek for an answer to the questions: What makes me turn the pages of this novel? Why do I want to finish it?

The Reader's Interest Captured The first answer is that the reader's interest must have been captured at the start. The source of this immediate interest is really a matter of emphasis. The emphasis in most of Conrad's novels is upon strange seas and lands, redolent of haunting perfumes, hypnotic, languorous, in George Eliot's novels upon complicated human relationships, in Galsworthy's upon the intimate linking of man to social forces, and in Stevenson's upon the adventure of simple and direct characters.

The Return of the Native begins at once with somber Egdon Heath because the Heath typifies the relentless forces of Nature which dwarf human beings into insignificance. After the first chapter the reader is eager to go on because the stage is set to suggest dark foreboding. When he reads the title of the second chapter "Humanity Appears upon the Scene, Hand in Hand with Trouble," he knows that he is to witness a drama of human lives which will come into conflict with Fate and probably end unhappily.

The Reader's Interest Sustained by Events Probably the fundamental element in maintaining the reader's interest, once captured, is suspense, that state of excitement which refuses to remain static, but insists upon having its curiosity, sympathy, dread, anger, or expectation satisfied. What will happen next? how will this difficulty be resolved? what is the answer to this problem? what is the key to this puzzle? These are the questions which demand solution. Suspense provides the thrill which furnishes an inexplicable, palpitating sensation when suddenly the traveled road disappears into blackness and becomes an adventure upon which anything can happen.

Closely allied to suspense is climax, that culmination of forces at their highest point, where the suspense involved does not concern a single episode or a single character, but the novel as a whole.

Of all forms of climax, a sudden reversal of situation is the most striking. One moment Becky Sharp has London society at her command, royalty has noticed her, Lord Steyne has lavished diamonds upon her, the next—Rawdon Crawley has torn "the diamond ornament out of her breast, and flung it at Lord Steyne," and Becky's world is shattered.

But such a use of climax has its disadvantages, for all its power, it seems sometimes theatrical and manufactured.

In novels which cling more closely to earth the climax is often hard to discover. Human life is not built with a view to literary efficaciousness. The immense vogue of Galsworthy's novels and the great interest in the novels of Willa Cather indicate that character and background alone are of sufficient interest if they are skillfully handled.

The common though superficial and unsatisfactory division of novelists into two groups, realists and romanticists, is partly based upon their use of suspense and climax. The realists have insisted that their stories move as ordinary life moves, without undue excitement or variety. In the normal course of life men have few adventures, one day is like another, if there is a simple everyday heroism, it passes unnoticed. The realistic mind is all for carefulness of detail, for faithful adherence to the known, for a suppression of emotion, for self-command, for acknowledgment that the world rarely stirs from common sense. The romantic mind is all for the sudden and unusual, for the great "culminating moments in the legend" "Crusoe recoiling from the foot print, Achilles shouting over against the Trojans, Ulysses bending the great bow, Christian running with his fingers in his ears." The romanticist stresses the unusual springs of human action, the great heroisms, loves, and sacrifices. Human life is not like that, he admits, but then he says, "Don't you wish it were!"

Stevenson, who fought for romance as for a religion, says

In anything fit to be called by the name of reading, the process itself should be absorbing and voluptuous, we should gloat over a book, be rapt clean out of our selves, and rise from the perusal, our mind filled with the busiest, kaleidoscopic dance of images, incapable of sleep or of continuous thought. The words, if the book be eloquent, should run thenceforward in our ears like the noise of breakers, and the story, if it be a story, repeat itself in a thousand colored pictures to the eye.

William Dean Howells, on the other hand, had a temperament directly opposed to that of Stevenson. What mattered to him was common sense, fidelity to the ordinary run of facts, calm and reasoned behavior. In *The Rise of Silas Lapham* he speaks through Mr. Sewell, the minister

"But the novels with old fashioned heroes and heroines in them are ruinous."

"The novelists might be the greatest possible help to us if they painted life as it is, and human feelings in their true proportion and relation, but for the most part they have been and are altogether noxious."

This seemed sense to Lapham, but Bromfield Corey asked "But what if life as it is isn't amusing? Aren't we to be amused?"

"Not to our hurt," sturdily answered the minister. "And the self sacrifice painted in most novels is nothing but psychical suicide, and is as wholly immoral as the spectacle of a man falling upon his sword."

But suspense is only one of many sources of the novelist's power to keep the reader interested. There is a natural pleasure in exploration. Readers like to go on an expedition of discovery and to feel that they themselves are responsible for finding out the final result. Moreover, readers like to be stirred emotionally. They like to laugh, they like to weep. The root of the willingness

of readers to subject themselves to emotional excitation lies apparently in a desire to enlarge experience. Sometimes the reader is moved by fellow-feeling for the emotional experience depicted in the novel, more often probably he projects himself into the situation and identifies himself with the character in the novel. Most readers see nothing strange in a woman's saying "It's a wonderful book. I cried my eyes out when I read it." They remember too well their own luxurious abandonment in such emotional classics as *Sara Crewe* and *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, or the more mature and sympathetic emotional experience at the death of Colonel Newcome in *The Newcomes* and of Ralph Touchett in *The Portrait of a Lady*.

The interest of readers is maintained, then, by suspense and by movement of many kinds. But neither of these is sufficient. The reader constantly needs help in finding his way. He wants to be guided, unobtrusively, to be sure, but unmistakably.

The novelist does all he can to help the reader. Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* represents a type of novel that easily becomes muddy, the so-called "stream of consciousness novel" which aims at the complete exploration of the conscious and subconscious thought-processes of a character. This type of novel works by means of a character's "reverie" rather than by direct action, and "reverie" is likely to stray and dissolve, as every one knows. Mrs. Woolf uses the London bell "Big Ben" to boom the passing of the hours in Mrs. Dalloway's day, she ties her scenes together by having characters in one scene appear in another, she steers Clarissa Dalloway's reverie toward memories which throw light when light is most needed.

Sometimes a writer uses a symbol for a guide. Pearl in Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* helps to keep straight the reader's sense of the passage of time as she grows from babyhood to girlhood. Pearl actually symbolizes thoughts and feelings in the minds of the characters. Hawthorne's poetic mind was very fond of such symbols. *The House of the Seven Gables* is full of them. Alice's posies, the chickens, the portrait, indeed the house itself. In Hardy's *The Return of the Native* Egdon Heath stands immovable while all else changes. In Bennett's *The Old Wives' Tale* Mr. Critchlow is a symbol of time, always old, never dying, and the succession of pet dogs is a reminder of the fleeting hours. In Sheila Kaye-Smith's *Sussex Gorse* the firs on the summit of Boarzell Moor flaunt defiantly until the end, the symbol of Reuben's goal.

Minor characters are the most hardworked people in the interests of clearness. They steer the reader about and manipulate the plot for their greater brethren. Crossjay Patterne, one of the most engaging boys in literature, is given a fully rounded life that he may, after the crisis in George Meredith's *The Egoist*, rescue Clara Middleton from her hated engagement. Sometimes a character serves to speak for the author and explain the book to the reader, like Mr. Sewall in *The Rise of Silas Lapham*, sometimes minor characters like a Greek chorus comment on the action as do Thomas Hardy's peasants. More frequently the novelist himself boldly speaks out and directs the reader. Fielding, Thackeray, George Eliot, and William Dean Howells are much given to this practice.

One of the commonest devices to secure clearness is foreshadowing, the forecasting of an important event in such a manner that the reader when the event happens will see how it has been prepared from the beginning. It is a well known fact that though readers like surprise, they do not like to be startled. They wish to say, "Ah! I might have seen it all along," or, better yet, "How clever I was to see it before the author disclosed it!"

Thus Arthur Dimmesdale in *The Scarlet Letter* constantly presses his hand on his heart to prepare the reader for his death, Anna Karenina's suicide in Tolstoy's great novel recalls the accident when she first saw Vronsky at the station, the furmity seller in *The Mayor of Casterbridge* moves about like a menacing cloud upon the horizon, and the silver in Conrad's *Nostromo* is always before the reader.

A variant of foreshadowing is the "false lead" much cultivated by writers of mystery stories. Dickens's novels are full of false leads like Miss Havisham in *Great Expectations* whom Pip thinks to be the cause of his prosperity.

The most important consideration, however, in the study of the means by which the author maintains the reader's interest is the working of causal law in the novel. The fundamental demand which one makes of an author is that the progression of his story be probable.

Of course every reader accepts certain conventions.

The Greeks, who had much common sense in these matters, devised a series of conventions for the use of their dramatists. When the plot was too thick, a god could descend from the high staging and carry off a complicating character, though Aristotle felt that the *deus ex machina* had been overworked and should be used only when it resolved something outside the scope of the drama.

Novelists have always been ready to use traditional devices to move their plots and to develop their characters. Lossie and Joe in De Morgan's *Joseph Vance* are brought together through the discovery of a letter which had years before slipped behind the lining of a dispatch-case, Thackeray and Dickens both use lost wills which turn up opportunely, Dickens in *Our Mutual Friend* has a man supposed drowned returning to life, amnesia is used in De Morgan's *Somehow Good*, death comes to Arthur Dimmesdale in *The Scarlet Letter* as opportunely as if Hawthorne were the angel Azrael, Scott has no more conscience in the use of coincidence than if he were writing fairy stories. In his novels knights gallop to the rescue in the nick of time, stolen children reappear, and trick prophecies fool kings.

In novels of adventure in which the sequence of events is chronological only, there is no necessary causal connection between one incident and the next. In such novels, people do things not because they are the sort of people who act so, but because the author has thought of ingenious things for them to do. The pirate whom Stevenson described as simply "a beard, a pair of wide trousers and a liberal complement of pistols," goes through the exciting adventures which the author invents for him as obediently as wooden soldiers drill. When the author creates real persons, however, he must allow them to act in accordance with their own natures. Captain Ahab in Melville's *Moby Dick*, for example, has one passion, revenge. Revenge drives him over the seas

in search of the white whale who maimed him, and compels him to fight Moby Dick to the bitter end. Even the most mercenary of authors could not have brought him back to New Bedford with his hold full of whale oil and Moby Dick still alive, nor could the most ardent of patriots have diverted his activities to fighting the Barbary pirates or to privateering in the War of 1812. This is the simplest form of causation, the characters determine the action, but are not changed by it.

A more complicated form of plot is that in which the characters are influenced by the events which they have determined. In *The Scarlet Letter* Hester Prynne's capacity for unselfish devotion, and the undercurrent of passion in the minister's sensitive soul made their love an entirely probable development. The effect of this sin on the minister was a gradual undermining of his whole moral nature. Hester's isolation and suffering turned her naturally keen mind to a questioning of the value of the whole Puritan social structure. Her intellectual independence and her deep love for the minister made it possible for her, when she realized his weakness, to suggest that they go to Europe to begin life anew together, and his moral weakness and need of her support led him to accept the suggestion. Interdependence of character and event is evident in Chillingworth, also. His desire for revenge drove him to search out Hester's lover, his brooding on this search nourished the spirit of revenge. The whole rising action of *The Scarlet Letter* is determined by the progressive influence of character on event and of event on character. This perfect causal sequence is broken only when Hawthorne cuts the knot by killing the minister.

Pride and Prejudice is almost unique in that every important step in the plot is developed by this mutual influence of character and event. The climax, brought about by the qualities of Elizabeth's and Darcy's characters, acts upon these characters in such a way as to motivate the denouement.

Sometimes a novelist convinces the reader that his succession of events is plausible by introducing Fate as one of his characters. There is a distinction between this use of Fate and that use of chance which is the last resort of desperate authors seeking a way out of a hopeless tangle. Chance is irrational, Fate is as logical and law-abiding as the other characters. In Conrad's *Lord Jim* the heat, the motionless sea, and the tropical surroundings dull the reader's senses until, like Jim, he feels the presence of a heavy-lidded Fate, smiling, but relentless, and must perforce accept anything which she sends. The lonely Heath in Hardy's *The Return of the Native*, the strange half-light by which we first see it, Thomasin's sobbing, and the weird ceremonies of that first evening introduce the reader to a Fate definitely characterized as grim, malicious, and ironical.

The sum of the whole matter is that the novel has probability when characters act as people of such qualities would act in such circumstances, and when Fate, if it is introduced, also acts in accordance with the laws of her nature. The reader objects to the deaths of Wildeve and Eustacia in *The Return of the Native* because these deaths are pure accidents, and nothing destroys the illusion of reality in novels quite so readily as unmotivated accident. Hardy himself says, "Misfortune had struck them gracefully, cutting off their erratic histories with a catastrophic dash, instead of, as with many, attenuating each life

to an uninteresting meagerness" Unfortunately the "dash" is too graceful to be natural

In defiance of all our observation most of us still believe that man is master of his fate Hence we call stories in which outer events or mere chance dominate characters either melodramatic or farcical

The Reader's Interest Sustained by Characters Up to this point discussion has centered upon the way in which the reader's interest is maintained by the complication of events, by the effect upon him of suspense and climax, of movement in many forms, of the guidance furnished by the author, and of the working of causal law

A second source of interest is in the people of the novel in so far as they can be separated from the incidents by which they are revealed There is a natural interest in psychological analysis Every one is glad to learn how the human mind acts, "why we behave like human beings," how human conduct is influenced, what motives affect men's lives The so called "psychological novel" is nothing new, it goes back to medieval romances The novels of George Eliot, George Meredith, Henry James, Edith Wharton, and May Sinclair have many sources of interest, but certainly their dominant interest for most readers is in their exploration of men's minds and of the conscious or unconscious motives of human behavior The reader finds himself interested not so much in what the characters of these novels do, as in why they do it Most readers would be hard put to it to remember just what David Copperfield did, but they have no difficulty in remembering what he was like In reading about him their interest in what happened was subordinated to the light which the incidents threw upon him, and in the end the novel became for them not a combination of events which had been devised, but a record of a person who had been created

It is probable that the fundamental source of interest in characters is some sort of relation which the reader establishes between the character and himself He may recognize the character as true to some aspect of his experience, so that reading the novel may give him the "pleasure of recognition," with the added gratification of finding that his view of life is borne out by the superior knowledge of the novelist To some extent this happens in the case of all effective characters Certain characters have been called "representative" because like representative men in history they are a composite of certain characteristics of scores of individuals In other words, in certain aspects of such characters as Colonel Newcome (*The Newcomes*), Silas Lapham (*The Rise of Silas Lapham*), Isabel Archer (*The Portrait of a Lady*), Sarah Gamp (*Martin Chuzzlewit*), and Long John Silver (*Treasure Island*), readers see constantly reflections of the men and women whom they meet every day These great characters are composite pictures of actual people They have, of course, been fused into a new unity by the novelist so that they are individuals and not types But the ultimate source of their power is the fact that the reader recognizes in them facets of his own limited experience

Readers, also, undoubtedly identify themselves with characters to a greater extent than they realize They live with the characters, they suffer with them The character's failure is the reader's failure, his triumph is the reader's triumph The reader undoubtedly adopts a physical attitude in sympathy with that of the character The reader of the great duel scene in Stevenson's *The*

Master of Ballantrae flexes his muscles in sympathy with the fighters, his teeth chatter with the craven servants, his muscles feel the sensation of falling as the Master falls. This process of "empathy," as it is called by psychologists, explains why an exciting book often leaves a reader physically tired.

But identification is not always of this empathic kind. It may be of that subtler variety in which the reader, by identification of himself with a character, finds in imaginative experience compensation for life's shortcomings. This fact seems to explain the type of fiction which prevails in magazines specialized for certain groups, such as business executives, housekeepers, clerks, stenographers.

A third source of interest in characters and probably the most important of the three is the simple pleasure of meeting new people, particularly people whom the reader likes and understands. Dickens was more popular than Thackeray in the nineteenth century because readers found his characters more interesting than those of Thackeray. Readers knew the people in Dickens's pages. Readers often pick their characters as they pick their friends, and refuse to read about people whom they would not enjoy meeting in real life. This refusal means a serious narrowing of experience. It means, moreover, that such readers fail to appreciate that these characters are successful portrayals by the author.

The Reader's Interest Sustained by Setting and Ideas Interest in setting accounts for some of the power which Cooper's novels have exercised, and there are many readers who enjoy Hardy's Wessex, Sheila Kaye-Smith's Sussex, the India of *Kim*, Conrad's Indian seas, and Edith Wharton's New York. The student finds pleasure in studying setting as a moving force in the story. Still, most readers are interested in observing setting as it affects human life in action, not for its own sake. A novel can never be primarily descriptive.

Similarly, even though an idea is the dominant force in a novel, it must be worked out in terms of human lives. The exposition of ideas, without adequate dramatization in character and incident, has produced many interesting books such as Oliver Wendell Holmes's *Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* and Pater's *Marius the Epicurean*. Such books, however, seem to lie nearer the essay than the novel. When, as in Meredith's *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, striking ideas are expressed in terms of vivid characters and dramatic incident, the result is a novel of the greatest interest.

WHAT IS A GOOD NOVEL?

To the naive reader a good novel is one which provides the maximum pleasure of the most simple sort. The reader of detective stories wants the pleasure of watching the unravelling of a complicated mystery, the reader of adventure stories wants to live imaginatively an exciting life, the child wants a story in which life offers solutions fitted to the child's sense of ideal justice.

The critical reader is more catholic in his tastes. What he asks is that a novel have vitality, that is, the power of creating an illusion of life which is superior to changes in taste, fashion, ethics, social organization, or literary vogue. Such

a novel as Fanny Burney's *Evelina* has vitality, though the language is outmoded and the sentiment outworn. No girl now has such trust in her elders as *Evelina* had, and what passes in the book for good old English bluntness and plain dealing now seems barbarous. *Evelina* was a first novel. Its action, moreover, is carried on by letters, the most cumbersome method of narration known in the history of fiction. Yet life was in the book in the beginning, as Samuel Johnson recognized, and life is in it still, a quiet, tenuous, graceful life like the fragrance of orris-root or dried lavender.

Scott's novels remain alive, though Sir Walter rushed them off as fast as his pen would write, and though creditors hounded him until ingenuity and dexterity had to take the place of insight. Scott's women were dead when they were born. His taste for romance led him to snatch at improbabilities and to pile up adventures. The modern reader smiles at the long expositions and the pasteboard stage settings of his novels, yet his men have an immense vitality and his sense for simple, stirring, picturesque romance has never been surpassed.

Many books have vitality though they depict a life which is ugly, cruel, and harsh. Such books leave the reader disturbed and unhappy just because they are vivid. And it is this vitality which one misses in novels which are merely sentimental, which flatter and fool the reader, or which deliberately paint life with rose color to satisfy the cravings of those who seek "a cheap release from worry and from pain."

An intelligent reader of novels must, then, above everything, be able to recognize vitality when he meets it and must be catholic enough not to be led astray by mere brutality or by sexual frankness any more than by the seeming charm of unintelligent optimism. If a reader can feel the vitality of Jane Austen as well as of Sherwood Anderson, of Joseph Conrad as well as of Charlotte Brontë, he has the true catholic sensitiveness to the indispensable quality of good fiction.

Vitality shows itself in many ways. Many good novels are good because of their delicacy, subtlety, fantasy, charm or grace revealed in their plots, their characters, or their backgrounds. They are often strictly limited in scope, and usually problems of conduct, questions of social adjustments, and the like are nothing to their purpose. It is enough that they produce an illusion of life.

Many novels achieve vitality through their intellectual power. In the novels of George Meredith the reader recognizes that he is dealing with a thinker, *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* must be read with head as well as heart. Meredith has thought about life, his characters have brains. As his stories move, the reader finds his own intellectual processes challenged. *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* has passages of pure magical romance, its command of the technical processes of the art of narrative must at least receive attention, but in the end it is Meredith's incisive mind which makes the reader ponder motives, complications, and outcome and keeps the novel among the great books of English literature.

The mind of Thomas Hardy, though it has none of the brilliance of Meredith, is the mind of a man who has pondered the great endless questions of the good and evil in human life. His characters do not think, as do Meredith's, but their author thinks and in the movement of the people in the Wessex

novels, so calmly desperate, so gravely passionate, may be seen the mind of a creator *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* seems now a little strained and "dated", *Jude the Obscure* seems melodramatic, but the impressive dignity of *The Return of the Native*, *The Woodlanders*, and *The Mayor of Casterbridge* makes of their author one of the thinkers of English literature

Another aspect of intellectual force in fiction is present in the work of satirists like Sinclair Lewis. There is journalistic dash in *Main Street* and *Babbitt*, joyous slam bang irreverence, and boisterous laughter. But beneath the surface is the keen incisiveness of the satirist who is jabbing a hidden wound. The success of Sinclair Lewis's characterization of American life is due to the fact that his novels are the concrete embodiment of his ideas, and his ideas are the product of reflective thinking. He has enough to say about America to make him a permanent figure in American social history.

Again, novels sometimes get their power through their author's ability to create characters who, though individuals, are yet representative of common human traits. The English novel is full of characters so interesting and vivid that they make a world the vitality of which seems abiding. Their world is a world more real than that of history and infinitely more appealing to the common run of us. Tom Sawyer, Mr. Pickwick, Colonel Newcome, Natty Bumppo, Sarah Gamp, Adam Bede, Huck Finn, Jane Eyre and scores of others are more alive than Queen Elizabeth. This is what more readers want in a novel than any other thing: they want to meet more people, to see more of life as it is experienced by folk whom they can understand. To the power of creating character all other qualities of good novels must sooner or later yield. Depth, breadth, warmth, variety, and vividness of characterization—these qualities will hold the reader's attention as nothing else will.

Finally, novels often secure vitality through their power over setting, through their ability to produce a sense of a special world different from the reader's and hence more exciting. To many people *Moby Dick* is interesting because more than any other sea novel it is tangy with the very breath of the salt water. One may be bored with its details of whaling, Captain Ahab, Queequeg, and the rest of the queer crew of the *Pequod* may seem a little hysterical, but the sea is there as nowhere else except in that master of setting, Joseph Conrad, whose world is constructed with such power and solidity that it almost has three dimensions. Henry James can create setting which has the glamor and depth of a theatre, as in the beautiful opening scene of *The Portrait of a Lady*, Galsworthy can make the English country sing with a rich and glowing music, as in *Indian Summer of a Forsyte*, but Conrad has a warmth and variety, a charm and glow, a mysterious spell, indeed, which makes him unique in the English novel.

Every critical reader knows that of the many novels which give him the sense of life some are better than others, not because they portray a more noble life or more admirable people, but because they penetrate more nearly to the heart of the experience which they present. Students often wonder at the high regard which critics have for such a novel as *Madame Bovary*. Madame Bovary is a bad woman, weak, self-willed, selfish, and fundamentally unintelligent. She is surrounded by weak, vain, heartless people. Flaubert is relentless in driving her to destruction. Why should such a novel be highly valued? Certainly not

because of its practical value to the reader who wants a happy release from reality, or its ethical value to the reader who wants edifying lessons and the companionship of noble people. No, *Madame Bovary* is a great novel because it makes the most of the experience which it presents. It tells its story completely and finally. It possesses the quality which has been called "intensity," the power to produce, no matter how often it is read, a complete and moving illusion of the essence of an experience.

Such power results from the author's penetrating perception of life conveyed to the reader by the author's ability to use the materials of his art. A great novel is not the result of chance, it is the result of a powerful mind armed with the technical resources which centuries of artistic creation have evolved. Command over structure, style, dialogue, setting, and the other technical elements of the novelist's art will not in themselves make a great novel, but no great novel can be made without them.

THE RETURN OF THE NATIVE

by Thomas Hardy

The literary career of Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) is unique in that for a quarter of a century he published as a novelist and for the following quarter of a century he published as a poet! More specifically, *Desperate Remedies* appeared in 1871 (the manuscript of an earlier novel had been withdrawn) and *Jude the Obscure* in 1896. Within this period his career as a novelist fits. Then comes the period during which he published his poetry, extending from 1898 (*Wessex Poems*) to 1925 (*Human Shows, Winter Words* was published posthumously in 1928). It would be incorrect, however, to assume that Hardy suddenly ceased writing novels and as suddenly became a poet, in his youth he had written poems and while writing his novels he continued the practice. "I never cared much about writing novels," he once said, and yet it is a "satire of circumstance" that Hardy is better known as a novelist than as a poet. Oddly enough, throughout this extended period of literary activity there was no essential change in Hardy's attitude toward life. The themes which he stressed in his youth he stressed in his old age, and the poem "Hap" (1866), in which Hardy has expressed his despair, may well serve not only as prologue to his work, but epilogue as well. The hopelessness of the struggle, the perversities of fate, "the perennial procedure of humanity," pity for mankind—these are the themes which he persistently developed. The poems are the epitome of his novels, the novels are the enlargement of his poems.

The Return of the Native (1878) is the most majestic of Hardy's novels. The theme is the effect of environment and heredity on mankind, and particularly the effect of Egdon Heath on the characters placed there by the author. To Hardy the Heath is a relentless power bringing tragedy not only to those who, like Eustacia Vye, hate it, but to those—Clym Yeobright, for example—who love it. And when the tragedy is completed, when forces beyond the control of the characters have exerted their influence, the Heath remains unsubdued and still relentless, and the forces are unimpaired. Man is pitted against his environment and his own passions, and man loses in the struggle.

(A useful handbook for the study of the Hardy country is Hermann Lea's *Highways & Byways in Hardy's Wessex*.)

BOOK FIRST THE THREE WOMEN

I A FACE ON WHICH TIME MAKES BUT LITTLE IMPRESSION

A SATURDAY afternoon in November was approaching the time of twilight, and the vast tract of unenclosed wild known as Egdon Heath embrowned itself moment by moment. Overhead the hollow stretch of whitish cloud shutting out the sky was as a tent which had the whole heath for its floor.

The heaven being spread with this pallid screen and the earth with the darkest vegetation, their meeting-line at the horizon was clearly marked. In such contrast the heath wore the appearance of an installment of night which had taken up its place before its astronomical hour was come. Darkness had to a great extent arrived hereon, while day stood distinct in the sky. Looking upwards a furze-cutter would have been inclined to continue work, looking down, he would have decided to finish his faggot and go home. The distant rims of the world and of the firmament seemed to be a division in time no less than a division in matter. The face of the heath by its mere complexion added half an hour to evening, it could in like manner retard the dawn, sadden noon, anticipate the frowning of storms scarcely generated, and intensify the opacity of a moonless midnight to a cause of shaking and dread.

In fact, precisely at this transitional point of its nightly roll into darkness the great and particular glory of the Egdon waste began, and nobody could be said to understand the heath who had not been there at such a time. It could best be felt when it could not clearly be seen, its complete effect and explanation lying in this and the succeeding hours before the next dawn. Then, and only then, did it tell its true tale. The spot was, indeed, a near relation of night, and when night showed itself an apparent tendency to gravitate together could be perceived in its shades and the scene. The somber stretch of rounds and hollows seemed to rise and meet the evening gloom in pure sympathy, the heath exhaling darkness as rapidly as the heavens precipitated it. And so the obscurity in the air and the obscurity in the land closed together in a black fraternization towards which each advanced half-way.

The place became full of a watchful intentness now, for when other things sank brooding to sleep the heath appeared slowly to awake and listen. Every night its Titanic form seemed to await something, but it had waited thus, unmoved, during so many centuries, through the crises of so many things, that it could only be imagined to await one last crisis—the final overthrow.

It was a spot which returned upon the memory of those who loved it with an aspect of peculiar and kindly congruity. Smiling champagnes of flowers and fruit hardly do this, for they are permanently harmonious only with an existence of better reputation as to its issues than the present. Twilight combined with the scenery of Egdon Heath to evolve a thing majestic without severity,

impressive, without showiness, emphatic in its admonitions, grand in its simplicity. The qualifications which frequently invest the facade of a prison with far more dignity than is found in the facade of a palace double its size lent to this heath a sublimity in which spots renowned for beauty of the accepted kind are utterly wanting. Fair prospects wed happily with fair times, but alas, if times be not fair! Men have oftener suffered from the mockery of a place too smiling for their reason than from the oppression of surroundings oversadly tinged. Haggard Egdon appealed to a subtler and scarcer instinct, to a more recently learnt emotion, than that which responds to the sort of beauty called charming and fair.

Indeed, it is a question if the exclusive reign of this orthodox beauty is not approaching its last quarter. The new Vale of Tempe may be a gaunt waste in Thule, human souls may find themselves in closer and closer harmony with external things wearing a somberness distasteful to our race when it was young. The time seems near, if it has not actually arrived, when the chastened sublimity of a moor, a sea, or a mountain will be all of nature that is absolutely in keeping with the moods of the more thinking among mankind. And ultimately, to the commonest tourist, spots like Iceland may become what the vineyards and myrtle-gardens of South Europe are to him now, and Heidelberg and Baden be passed unheeded as he hastens from the Alps to the sand-dunes of Scheveningen.

The most thorough-going ascetic could feel that he had a natural right to wander on Egdon—he was keeping within the line of legitimate indulgence when he laid himself open to influences such as these. Colors and beauties so far subdued were, at least, the birthright of all. Only in summer days of highest feather did its mood touch the level of gaiety. Intensity was more usually reached by way of the solemn than by way of the brilliant, and such a sort of intensity was often arrived at during winter darkness, tempests, and mists. Then Egdon was aroused to reciprocity, for the storm was its lover, and the wind its friend. Then it became the home of strange phantoms, and it was found to be the hitherto unrecognized original of those wild regions of obscurity which are vaguely felt to be compassing us about in midnight dreams of flight and disaster, and are never thought of after the dream till revived by scenes like this.

It was at present a place perfectly accordant with man's nature—neither ghastly, hateful, nor ugly; neither commonplace, unmeaning, nor tame, but, like man, slighted and enduring, and withal singularly colossal and mysterious in its swarthy monotony. As with some persons who have long lived apart, solitude seemed to look out of its countenance. It had a lonely face, suggesting tragical possibilities.

This obscure, obsolete, superseded country figures in Domesday. Its condition is recorded therein as that of heathy, furzy, briary wilderness—"Bruaria." Then follows the length and breadth in leagues, and, though some uncertainty exists as to the exact extent of this ancient lineal measure, it appears from the figures that the area of Egdon down to the present day has but little diminished. "Turbaria Bruaria"—the right of cutting heath-turf—occurs in charters relating to the district. "Overgrown with heth and mosse," says Leland of the same dark sweep of country.

Here at least were intelligible facts regarding landscape—far-reaching proofs productive of genuine satisfaction. The untamable, Ishmaelitish thing that Egdon now was it always had been. Civilization was its enemy, and ever since the beginning of vegetation its soil had worn the same antique brown dress, the natural and invariable garment of the particular formation. In its venerable one coat lay a certain vein of satire on human vanity in clothes. A person on a heath in raiment of modern cut and colors has more or less an anomalous look. We seem to want the oldest and simplest human clothing where the clothing of the earth is so primitive.

To recline on a stump of thorn in the central valley of Egdon, between afternoon and night, as now, where the eye could reach nothing of the world outside the summits and shoulders of heathland which filled the whole circumference of its glance, and to know that everything around and underneath had been from prehistoric times as unaltered as the stars overhead, gave ballast to the mind adrift on change, and harassed by the irrepressible New. The great inviolate place had an ancient permanence which the sea cannot claim. Who can say of a particular sea that it is old? Distilled by the sun, kneaded by the moon, it is renewed in a year, in a day, or in an hour. The sea changed, the fields changed, the rivers, the villages, and the people changed, yet Egdon remained. Those surfaces were neither so steep as to be destructible by weather, nor so flat as to be the victims of floods and deposits. With the exception of an aged highway, and a still more aged barrow presently to be referred to—themselves almost crystallized to natural products by long continuance—even the trifling irregularities were not caused by pickaxe, plough, or spade, but remained as the very finger-touches of the last geological change.

The above-mentioned highway traversed the lower levels of the heath, from one horizon to another. In many portions of its course it overlaid an old vicinal way, which branched from the great Western road of the Romans, the *Via Iceniana*, or *Ikenild Street*, hard by. On the evening under consideration it would have been noticed that, though the gloom had increased sufficiently to confuse the minor features of the heath, the white surface of the road remained almost as clear as ever.

II HUMANITY APPEARS UPON THE SCENE, HAND IN HAND WITH TROUBLE

ALONG the road walked an old man. He was white-headed as a mountain, bowed in the shoulders, and faded in general aspect. He wore a glazed hat, an ancient boat-cloak, and shoes, his brass buttons bearing an anchor upon their face. In his hand was a silver-headed walking-stick, which he used as a veritable third leg, perseveringly dotting the ground with its point at every few inches' interval. One would have said that he had been, in his day, a naval officer of some sort or other.

Before him stretched the long, laborious road, dry, empty, and white. It was quite open to the heath on each side, and bisected that vast dark surface like

the parting-line on a head of black hair, diminishing and bending away on the furthest horizon

The old man frequently stretched his eyes ahead to gaze over the tract that he had yet to traverse. At length he discerned, a long distance in front of him, a moving spot, which appeared to be a vehicle, and it proved to be going the same way as that in which he himself was journeying. It was the single atom of life that the scene contained, and it only served to render the general loneliness more evident. Its rate of advance was slow, and the old man gained upon it sensibly.

When he drew nearer he perceived it to be a spring van ordinary in shape, but singular in color, this being a lurid red. The driver walked beside it, and, like his van, he was completely red. One dye of that tincture covered his clothes, the cap upon his head, his boots, his face, and his hands. He was not temporarily overlaid with the color; it permeated him.

The old man knew the meaning of this. The traveler with the cart was a reddleman—a person whose vocation it was to supply farmers with redding for their sheep. He was one of a class rapidly becoming extinct in Wessex, filling at present in the rural world the place which, during the last century, the dodo occupied in the world of animals. He is a curious, interesting, and nearly perished link between obsolete forms of life and those which generally prevail.

The decayed officer, by degrees, came up alongside his fellow wayfarer, and wished him good evening. The reddleman turned his head, and replied in sad and occupied tones. He was young, and his face, if not exactly handsome, approached so near to handsome that nobody would have contradicted an assertion that it really was so in its natural color. His eye, which glared so strangely through his stain, was in itself attractive—keen as that of a bird of prey, and blue as autumn mist. He had neither whisker nor moustache, which allowed the soft curves of the lower part of his face to be apparent. His lips were thin, and though, as it seemed, compressed by thought, there was a pleasant twitch at their corners now and then. He was clothed throughout in a tight-fitting suit of corduroy, excellent in quality, not much worn, and well chosen for its purpose, but deprived of its original color by his trade. It showed to advantage the good shape of his figure. A certain well-to-do air about the man suggested that he was not poor for his degree. The natural query of an observer would have been, Why should such a promising being as this have hidden his prepossessing exterior by adopting that singular occupation?

After replying to the old man's greeting he showed no inclination to continue in talk, although they still walked side by side, for the elder traveler seemed to desire company. There were no sounds but that of the booming wind upon the stretch of tawny herbage around them, the crackling wheels, the tread of the men, and the footsteps of the two shaggy ponies which drew the van. They were small, hardy animals, of a breed between Galloway and Exmoor, and were known as "heath-croppers" here.

Now, as they thus pursued their way, the reddleman occasionally left his companion's side, and, stepping behind the van, looked into its interior through a small window. The look was always anxious. He would then return to the old man, who made another remark about the state of the country and so on,

to which the reddleman again abstractedly replied, and then again they would lapse into silence. The silence conveyed to neither any sense of awkwardness, in these lonely places wayfarers, after a first greeting, frequently plod on for miles without speech, contiguity amounts to a tacit conversation where, otherwise than in cities, such contiguity can be put an end to on the merest inclination, and where not to put an end to it is intercourse in itself.

Possibly these two might not have spoken again till their parting, had it not been for the reddleman's visits to his van. When he returned from his fifth time of looking in the old man said, "You have something inside there besides your load?"

"Yes."

"Somebody who wants looking after?"

"Yes."

Not long after this a faint cry sounded from the interior. The reddleman hastened to the back, looked in, and came away again.

"You have a child there, my man?"

"No, sir, I have a woman."

"The deuce you have! Why did she cry out?"

"Oh, she has fallen asleep, and not being used to traveling, she's uneasy, and keeps dreaming."

"A young woman?"

"Yes, a young woman."

"That would have interested me forty years ago. Perhaps she's your wife?"

"My wife!" said the other bitterly. "She's above mating with such as I. But there's no reason why I should tell you about that."

"That's true. And there's no reason why you should not. What harm can I do to you or to her?"

The reddleman looked in the old man's face. "Well, sir," he said at last, "I knew her before today, though perhaps it would have been better if I had not. But she's nothing to me, and I am nothing to her, and she wouldn't have been in my van if any better carriage had been there to take her."

"Where, may I ask?"

"At Anglebury."

"I know the town well. What was she doing there?"

"Oh, not much—to gossip about. However, she's tired to death now, and not at all well, and that's what makes her so restless. She dropped off into a nap about an hour ago, and 'twill do her good."

"A nice-looking girl, no doubt?"

"You would say so."

The other traveler turned his eyes with interest towards the van window, and, without withdrawing them, said, "I presume I might look in upon her?"

"No," said the reddleman abruptly. "It is getting too dark for you to see much of her, and, more than that, I have no right to allow you. Thank God she sleeps so well. I hope she won't wake till she's home."

"Who is she? One of the neighborhood?"

"Tis no matter who, excuse me."

"It is not that girl of Blooms-End, who has been talked about more or less lately? If so, I know her, and I can guess what has happened"

"Tis no matter Now, sir, I am sorry to say that we shall soon have to part company My ponies are tired, and I have further to go, and I am going to rest them under this bank for an hour"

The elder traveler nodded his head indifferently, and the reddleman turned his horses and van in upon the turf, saying, "Good night" The old man replied, and proceeded on his way as before

The reddleman watched his form as it diminished to a speck on the road and became absorbed in the thickening films of night He then took some hay from a truss which was slung up under the van, and, throwing a portion of it in front of the horses, made a pad of the rest, which he laid on the ground beside his vehicle Upon this he sat down, leaning his back against the wheel From the interior a low soft breathing came to his ear It appeared to satisfy him, and he musingly surveyed the scene, as if considering the next step that he should take

To do things musingly, and by small degrees, seemed, indeed, to be a duty in the Egdon valleys at this transitional hour, for there was that in the condition of the heath itself which resembled protracted and halting dubiousness It was the quality of the repose appertaining to the scene This was not the repose of actual stagnation, but the apparent repose of incredible slowness A condition of healthy life so nearly resembling the torpor of death is a noticeable thing of its sort, to exhibit the inertness of the desert, and at the same time to be exercising powers akin to those of the meadow, and even of the forest, awakened in those who thought of it the attentiveness usually engendered by understatement and reserve

The scene before the reddleman's eyes was a gradual series of ascents from the level of the road backward into the heart of the heath It embraced hillocks, pits, ridges, acclivities, one behind the other, till all was finished by a high hill cutting against the still light sky The traveler's eye hovered about these things for a time, and finally settled upon one noteworthy object up there It was a barrow This bossy projection of earth above its natural level occupied the loftiest ground of the loneliest height that the heath contained Although from the vale it appeared but as a wart on an Atlantean brow, its actual bulk was great It formed the pole and axis of this heathery world

As the resting man looked at the barrow he became aware that its summit, hitherto the highest object in the whole prospect round, was surmounted by something higher It rose from the semi-globular mound like a spike from a helmet The first instinct of an imaginative stranger might have been to suppose it the person of one of the Celts who built the barrow, so far had all of modern date withdrawn from the scene It seemed a sort of last man among them, musing for a moment before dropping into eternal night with the rest of his race

There the form stood, motionless as the hill beneath Above the plain rose the hill, above the hill rose the barrow, and above the barrow rose the figure Above the figure was nothing that could be mapped elsewhere than on a celestial globe

Such a perfect, delicate, and necessary finish did the figure give to the dark pile of hills that it seemed to be the only obvious justification of their outline. Without it, there was the dome without the lantern, with it the architectural demands of the mass were satisfied. The scene was strangely homogeneous. The vale, the upland, the barrow, and the figure above it amounted only to unity. Looking at this or that member of the group was not observing a complete thing, but a fraction of a thing.

The form was so much like an organic part of the entire motionless structure that to see it move would have impressed the mind as a strange phenomenon. Immobility being the chief characteristic of that whole which the person formed portion of, the discontinuance of immobility in any quarter suggested confusion.

Yet that is what happened. The figure perceptibly gave up its fixity, shifted a step or two, and turned round. As if alarmed, it descended on the right side of the barrow, with the glide of a water drop down a bud, and then vanished. The movement had been sufficient to show more clearly the characteristics of the figure, and that it was a woman's.

The reason of her sudden displacement now appeared. With her dropping out of sight on the right side, a new comer, bearing a burden, protruded into the sky on the left side, ascended the tumulus, and deposited the burden on the top. A second followed, then a third, a fourth, a fifth, and ultimately the whole barrow was peopled with burdened figures.

The only intelligible meaning in this sky-backed pantomime of silhouettes was that the woman had no relation to the forms who had taken her place, was sedulously avoiding these, and had come thither for another object than theirs. The imagination of the observer clung by preference to that vanished, solitary figure, as to something more interesting, more important, more likely to have a history worth knowing than these new-comers, and unconsciously regarded them as intruders. But they remained, and established themselves, and the lonely person who hitherto had been queen of the solitude did not at present seem likely to return.

III THE CUSTOM OF THE COUNTRY

HAD a looker-on been posted in the immediate vicinity of the barrow, he would have learned that these persons were boys and men of the neighboring hamlets. Each, as he ascended the barrow, had been heavily laden with furze-faggots, carried upon the shoulder by means of a long stake sharpened at each end for impaling them easily—two in front and two behind. They came from a part of the heath a quarter of a mile to the rear, where furze almost exclusively prevailed as a product.

Every individual was so involved in furze by his method of carrying the faggots that he appeared like a bush on legs till he had thrown them down. The party had marched in trail, like a traveling flock of sheep, that is to say, the strongest first, the weak and young behind.

The loads were all laid together, and a pyramid of furze thirty feet in cir-

cumference now occupied the crown of the tumulus, which was known as Rainbarrow for many miles round. Some made themselves busy with matches, and in selecting the driest tufts of furze, others in loosening the bramble bonds which held the faggots together. Others, again, while this was in progress, lifted their eyes and swept the vast expanse of country commanded by their position, now lying nearly obliterated by shade. In the valleys of the heath nothing save its own wild face was visible at any time of day, but this spot commanded a horizon enclosing a tract of far extent, and in many cases lying beyond the heath country. None of its features could be seen now, but the whole made itself felt as a vague stretch of remoteness.

While the men and lads were building the pile, a change took place in the mass of shade which denoted the distant landscape. Red suns and tufts of fire one by one began to arise, flecking the whole country round. They were the bonfires of other parishes and hamlets that were engaged in the same sort of commemoration. Some were distant, and stood in a dense atmosphere, so that bundles of pale strawlike beams radiated around them in the shape of a fan. Some were large and near, glowing scarlet-red from the shade, like wounds in a black hide. Some were Maenades, with winy faces and blown hair. These tintured the silent bosom of the clouds above them and lit up their ephemeral caves, which seemed thenceforth to become scalding caldrons. Perhaps as many as thirty bonfires could be counted within the whole bounds of the district, and as the hour may be told on a clockface when the figures themselves are invisible, so did the men recognize the locality of each fire by its angle and direction, though nothing of the scenery could be viewed.

The first tall flame from Rainbarrow sprang into the sky, attracting all eyes that had been fixed on the distant conflagrations back to their own attempt in the same kind. The cheerful blaze streaked the inner surface of the human circle—now increased by other stragglers, male and female—with its own gold livery, and even overlaid the dark turf around with a lively luminousness, which softened off into obscurity where the barrow rounded downwards out of sight. It showed the barrow to be the segment of a globe, as perfect as on the day when it was thrown up, even the little ditch remaining from which the earth was dug. Not a plough had ever disturbed a grain of that stubborn soil. In the heath's barrenness to the farmer lay its fertility to the historian. There had been no obliteration, because there had been no tending.

It was as if the bonfire-makers were standing in some radiant upper story of the world, detached from and independent of the dark stretches below. The heath down there was now a vast abyss, and no longer a continuation of what they stood on, for their eyes, adapted to the blaze, could see nothing of the deeps beyond its influence. Occasionally, it is true, a more vigorous flare than usual from their faggots sent darting lights like aides-de-camp down the inclines to some distant bush, pool, or patch of white sand, kindling these to replies of the same color, till all was lost in darkness again. Then the whole black phenomenon beneath represented Limbo as viewed from the brink by the sublime Florentine in his vision, and the muttered articulations of the wind in

the hollows were as complaints and petitions from the "souls of mighty worth" suspended therein

It was as if these men and boys had suddenly dived into past ages, and fetched therefrom an hour and deed which had before been familiar with this spot. The ashes of the original British pyre which blazed from that summit lay fresh and undisturbed in the barrow beneath their tread. The flames from funeral piles long ago kindled there had shone down upon the lowlands as these were shining now. Festival fires to Thor and Woden had followed on the same ground and duly had their day. Indeed, it is pretty well known that such blazes as this the heathmen were now enjoying are rather the lineal descendants from jumbled Druidical rites and Saxon ceremonies than the invention of popular feeling about Gunpowder Plot.

Moreover to light a fire is the instinctive and resistant act of man when, at the winter ingress, the curfew is sounded throughout Nature. It indicates a spontaneous, Promethean rebelliousness against the fact that this recurrent season shall bring foul times, cold darkness, misery and death. Black chaos comes, and the fettered gods of the earth say, Let there be light.

The brilliant lights and sooty shades which struggled upon the skin and clothes of the persons standing round caused their lineaments and general contours to be drawn with Dureresque vigor and dash. Yet the permanent moral expression of each face it was impossible to discover, for as the nimble flames towered, nodded, and swooped through the surrounding air, the blots of shade and flakes of light upon the countenances of the group changed shape and position endlessly. All was unstable, quivering as leaves, evanescent as lightning. Shadowy eye-sockets, deep as those of a death's head, suddenly turned into pits of luster: a lantern-jaw was cavernous, then it was shining, wrinkles were emphasized to ravines, or obliterated entirely by a changed ray. Nostrils were dark wells, sinews in old necks were gilt mouldings, things with no particular polish on them were glazed, bright objects, such as the tip of a furze-hook one of the men carried, were as glass, eyeballs glowed like little lanterns. Those whom Nature had depicted as merely quaint became grotesque, the grotesque became preternatural, for all was in extremity.

Hence it may be that the face of an old man, who had like others been called to the heights by the rising flames, was not really the mere nose and chin that it appeared to be, but an appreciable quantity of human countenance. He stood complacently sunning himself in the heat. With a speaker, or stake, he tossed the outlying scraps of fuel into the conflagration, looking at the midst of the pile, occasionally lifting his eyes to measure the height of the flame, or to follow the great sparks which rose with it and sailed away into darkness. The beaming sight, and the penetrating warmth, seemed to breed in him a cumulative cheerfulness, which soon amounted to delight. With his stick in his hand he began to jig a private minuet, a bunch of copper seals shining and swinging like a pendulum from under his waistcoat: he also began to sing, in the voice of a bee up a flue—

"The king call'd down his nobles all,
By one, by two, by three,

Earl Mar shal, I'll go shrive the queen,
And thou shalt wend with me

"A boon, a boon, quoth Earl Mar shal,
And fell on his bend ded knee,
That what so e'er the queen shall say,
No harm there of may be"

Want of breath prevented a continuance of the song, and the breakdown attracted the attention of a firm-standing man of middle age, who kept each corner of his crescent-shaped mouth rigorously drawn back into his cheek, as if to do away with any suspicion of mirthfulness which might erroneously have attached to him

"A fair stave, Grandfer Cantle, but I am afeard 'tis too much for the mouldy weasand of such a old man as you," he said to the wrinkled reveler "Dostn't wish th' wast three sixes again, Grandfer, as you was when you first learnt to sing it?"

"Hey?" said Grandfer Cantle, stopping in his dance

"Dostn't wish was young again, I say? There's a hole in thy poor bellows nowadays seemingly"

"But there's good art in me If I couldn't make a little wind go a long ways I should seem no younger than the most aged man, should I, Timothy?"

"And how about the new-married folks down there at the Quiet Woman Inn?" the other inquired, pointing towards a dim light in the direction of the distant highway, but considerably apart from where the reddleman was at that moment resting "What's the rights of the matter about 'em? You ought to know, being an understanding man"

"But a little rakish, hey? I own to it Master Cantle is that, or he's nothing Yet 'tis a gay fault, neighbor Fairway, that age will cure"

"I heard that they were coming home tonight By this time they must have come What besides?"

"The next thing is for us to go and wish 'em joy, I suppose?"

"Well, no"

"No? Now, I thought we must I must, or 'twould be very unlike me—the first in every spree that's going!"

"Do thou put on a friar's coat,
And I'll put on a no ther,
And we will to Queen Eleanor go,
Like Friar and his bro ther"

I met Mis'ess Yeobright, the young bride's aunt, last night, and she told me that her son Clym was coming home a' Christmas Wonderful clever, 'a believe—ah, I should like to have all that's under that young man's hair Well, then, I spoke to her in my well-known merry way, and she said, 'O that what's shaped so venerable should talk like a fool!'—that's what she said to me I don't care for her, be jowned if I do, and so I told her 'Be jowned if I care for 'ee,' I said I had her there—hey?"

"I rather think she had you," said Fairway

"No," said Grandfer Cante, his countenance slightly flagging "'Tisn't so bad as that with me?"

"Seemingly 'tis, however, is it because of the wedding that Clym is coming home a' Christmas—to make a new arrangement because his mother is now left in the house alone?"

"Yes, yes—that's it But, Timothy, hearken to me," said the Grandfer earnestly "Though known as such a joker, I be an understanding man if you catch me serious, and I am serious now I can tell 'ee lots about the married couple Yes, this morning at six o'clock they went up the country to do the job, and neither vell nor mark have been seen of 'em since, though I reckon that this afternoon has brought 'em home again, man and woman—wife, that is Isn't it spoke like a man, Timothy, and wasn't Mis'ess Yeobright wrong about me?"

"Yes, it will do I didn't know the two had walked together since last fall, when her mother forbade the banns How long has this new set-to been in mangling then? Do you know, Humphrey?"

"Yes, how long?" said Grandfer Cante smartly, likewise turning to Humphrey "I ask that question"

"Ever since her aunt altered her mind, and said she might hae the man after all," replied Humphrey, without removing his eyes from the fire He was a somewhat solemn young fellow, and carried the hook and leather gloves of a furze-cutter, his legs, by reason of that occupation, being sheathed in bulging leggings as stiff as the Philistine's greaves of brass "That's why they went away to be married, I count You see, after kicking up such a nunny watch and forbidding the banns 'twould have made Mis'ess Yeobright seem foolish-like to have a banging wedding in the same parish all as if she'd never gainsaid it"

"Exactly—seem foolish-like, and that's very bad for the poor things that be so, though I only guess as much, to be sure," said Grandfer Cante, still strenuously preserving a sensible bearing and mien

"Ah, well, I was at church that day," said Fairway, "which was a very curious thing to happen"

"If 'twasn't my name's Simple," said the Grandfer emphatically "I ha'n't been there to-year, and now the winter is a coming on I won't say I shall"

"I ha'n't been these three years," said Humphrey, "for I'm so dead sleepy of a Sunday, and 'tis so terrible far to get there, and when you do get there 'tis such a mortal poor chance that you'll be chose for up above, when so many bain't, that I bide at home and don't go at all"

"I not only happened to be there," said Fairway, with a fresh collection of emphasis, "but I was sitting in the same pew as Mis'ess Yeobright And though you may not see it as such, it fairly made my blood run cold to hear her Yes, it is a curious thing, but it made my blood run cold, for I was close at her elbow" The speaker looked round upon the bystanders, now drawing closer to hear him, with his lips gathered tighter than ever in the rigorousness of his descriptive moderation

"'Tis a serious job to have things happen to 'ee there," said a woman behind

"'Ye are to declare it,' wez the parson's words," Fairway continued "And then up stood a woman at my side—a touching of me 'Well, be damned if there isn't Mis'ess Yeobright a-standing up,' I said to myself Yes, neighbors,

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though I was in the temple of prayer that's what I said 'Tis against my conscience to curse and swear in company, and I hope any woman here will overlook it Still what I did say I did say, and 'twould be a lie if I didn't own it"

"So 'twould, neighbor Fairway"

"'Be damned if there isn't Mis'ess Yeobright a-standing up,' I said," the narrator repeated, giving out the bad word with the same passionless severity of face as before, which proved how entirely necessity and not gusto had to do with the iteration "And the next thing I heard was, 'I forbid the banns,' from her 'I'll speak to you after the service,' said the parson, in quite a homely way—yes, turning all at once into a common man no holier than you or I Ah, her face was pale! Maybe you can call to mind that monument in church—the cross-legged soldier that have had his nose knocked away by the school children? Well, he would about have matched that woman's face, when she said, 'I forbid the banns' "

The audience cleared their throats and tossed a few stalks into the fire, not because these deeds were urgent, but to give themselves time to weigh the moral of the story

"I'm sure when I heard they'd been forbid I felt as glad as if anybody had gied me sixpence," said an earnest voice—that of Olly Dowden, a woman who lived by making heath brooms, or besoms Her nature was to be civil to enemies as well as to friends, and grateful to all the world for letting her remain alive

"And now the maid have married him just the same," said Humphrey

"After the Mis'ess Yeobright came round and was quite agreeable," Fairway resumed, with an unheeding air, to show that his words were no appendage to Humphrey's, but the result of independent reflection

"Supposing they were ashamed, I don't see why they shouldn't have done it here-right," said a wide-spread woman whose stays creaked like shoes whenever she stooped or turned "'Tis well to call the neighbors together and to hae a good racket once now and then, and it may as well be when there's a wedding as at tide-times I don't care for close ways"

"Ah, now, you'd hardly believe it, but I don't care for gay weddings," said Timothy Fairway, his eyes again traveling round "I hardly blame Thomasin Yeobright and neighbor Wildeve for doing it quiet, if I must own it A wedding at home means five- and six-handed reels by the hour, and they do a man's legs no good when he's over forty"

"True Once at the woman's house you can hardly say nay to being one in a jig, knowing all the time that you be expected to make yourself worth your victuals"

"You be bound to dance at Christmas because 'tis the time o' year, you must dance at weddings because 'tis the time o' life At christenings folk will even smuggle in a reel or two, if 'tis no further on than the first or second chiel And this is not naming the songs you've got to sing For my part I like a good hearty funeral as well as anything You've as splendid victuals and drink as at other parties, and even better And it don't wear your legs to stumps in talking over a poor fellow's ways as it do to stand up in hornpipes"

"Nine folks out of ten would own 'twas going too far to dance then, I suppose?" said Grandfer Cattle inquiringly

"'Tis the only sort of party a staid man can feel safe at after the mug have been round a few times"

"Well, I can't understand a quiet lady-like little body like Tamsin Yeobright caring to be married in such a mean way," said Susan Nunsuch, the wide woman, who preferred the original subject "'Tis worse than the poorest do And I shouldn't have cared about the man, though some may say he's good-looking"

"To give him his due he's a clever, learned fellow in his way—a'most as clever as Clym Yeobright used to be He was brought up to better things than keeping the Quiet Woman An engineer—that's what the man was, as we know, but he threw away his chance, and so 'a took a public-house to live His learning was no use to him at all"

"Very often the case," said Olly, the besom-maker "And yet how people do stive after it and get it! The class of folk that couldn't use to make a round O to save their bones from the pit can write their names now without a sputter of the pen, oftentimes without a single blot what do I say?—why, almost without a desk to lean their stomachs and elbows upon"

"True 'tis amazing what a polish the world have been brought to," said Humphrey

"Why, afore I went a soldier in the Bang up Locals (as we was called), in the year four," chimed in Grandfer Cattle brightly, "I didn't know no more what the world was like than the commonest man among ye And now, jown it all, I won't say what I brunt fit for, hey?"

"Couldst sign the book, no doubt," said Fairway, "if wast young enough to join hands with a woman again, like Wildev and Mis'ess Tamsin, which is more than Humph there could do, for he follows his father in learning Ah, Humph, well I can mind when I was married how I zid thy father's mark staring me in the face as I went to put down my name He and your mother were the couple married just afore we were, and there stood thy father's cross with arms stretched out like a great banging scarecrow What a terrible black cross that was—thy father's very likeness in en! To save my soul I couldn't help laughing when I zid en, though all the time I was as hot as dog days, what with the marrying, and what with the woman a hanging to me, and what with Jack Changley and a lot more chaps grinning at me through church window But the next moment a strawmote would have knocked me down, for I called to mind that if thy father and mother had had high words once, they'd been at it twenty times since they'd been man and wife, and I zid myself as the next poor stunpoll to get into the same mess Ah—well, what a day 'twas!"

"Wildev is older than Tamsin Yeobright by a good-few summers A pretty mad too she is A young woman with a home must 'be a fool to tear her smock for a man like that"

The speaker, a peat or turf-cutter, who had newly joined the group, carried across his shoulder the singular heart shaped spade of large dimensions used in that species of labor, and its well-whetted edge gleamed like a silver bow in the beams of the fire

"A hundred maidens would have had him if he'd asked 'em," said the wide woman

"Didst ever know a man, neighbor, that no woman at all would marry?" inquired Humphrey

"I never did," said the turf-cutter

"Nor I," said another

"Nor I," said Grandfer Cattle

"Well, now, I did once," said Timothy Fairway, adding more firmness to one of his legs "I did know of such a man But only once, mind" He gave his throat a thorough rake round, as if it were the duty of every person not to be mistaken through thickness of voice "Yes, I knew of such a man," he said

"And what ghastly gallicrow might the poor fellow have been like, Master Fairway?" asked the turf-cutter

"Well, 'a was neither a deaf man, nor a dumb man, nor a blind man What 'a was I don't say"

"Is he known in these parts?" said Olly Dowden

"Hardly," said Timothy, "but I name no name Come, keep the fire up there, youngsters"

"Whatever is Christian Cattle's teeth a-chattering for?" said a boy from amid the smoke and shades on the other side of the blaze "Be ye a cold, Christian?"

A thin, jibbering voice was heard to reply, "No, not at all"

"Come forward, Christian, and show yourself I didn't know you were here," said Fairway, with a humane look across towards that quarter

Thus requested, a faltering man, with reedy hair, no shoulders, and a great quantity of wrist and ankle beyond his clothes, advanced a step or two by his own will, and was pushed by the will of others half a dozen steps more He was Grandfer Cattle's youngest son

"What be ye quaking for, Christian?" said the turf-cutter kindly

"I'm the man"

"What man?"

"The man no woman will marry"

"The deuce you be!" said Timothy Fairway, enlarging his gaze to cover Christian's whole surface and a great deal more, Grandfer Cattle meanwhile staring as a hen stares at the duck she has hatched

"Yes, I be he, and it makes me afeard," said Christian "D'ye think 'twill hurt me? I shall always say I don't care, and swear to it, though I do care all the while"

"Well, be damned if this isn't the queerest start ever I know'd," said Mr Fairway "I didn't mean you at all There's another in the country, then! Why did ye reveal yer misfortune, Christian?"

"'Twas to be if 'twas, I suppose I can't help it, can I?" He turned upon them his painfully circular eyes, surrounded by concentric lines like targets

"No, that's true But 'tis a melancholy thing, and my blood ran cold when you spoke, for I felt there were two poor fellows where I had thought only one 'Tis a sad thing for ye, Christian How'st know the women won't hae thee?"

"I've asked 'em"

"Sure I should never have thought you had the face Well, and what did the last one say to ye? Nothing that can't be got over, perhaps, after all?"

"'Get out of my sight, you slack-twisted, slim looking, maphrotight fool, was the woman's words to me"

"Not encouraging, I own," said Fairway "'Get out of my sight, you slack-twisted, slim-looking fool,' is rather a hard way of saying No But even that might be overcome by time and patience, so as to let a few gray hairs show themselves in the hussy's head How old be you, Christian?"

"Thirty-one last tatie-digging, Mister Fairway"

"Not a boy—not a boy Still there's hope yet"

"That's my age by baptism, because that's put down in the great book of the Judgment—that they keep down in church vestry, but mother told me I was born some time afore I was christened"

"Ah!"

"But she couldn't tell when, to save her life, except that there was no moon"

"No moon that's bad Hey, neighbors, that's bad for him!"

"Yes, 'us bad," said Grandfer Cante, shaking his head

"Mother know'd 'twas no moon, for she asked another woman that had an almanac, as she did whenever a boy was born to her, because of the saying, 'No moon, no man,' which made her afeard every man child she had Do ye really think it serious, Mister Fairway, that there was no moon?"

"Yes, 'No moon, no man' 'Tis one of the truest sayings ever spit out The boy never comes to anything that's born at new moon A bad job for thee, Christian, that you should have showed your nose then of all days in the month"

"I suppose the moon was terrible full when you were born?" said Christian, with a look of hopeless admiration at Fairway

"Well, 'a was not new," Mr Fairway replied, with a disinterested gaze

"I'd sooner go without drink at Lammas-tide than be a man of no moon," continued Christian, in the same shattered recitative "'Tis said I be only the rames of a man, and no good for my race at all, and I suppose that's the cause o't"

"Ay," said Grandfer Cante, somewhat subdued in spirit, "and yet his mother cried for scores of hours when 'a was a boy, for fear he should out-grow hisself and go for a soldier"

"Well, there's many just as bad as he," said Fairway "Wethers must live their time as well as other sheep, poor soul"

"So, perhaps I shall rub on? Ought I to be afeard o' nights, Master Fairway?"

"You'll have to lie alone all your life, and 'tis not to married couples but to single sleepers that a ghost shows hisself when 'a do come One has been seen lately, too A very strange one"

"No—don't talk about it if 'tis agreeable of ye not to! 'Twill make my skin crawl when I think of it in bed alone But you will—ah, you will, I know, Timothy, and I shall dream all night o't! A very strange one? What sort of a spirit did ye mean when ye said, a very strange one, Timothy?—no, no—don't tell me"

"I don't half believe in spirits myself But I think it ghostly enough—what I was told 'Twas a little boy that zid it"

"What was it like?—no, don't—"

"A red one Yes, most ghosts be white, but this is as if it had been dipped in blood"

Christian drew a deep breath without letting it expand his body, and Humphrey said, "Where has it been seen?"

"Not exactly here, but in this same heth But 'tisn't a thing to talk about What do ye say," continued Fairway in brisker tones, and turning upon them as if the idea had not been Grandfer Cantle's—"what do you say to giving the new man and wife a bit of a song tonight afore we go to bed—being their wedding day? When folks are just married 'tis as well to look glad o't, since looking sorry won't unjoin 'em I am no drinker, as we know, but when the womenfolk and youngsters have gone home we can drop down across to the Quiet Woman, and strike up a ballet in front of the married folks' door 'Twill please the young wife, and that's what I should like to do, for many's the skinful I've had at her hands when she lived with her aunt at Blooms-End"

"Hey? And so we will!" said Grandfer Cantle, turning so briskly that his copper seals swung extravagantly "I'm as dry as a kex with biding up here in the wind, and I haven't seen the color of drink since nammet time today 'Tis said that the last brew at the Woman is very pretty drinking And, neighbors if we should be a little late in the finishing, why, tomorrow's Sunday, and we can sleep it off!"

"Grandfer Cantle! you take things very careless for an old man," said the wide woman

"I take things careless, I do—too careless to please the women! Kik! I'll sing the 'Jovial Crew,' or any other song, when a weak old man would cry his eyes out Jown it, I am up for anything

"The king look'd o ver his left shoul der,
And a grim look look ed hee,
Earl Mar shal, he said, but for my oath,
Or hang-ed thou shouldst bee'"

"Well, that's what we'll do," said Fairway "We'll give 'em a song, an' it please the Lord What's the good of Thomasin's cousin Clym a coming home after the deed's done? He should have come afore, if so be he wanted to stop it, and marry her himself"

"Perhaps he's coming to bide with his mother a little time, as she must feel lonely now the maid's gone"

"Now, 'tis very odd, but I never feel lonely—no, not at all," said Grandfer Cantle "I am as brave in the night-time as a' admiral!"

The bonfire was by this time beginning to sink low, for the fuel had not been of that substantial sort which can support a blaze long Most of the other fires within the wide horizon were also dwindling weak Attentive observation of their brightness, color, and length of existence would have revealed the quality of the material burnt, and through that, to some extent the natural produce of the district in which each bonfire was situate The clear, kingly effulgence which had characterized the majority expressed a heath and furze country like their own, which in one direction extended an unlimited number of miles the rapid flares and extinctions at other points of the compass showed the

lightest of fuel—straw, beanstalks, and the usual waste from arable land. The most enduring of all—steady unaltering eyes like planets—signified wood, such as hazel-branches, thorn-faggots, and stout billets. Fires of the last-mentioned materials were rare, and, though comparatively small in magnitude beside the transient blazes, now began to get the best of them by mere long continuance. The great ones had perished, but these remained. They occupied the remotest visible positions—sky-backed summits rising out of rich coppice and plantation districts to the north, where the soil was different, and heath foreign and strange.

Save one, and this was the nearest of any, the moon of the whole shining throng. It lay in a direction precisely opposite to that of the little window in the vale below. Its nearness was such that, notwithstanding its actual smallness, its glow infinitely transcended theirs.

This quiet eye had attracted attention from time to time, and when their own fire had become sunken and dim it attracted more, some even of the wood fires more recently lighted had reached their decline, but no change was perceptible here.

"To be sure, how near that fire is!" said Fairway. "Seemingly, I can see a fellow of some sort walking round it. Little and good must be said of that fire, surely."

"I can throw a stone there," said the boy.

"And so can I!" said Grandfer Cattle.

"No, no, you can't, my sonnies. That fire is not much less than a mile and a half off, for all that 'a seems so near."

"'Tis in the heath, but not furze," said the turf-cutter.

"'Tis cleft-wood, that's what 'tis," said Timothy Fairway. "Nothing would burn like that except clean timber. And 'tis on the knap afore the old captain's house at Mistover. Such a queer mortal as that man is! To have a little fire inside your own bank and ditch, that nobody else may enjoy it or come anigh it! And what a zany an old chap must be, to light a bonfire when there's no youngsters to please."

"Cap'n Vye has been for a long walk today, and is quite tired out," said Grandfer Cattle, "so 'tisn't likely to be he."

"And he would hardly afford good fuel like that," said the wide woman.

"Then it must be his grand-daughter," said Fairway. "Not that a body of her age can want a fire much."

"She is very strange in her ways, living up there by herself, and such things please her," said Susan.

"She's a well-favored maid enough," said Humphrey the furze-cutter, "especially when she's got one of her dandy gowns on."

"That's true," said Fairway. "Well, let her bonfire burn an't will. Ours is well-nigh out by the look o't."

"How dark 'tis now the fire's gone down!" said Christian Cattle, looking behind him with his hare eyes. "Don't ye think we'd better get home-along, neighbors? The heth isn't haunted, I know, but we'd better get home. Ah, what was that?"

"Only the wind," said the turf-cutter.

"I don't think Fifth-of-Novembers ought to be kept up by night except in towns. It should be by day in outstep, ill-accounted places like this!"

"Nonsense, Christian! It up your spirits like a man! Susy, dear, you and I will have a jig—hey, my honey?—before 'tis quite too dark to see how well-favored you be still, though so many summers have passed since your husband, a son of a witch, snapped you up from me."

This was addressed to Susan Nunsuch, and the next circumstance of which the beholders were conscious was a vision of the matron's broad form whisking off towards the space whereon the fire had been kindled. She was lifted bodily by Mr. Fairway's arm, which had been flung round her waist before she had become aware of his intention. The site of the fire was now merely a circle of ashes flecked with red embers and sparks, the furze having burnt completely away. Once within the circle he whirled her round and round in a dance. She was a woman noisily constructed, in addition to her enclosing framework of whalebone and lath, she wore pattens summer and winter, in wet weather and in dry, to preserve her boots from wear, and when Fairway began to jump about with her, the clicking of the pattens, the creaking of the stays, and her screams of surprise, formed a very audible concert.

"I'll crack thy numskull for thee, you mandy chap," said Mrs. Nunsuch, as she helplessly danced round with him, her feet playing like drumsticks among the sparks. "My ankles were all in a fever afore, from walking through that prickly furze, and now you must make 'em worse with these vlankers!"

The vagary of Timothy Fairway was infectious. The turf-cutter seized old Olly Dowden, and, somewhat more gently, pousetted with her likewise. The young men were not slow to imitate the example of their elders, and seized the maids, Grandfer Cattle and his stick jugged in the form of a three-legged object among the rest, and in half a minute all that could be seen on Rainbarrow was a whirling of dark shapes amid a boiling confusion of sparks, which leapt around the dancers as high as their waists. The chief noises were women's shrill cries, men's laughter, Susan's stays and pattens, Olly Dowden's "heu heu-heu!" and the strumming of the wind upon the furze-bushes, which formed a kind of tune to the demoniac measure they trod. Christian alone stood aloof, uneasily rocking himself as he murmured, "They ought not to do it—how the vlankers do fly! 'tis tempting the Wicked one, 'tis."

"What was that?" said one of the lads, stopping.

"Ah—where?" said Christian, hastily closing up to the rest.

The dancers all lessened their speed.

"'Twas behind you, Christian, that I heard it—down there."

"Yes—'tis behind me!" Christian said. "Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, bless the bed that I lie on, four angels guard—"

"Hold your tongue. What is it?" said Fairway.

"Hoi-i-i-i!" cried a voice from the darkness.

"Halloo-o-o-o!" said Fairway.

"Is there any cart-track up across here to Mis'sess Yeobright's, of Blooms-End?" came to them in the same voice, as a long, slim, indistinct figure approached the barrow.

"Ought we not to run home as hard as we can, neighbors, as 'tis getting

late?" said Christian "Not run away from one another, you know, run close together, I mean"

"Scrape up a few stray locks of furze, and make a blaze, so that we can see who the man is," said Fairway

When the flame arose it revealed a young man in tight raiment, and red from top to toe "Is there a track across here to Mis'ess Yeobright's house?" he repeated

"Ay—keep along the path down there"

"I mean a way two horses and a van can travel over"

"Well, yes, you can get up the vale below here with time The track is rough, but if you've got a light your horses may pick along wi' care Have ye brought your cart far up, neighbor reddleman?"

"I've left it in the bottom, about half a mile back I stepped on in front to make sure of the way, as 'tis nighttime, and I han't been here for so long"

"Oh, well, you can get up," said Fairway "What a turn it did give me when I zid him!" he added to the whole group, the reddleman included "Lord's sake, I thought, whatever fiery mommet is this come to trouble us? No slight to your looks, reddleman, for ye bain't bad looking in the groundwork, though the finish is queer My merning is just to say how curious I felt I half thought 'twas the devil or the red ghost the boy told of"

"It gied me a turn likewise," said Susan Nunsuch, "for I had a dream last night of a death's head"

"Don't ye talk o't no more," said Christian "If he had a handkerchief over his head he'd look for all the world like the Devil in the picture of the Temptation"

"Well, thank you for telling me," said the young reddleman, smiling faintly "And good night t'ye all"

He withdrew from their sight down the barrow

"I fancy I've seen that young man's face before," said Humphrey "But where, or how, or what his name is, I don't know"

The reddleman had not been gone more than a few minutes when another person approached the partially revived bonfire It proved to be a well-known and respected widow of the neighborhood, of a standing which can only be expressed by the word genteel Her face, encompassed by the blackness of the receding heath, showed whitely, and without half-lights, like a cameo

She was a woman of middle-age, with well-formed features of the type usually found where perspicacity is the chief quality enthroned within At moments she seemed to be regarding issues from a Nebo denied to others around She had something of an estranged mien the solitude exhaled from the heath was concentrated in this face that had risen from it The air with which she looked at the heathmen betokened a certain unconcern at their presence, or at what might be their opinions of her for walking in that lonely spot at such an hour, thus indirectly implying that in some respect or other they were not up to her level The explanation lay in the fact that though her husband had been a small farmer she herself was a curate's daughter, who had once dreamt of doing better things

Persons with any weight of character carry, like planets, their atmospheres along with them in their orbits, and the matron who entered now upon the scene could, and usually did, bring her own tone into a company. Her normal manner among the heathfolk had that reticence which results from the consciousness of superior communicative power. But the effect of coming into society and light after lonely wandering in darkness is a sociability in the comer above its usual pitch, expressed in the features even more than in the words.

"Why, 'tis Mis'ess Yeobright," said Fairway. "Mis'ess Yeobright, not ten minutes ago a man was here asking for you—a reddleman."

"What did he want?" said she.

"He didn't tell us."

"Something to sell, I suppose, what it can be I am at a loss to understand."

"I am glad to hear that your son Mr. Clym is coming home at Christmas, ma'am," said Sam, the turf-cutter. "What a dog he used to be for bonfires!"

"Yes, I believe he is coming," she said.

"He must be a fine fellow by this time," said Fairway.

"He is a man now," she replied quietly.

"'Tis very lonesome for 'ee in the heth tonight, mis'ess," said Christian, coming from the seclusion he had hitherto maintained. "Mind you don't get lost. Egdon Heath is a bad place to get lost in, and the winds do huffle queerer tonight than ever I heard 'em afore. Them that know Egdon best have been pixy-led here at times."

"Is that you, Christian?" said Mrs. Yeobright. "What made you hide away from me?"

"'Twas that I didn't know you in this light, mis'ess, and being a man of the mournfulest make, I was scared a little, that's all. Oftentimes if you could see how terrible down I get in my mind, 'twould make 'ee quite nervous for fear I should die by my hand."

"You don't take after your father," said Mrs. Yeobright, looking towards the fire, where Grandfer Cantle, with some want of originality, was dancing by himself among the sparks, as the others had done before.

"Now, Grandfer," said Timothy Fairway, "we are ashamed of ye. A reverent old patriarch man as you be—seventy if a day—to go hornpiping like that by yourself!"

"A harrowing old man, Mis'ess Yeobright," said Christian despondingly. "I wouldn't live with him a week, so playward as he is, if I could get away."

"'Twould be more seemly in ye to stand still and welcome Mis'ess Yeobright, and you the venerablest here, Grandfer Cantle," said the besom-woman.

"Faith, and so it would," said the reveler, checking himself repentantly. "I've such a bad memory, Mis'ess Yeobright, that I forget how I'm looked up to by the rest of 'em. My spirits must be wonderful good, you'll say? But not always. 'Tis a weight upon a man to be looked up to as commander, and I often feel it."

"I am sorry to stop the talk," said Mrs. Yeobright. "But I must be leaving you now. I am crossing the heath towards my niece's new home, who is return-

ing tonight with her husband, and hearing Olly's voice I came up here to ask her if she would soon be going home, I should like her to walk with me, as her way is mine "

"Ay, sure, ma'am, I'm just thinking of moving," said Olly

"Why, you'll be safe to meet the reddleman that I told ye of," said Fairway "He's only gone back to get his van We heard that your niece and her husband were coming straight home as soon as they were married, and we are going down there shortly, to give 'em a song o' welcome"

"Thank you indeed," said Mrs Yeobright

"But we shall take a shorter cut through the furze than you can go with long clothes, so we won't trouble you to wait "

"Very well—are you ready, Olly?"

"Yes, ma'am And there's a light shining from your niece's window, see It will help to keep us in the path "

She indicated the faint light at the bottom of the valley which Fairway had pointed out, and the two women descended the barrow

IV THE HALT ON THE TURNPIKE ROAD

Down, downward they went, and yet further down—their descent at each step seeming to outmeasure their advance Their skirts were scratched noisily by the furze, their shoulders brushed by the ferns, which, though dead and dry, stood erect as when alive, no sufficient winter weather having as yet arrived to beat them down Their Tartarean situation might by some have been called an imprudent one for two unattended women But these shaggy recesses were at all seasons a familiar surrounding to Olly and Mrs Yeobright, and the addition of darkness lends no frightfulness to the face of a friend

"And so Tamsin has married him at last," said Olly, when the incline had become so much less steep that their footsteps no longer required undivided attention

Mrs Yeobright answered slowly, "Yes at last "

"How you will miss her—living with ye as a daughter, as she always have "

"I do miss her "

Olly, though without the tact to perceive when remarks were untimely, was saved by her very simplicity from rendering them offensive Questions that would have been resented in others she could ask with impunity This accounted for Mrs Yeobright's acquiescence in the revival of an evidently sore subject

"I was quite strook to hear you'd agreed to it, ma'am, that I was," continued the besom-maker

"You were not more struck by it than I should have been last year this time, Olly There are a good many sides to that wedding I could not tell you all of them, even if I tried "

"I felt myself that he was hardly solid going enough to mate with your family Keeping an inn—what is it? But 'a's clever, that's true, and they say

he was an engineering gentleman once, but has come down by being too outwardly given "

"I saw that, upon the whole, it would be better she should marry where she wished "

"Poor little thing, her feelings got the better of her, no doubt 'Tis nature Well, they may call him what they will—he've several acres of heth ground broke up here, besides the public-house, and the heth-croppers, and his manners be quite like a gentleman's And what's done cannot be undone "

"It cannot," said Mrs Yeobright "See, here's the wagon-track at last Now we shall get along better "

The wedding subject was no further dwelt upon, and soon a faint diverging path was reached, where they parted company, Olly first begging her companion to remind Mr Wildeve that he had not sent her sick husband the bottle of wine promised on the occasion of his marriage The besom-maker turned to the left towards her own house, behind a spur of the hill, and Mrs Yeobright followed the straight track, which further on joined the highway by the Quiet Woman Inn, whither she supposed her niece to have returned with Wildeve from their wedding at Anglebury that day

She first reached Wildeve's Patch, as it was called, a plot of land redeemed from the heath, and after long and laborious years brought into cultivation The man who had discovered that it could be tilled died of the labor the man who succeeded him in possession ruined himself in fertilizing it Wildeve came like Amerigo Vespucci, and received the honors due to those who had gone before

When Mrs Yeobright had drawn near to the inn, and was about to enter, she saw a horse and vehicle some two hundred yards beyond it, coming towards her, a man walking alongside with a lantern in his hand It was soon evident that this was the reddleman who had inquired for her Instead of entering the inn at once, she walked by it and towards the van

The conveyance came close, and the man was about to pass her with little notice, when she turned to him and said, "I think you have been inquiring for me? I am Mrs Yeobright of Blooms-End "

The reddleman started, and held up his finger He stopped the horses, and beckoned to her to withdraw with him a few yards aside, which she did, wondering

"You don't know me, ma'am, I suppose?" he said

"I do not," said she "Why, yes, I do! You are young Venn—your father was a dairyman somewhere here?"

"Yes, and I knew your niece, Miss Tamsin, a little. I have something bad to tell you "

"About her—no? She has just come home, I believe, with her husband They arranged to return this afternoon—to the inn beyond here "

"She's not there "

"How do you know?"

"Because she's here She's in my van," he added slowly

"What new trouble has come?" murmured Mrs Yeobright, putting her hand over her eyes

"I can't explain much, ma'am All I know is that, as I was going along the road this morning, about a mile out of Anglebury, I heard something trotting after me like a doe, and looking round there she was, white as death itself 'Oh, Diggory Venn!' she said, 'I thought 'twas you will you help me?' I am in trouble,"

"How did she know your Christian name?" said Mrs Yeobright doubtfully

"I had met her as a lad before I went away in this trade She asked then if she might ride, and then down she fell in a faint I picked her up and put her in, and there she has been ever since She has cried a good deal, but she has hardly spoke, all she has told me being that she was to have been married this morning I tried to get her to eat something, but she couldn't, and at last she fell asleep"

"Let me see her at once," said Mrs Yeobright, hastening towards the van

The reddleman followed with the lantern, and, stepping up first, assisted Mrs Yeobright to mount beside him On the door being opened she perceived at the end of the van an extemporized couch, around which was hung apparently all the drapery that the reddleman possessed, to keep the occupant of the little couch from contact with the red materials of his trade A young girl lay thereon, covered with a cloak She was asleep, and the light of the lantern fell upon her features

A fair, sweet, and honest country face was revealed, reposing in a nest of wavy chestnut hair It was between pretty and beautiful Though her eyes were closed, one could easily imagine the light necessarily shining in them as the culmination of the luminous workmanship around The groundwork of the face was hopefulness, but over it now lay like a foreign substance a film of anxiety and grief The grief had been there so shortly as to have abstracted nothing of the bloom which had as yet but given a dignity to what it might eventually undermine The scarlet of her lips had not had time to abate, and just now it appeared still more intense by the absence of the neighboring and more transient color of her cheek The lips frequently parted, with a murmur of words She seemed to belong rightly to a madrigal—to require viewing through rhyme and harmony

One thing at least was obvious she was not made to be looked at thus The reddleman had appeared conscious of as much, and, while Mrs Yeobright looked in upon her, he cast his eyes aside with a delicacy which well became him The sleeper apparently thought so too, for the next moment she opened her eyes

The lips then parted with something of anticipation, something more of doubt, and her several thoughts and fractions of thoughts, as signaled by the changes on her face, were exhibited by the light to the utmost nicety An ingenuous, transparent life was disclosed, as if the flow of her existence could be seen passing within her She understood the scene in a moment

"O yes, it is I, aunt," she cried "I know how frightened you are, and how you cannot believe it, but all the same, it is I who have come home like this!"

"Tamsin, Tamsin!" said Mrs Yeobright stooping over the young woman and kissing her "O my dear girl!"

Thomasin was now on the verge of a sob, but by an unexpected self command she uttered no sound. With a gentle panting breath she sat upright.

"I did not expect to see you in this state, any more than you me," she went on quickly. "Where am I, aunt?"

"Nearly home, my dear. In Egdon Bottom. What dreadful thing is it?"

"I'll tell you in a moment. So near, are we? Then I will get out and walk. I want to go home by the path."

"But this kind man who has done so much will, I am sure, take you right on to my house?" said the aunt, turning to the reddleman, who had with drawn from the front of the van on the awakening of the girl, and stood in the road.

"Why should you think it necessary to ask me? I will, of course," said he.

"He is indeed kind," murmured Thomasin. "I was once acquainted with him, aunt, and when I saw him today I thought I should prefer his van to any conveyance of a stranger. But I'll walk now. Reddleman, stop the horses, please."

The man regarded her with tender reluctance, but stopped them.

Aunt and niece then descended from the van, Mrs Yeobright saying to its owner, "I quite recognize you now. What made you change from the nice business your father left you?"

"Well, I did," he said, and looked at Thomasin, who blushed a little. "Then you'll not be wanting me any more tonight, ma'am?"

Mrs Yeobright glanced around at the dark sky, at the hills, at the perishing bonfires, and at the lighted window of the inn they had neared. "I think not," she said, "since Thomasin wishes to walk. We can soon run up the path and reach home—we know it well."

And after a few further words they parted, the reddleman moving onwards with his van, and the two women remaining standing in the road. As soon as the vehicle and its driver had withdrawn so far as to be beyond all possible reach of her voice, Mrs Yeobright turned to her niece.

"Now, Thomasin," she said sternly, "what's the meaning of this disgraceful performance?"

V PERPLEXITY AMONG HONEST PEOPLE

THOMASIN looked as if quite overcome by her aunt's change of manner. "It means just what it seems to mean. I am—not married," she replied faintly. "Excuse me—for humiliating you, aunt, by this mishap. I am sorry for it. But I cannot help it."

"Me? Think of yourself first."

"It was nobody's fault. When we got there the parson wouldn't marry us because of some trifling irregularity in the license."

"What irregularity?"

"I don't know. Mr Wildeve can explain. I did not think when I went away this morning that I should come back like this." It being dark, Thomasin

allowed her emotion to escape her by the silent way of tears, which could roll down her cheeks unseen

"I could almost say that it serves you right—if I did not feel that you don't deserve it," continued Mrs Yeobright, who, possessing two distinct moods in close contiguity, a gentle mood and an angry, flew from one to the other without the least warning "Remember, Thomasin, this business was none of my seeking, from the very first, when you began to feel foolish about that man, I warned you he would not make you happy I felt it so strongly that I did what I would never have believed myself capable of doing—stood up in the church, and made myself the public talk for weeks But having once consented, I don't submit to these fancies without good reason Marry him you must after this"

"Do you think I wish to do otherwise for one moment?" said Thomasin, with a heavy sigh "I know how wrong it was of me to love him, but don't pain me by talking like that, aunt! You would not have had me stay there with him, would you?—and your house is the only home I have to return to. He says we can be married in a day or two"

"I wish he had never seen you"

"Very well, then I will be the miserablest woman in the world, and not let him see me again No, I won't have him!"

"It is too late to speak so Come with me I am going to the inn to see if he has returned Of course I shall get to the bottom of this story at once Mr Wildeve must not suppose he can play tricks upon me, or any belonging to me"

"It was not that The license was wrong, and he couldn't get another the same day He will tell you in a moment how it was, if he comes"

"Why didn't he bring you back?"

"That was me!" again sobbed Thomasin "When I found we could not be married I didn't like to come back with him, and I was very ill Then I saw Diggory Venn, and was glad to get him to take me home I cannot explain it any better, and you must be angry with me if you will"

"I shall see about that," said Mrs Yeobright, and they turned towards the inn, known in the neighborhood as the Quiet Woman, the sign of which represented the figure of a matron carrying her head under her arm The front of the house was towards the heath and Rainbarrow, whose dark shape seemed to threaten it from the sky Upon the door was a neglected brass plate, bearing the unexpected inscription, "Mr Wildeve, Engineer"—a useless yet cherished relic from the time when he had been started in that profession in an office at Budmouth by those who had hoped much from him, and had been disappointed The garden was at the back, and behind this ran a still, deep stream, forming the margin of the heath in this direction, meadow-land appearing beyond the stream

But the thick obscurity permitted only sky-lines to be visible of any scene at present The water at the back of the house could be heard, idly spinning whirlpools in its creep between the rows of dry feather-headed reeds which formed a stockade along each bank Their presence was denoted by sounds as of a

congregation praying humbly, produced by their rubbing against each other in the slow wind

The window, whence the candlelight had shone up the vale to the eyes of the bonfire group, was uncurtained, but the sill lay too high for a pedestrian on the outside to look over it into the room. A vast shadow, in which could be dimly traced portions of a masculine contour, blotted half the ceiling

"He seems to be at home," said Mrs Yeobright

"Must I come in, too, aunt?" asked Thomasin faintly "I suppose not, it would be wrong"

"You must come, certainly—to confront him, so that he may make no false representations to me. We shall not be five minutes in the house, and then we'll walk home"

Entering the open passage, she tapped at the door of the private parlor, unfastened it, and looked in

The back and shoulders of a man came between Mrs Yeobright's eyes and the fire. Wildevē, whose form it was, immediately turned, arose, and advanced to meet his visitors

He was quite a young man, and of the two properties, form and motion, the latter first attracted the eye in him. The grace of his movement was singular; it was the pantomimic expression of a lady-killing career. Next came into notice the more material qualities, among which was a profuse crop of hair impending over the top of his face, lending to his forehead the high-cornered outline of an early Gothic shield, and a neck which was smooth and round as a cylinder. The lower half of his figure was of light build. Altogether he was one in whom no man would have seen anything to admire, and in whom no woman would have seen anything to dislike

He discerned the young girl's form in the passage, and said, "Thomasin, then, has reached home. How could you leave me in that way, darling?" And turning to Mrs Yeobright "It was useless to argue with her. She would go, and go alone"

"But what's the meaning of it all?" demanded Mrs Yeobright haughtily

"Take a seat," said Wildevē, placing chairs for the two women. "Well, it was a very stupid mistake, but such mistakes will happen. The license was useless at Anglebury. It was made out for Budmouth, but as I didn't read it I wasn't aware of that"

"But you had been staying at Anglebury?"

"No. I had been at Budmouth—till two days ago—and that was where I had intended to take her, but when I came to fetch her we decided upon Anglebury, forgetting that a new license would be necessary. There was not time to get to Budmouth afterwards"

"I think you are very much to blame," said Mrs Yeobright

"It was quite my fault we chose Anglebury," Thomasin pleaded "I proposed it because I was not known there"

"I know so well that I am to blame that you need not remind me of it," replied Wildevē shortly

"Such things don't happen for nothing," said the aunt "It is a great slight to me and my family, and when it gets known there will be a very unpleasant

time for us How can she look her friends in the face tomorrow? It is a very great injury, and one I cannot easily forgive It may even reflect on her character "

"Nonsense," said Wildeve

Thomasin's large eyes had flown from the face of one to the face of the other during this discussion, and she now said anxiously, "Will you allow me, aunt, to talk it over alone with Damon for five minutes? Will you, Damon?"

"Certainly, dear," said Wildeve, "if your aunt will excuse us" He led her into an adjoining room, leaving Mrs Yeobright by the fire

As soon as they were alone, and the door closed, Thomasin said, turning up her pale, tearful face to him, "It is killing me, this, Damon! I did not mean to part from you in anger at Anglebury this morning, but I was frightened, and hardly knew what I said I've not let aunt know how much I have suffered today, and it is so hard to command my face and voice, and to smile as if it were a slight thing to me, but I try to do so, that she may not be still more indignant with you I know you could not help it, dear, whatever aunt may think "

"She is very unpleasant "

"Yes," Thomasin murmured, "and I suppose I seem so now Damon, what do you mean to do about me?"

"Do about you?"

"Yes Those who don't like you whisper things which at moments make me doubt you We mean to marry, I suppose, don't we?"

"Of course we do We have only to go to Budmouth on Monday, and we may marry at once "

"Then do let us go!—O Damon, what you make me say!" She hid her face in her handkerchief "Here am I asking you to marry me, when by rights you ought to be on your knees imploring me, your cruel mistress, not to refuse you, and saying it would break your heart if I did I used to think it would be pretty and sweet like that, but how different!"

"Yes, real life is never at all like that "

"But I don't care personally if it never takes place," she added with a little dignity, "no, I can live without you It is aunt I think of She is so proud, and thinks so much of her family respectability, that she will be cut down with mortification if this story should get abroad before—it is done My cousin Clym, too, will be much wounded "

"Then he will be very unreasonable In fact, you are all rather unreasonable "

Thomasin colored a little, and not with love But whatever the momentary feeling which caused that flush in her, it went as it came, and she humbly said, "I never mean to be, if I can help it I merely feel that you have my aunt to some extent in your power at last "

"As a matter of justice it is almost due to me," said Wildeve "Think what I have gone through to win her consent, the insult that it is to any man to have the banns forbidden the double insult to a man unlucky enough to be cursed with sensitiveness, and blue demons, and Heaven knows what, as I am I can never forget those banns A harsher man would rejoice now in the power I have of turning upon your aunt by going no further in the business "

She looked wistfully at him with her sorrowful eyes as he said those words, and her aspect showed that more than one person in the room could deplore the possession of sensitiveness. Seeing that she was really suffering he seemed disturbed and added, "This is merely a reflection, you know I have not the least intention to refuse to complete the marriage, Tamsie mine—I could not bear it."

"You could not, I know!" said the fair girl, brightening. "You, who cannot bear the sight of pain in even an insect, or any disagreeable sound, or unpleasant smell even, will not long cause pain to me and mine."

"I will not, if I can help it."

"Your hand upon it, Damon."

He carelessly gave her his hand.

"Ah, by my crown, what's that?" he said suddenly.

There fell upon their ears the sound of numerous voices singing in front of the house. Among these, two made themselves prominent by their peculiarity: one was a very strong bass, the other a wheezy thin piping. Thomasin recognized them as belonging to Timothy Fairway and Grandfer Cattle respectively.

"What does it mean—it is not skimmity-riding, I hope?" she said, with a frightened gaze at Wildeve.

"Of course not, no, it is that the heathfolk have come to sing to us a welcome. This is intolerable!" He began pacing about, the men outside singing cheerily—

"He told her that she was the joy of his life,
And if she'd con-sent he would make her his wife,
She could not refuse him, to church so they went,
Young Will was forgot, and young Sue was con tent,
And then was she kiss'd and set down on his knee,
No man in the world was so lov-ing as he!"

Mrs Yeobright burst in from the outer room. "Thomasin, Thomasin!" she said, looking indignantly at Wildeve, "here's a pretty exposure! Let us escape at once. Come!"

It was, however, too late to get away by the passage. A rugged knocking had begun upon the door of the front room. Wildeve, who had gone to the window, came back.

"Stop!" he said imperiously, putting his hand upon Mrs Yeobright's arm. "We are regularly besieged. There are fifty of them out there if there's one. You stay in this room with Thomasin, I'll go out and face them. You must stay now, for my sake, till they are gone, so that it may seem as if all was right. Come, Tamsie dear, don't go making a scene—we must marry after this, that you can see as well as I. Sit still, that's all—and don't speak much. I'll manage them. Blundering fools!"

He pressed the agitated girl into a seat, returned to the outer room and opened the door. Immediately outside, in the passage, appeared Grandfer Cattle singing in concert with those still standing in front of the house. He came into the room and nodded abstractedly to Wildeve, his lips still parted, and his features excruciatingly strained in the emission of the chorus. This being ended,

he said heartily, "Here's welcome to the new-made couple, and God bless 'em!"

"Thank you," said Wildeve, with dry resentment, his face as gloomy as a thunderstorm

At the Grandfer's heels now came the rest of the group, which included Fairway, Christian, Sam the turf cutter, Humphrey, and a dozen others. All smiled upon Wildeve, and upon his tables and chairs likewise, from a general sense of friendliness towards the articles as well as towards their owner.

"We be not here afore Mrs. Yeobright after all," said Fairway, recognizing the matron's bonnet through the glass partition which divided the public apartment they had entered from the room where the women sat. "We struck down across, d'ye see, Mr. Wildeve, and she went round by the path."

"And I see the young bride's little head!" said Grandfer, peeping in the same direction, and discerning Thomasin, who was waiting beside her aunt in a miserable and awkward way. "Not quite settled yet—well, well, there's plenty of time."

Wildeve made no reply, and probably feeling that the sooner he treated them the sooner they would go, he produced a stone jar, which threw a warm halo over matters at once.

"That's a drop of the right sort, I can see," said Grandfer Cante, with the air of a man too well-mannered to show any hurry to taste it.

"Yes," said Wildeve, "'tis some old mead. I hope you will like it."

"Oh ay," replied the guests, in the hearty tones natural when the words demanded by politeness coincide with those of deepest feeling. "There isn't a prettier drink under the sun."

"I'll take my oath there isn't," added Grandfer Cante. "All that can be said against mead is that 'tis rather heady, and apt to lie about a man a good while. But tomorrow's Sunday, thank God!"

"I feel'd for all the world like some bold soldier after I had had some once," said Christian.

"You shall feel so again," said Wildeve, with condescension. "Cups or glasses, gentlemen?"

"Well, if you don't mind, we'll have the beaker, and pass 'en round, 'tis better than heling it out in dribbles."

"Jown the slippery glasses," said Grandfer Cante. "What's the good of a thing that you can't put down in the ashes to warm, hey, neighbors, that's what I ask?"

"Right, Grandfer," said Sam, and the mead then circulated.

"Well," said Timothy Fairway, feeling demands upon his praise in some form or other, "'tis a worthy thing to be married, Mr. Wildeve, and the woman you've got is a dimant, so says I. Yes," he continued, to Grandfer Cante, raising his voice so as to be heard through the partition, "her father (inclining his head towards the inner room) was as good a feller as ever lived. He always had his great indignation ready against anything underhand."

"Is that very dangerous?" said Christian.

"And there were few in these parts that were upsides with him," said Sam. "Whenever a club walked he'd play the clarinet in the band that marched before 'em as if he'd never touched anything but a clarinet all his life. And then,

when they got to church-door he'd throw down the clarinet, mount the gallery, snatch up the bass-viol, and rozzum away as if he'd never played anything but a bass-viol. Folk would say—folk that knowed what a true stave was—"Surely, surely that's never the same man that I zid handling the clarinet so masterly by now!"

"I can mind it," said the furze-cutter "'Twas a wonderful thing that one body could hold it all and never mix the fingering."

"There was Kingsbere church likewise," Fairway recommenced, as one opening a new vein of the same mine of interest.

Wildeve breathed the breath of one intolerably bored, and glanced through the partition at the prisoners.

"He used to walk over there of a Sunday afternoon to visit his old acquaintance Andrew Brown, the first clarinet there, a good man enough, but rather screechy in his music, if you can mind?"

"'A was."

"And neighbor Yeobright would take Andrey's place for some part of the service, to let Andrey have a bit of a nap, as any friend would naturally do."

"As any friend would," said Grandfer Cantle, the other listeners expressing the same accord by the shorter way of nodding their heads.

"No sooner was Andrey asleep and the first whiff of neighbor Yeobright's wind had got inside Andrey's clarinet than every one in church feel'd in a moment there was a great soul among 'em. All heads would turn, and they'd say, 'Ah, I thought 'twas he!' One Sunday I can well mind—a bass-viol day that time, and Yeobright had brought his own. 'Twas the Hundred-and-thirty-third to 'Lydia', and when they'd come to, 'Ran down his beard and o'er his robes its costly moisture shed,' neighbor Yeobright, who had just warmed to his work, drove his bow into them strings that glorious grand that he e'en a'most saw'd the bass-viol into two pieces. Every winder in church rattled as if 'twere a thunderstorm. Old Pa'son Gibbons lifted his hands in his great holy surplice as natural as if he'd been in common clothes, and seemed to say to hisself, 'Oh for such a man in our parish!' But not a soul in Kingsbere could hold a candle to Yeobright."

"Was it quite safe when the winder shook?" Christian inquired.

He received no answer, all for the moment sitting rapt in admiration of the performance described. As with Farinelli's singing before the princesses, Sheridan's renowned Begum Speech, and other such examples, the fortunate condition of its being for ever lost to the world invested the deceased Mr. Yeobright's *tour de force* on that memorable afternoon with a cumulative glory which comparative criticism, had that been possible, might considerably have shorn down.

"He was the last you'd have expected to drop off in the prime of life," said Humphrey.

"Ah, well, he was looking for the earth some months afore he went. At that time women used to run for smocks and gown-pieces at Greenhill Fair, and my wife that is now, being a long-legged slithering maid, hardly husband-high, went with the rest of the maidens, for 'a was a good runner afore she got so heavy. When she came home I said—we were then just beginning to walk together—"What have ye got, my honey?" 'I've won—well, I've won—a gown

piece,' says she, her colors coming up in a moment 'Tis a smock for a crown, I thought, and so it turned out Ay, when I think what she'll say to me now without a mossel of red in her face, it do seem strange that 'a wouldn't say such a little thing then However, then she went on, and that's what made me bring up the story, 'Well, whatever clothes I've won, white or figured, for eyes to see or for eyes not to see' ('a could do a pretty stroke of modesty in those days), 'I'd sooner have lost it than have seen what I have Poor Mr Yeobright was took bad directly he reached the fair ground, and was forced to go home again' That was the last time he ever went out of the parish "

"'A faltered on from one day to another, and then we heard he was gone "

"D'ye think he had great pain when 'a died?" said Christian

"O no quite different Nor any pain of mind He was lucky enough to be God A'mighty's own man "

"And other folk—d'ye think 'twill be much pain to 'em, Master Fairway?"

"That depends on whether they be afeard "

"I bain't afeard at all, I thank God!" said Christian strenuously "I'm glad I bain't, for then 'twon't pain me I don't think I be afeard—or if I be I can't help it, and I don't deserve to suffer I wish I was not afeard at all!"

There was a solemn silence, and looking from the window, which was unshuttered and unblinded, Timothy said, "Well, what a fess little bonfire that one is, out by Cap'n Vye's! 'Tis burning just the same now as ever, upon my life "

All glances went through the window, and nobody noticed that Wildeve disguised a brief, tell-tale look Far away up the somber valley of heath, and to the right of Rainbarrow, could indeed be seen the light, small, but steady and persistent as before

"It was lighted before ours was," Fairway continued, "and yet every one in the country round is out afore 'n "

"Perhaps there's meaning in it!" murmured Christian

"How meaning?" said Wildeve sharply

Christian was too scattered to reply, and Timothy helped him

"He means, sir, that the lonesome dark-eyed creature up there that some say is a witch—ever I should call a fine young woman such a name—is always up to some odd conceit or other, and so perhaps 'tis she "

"I'd be very glad to ask her in wedlock, if she'd hae me, and take the risk of her wild dark eyes ill-wishing me," said Grandfer Cantle stanchly

"Don't ye say it, father!" implored Christian

"Well, be dazed if he who do marry the maid won't hae an uncommon picture for his best parlor," said Fairway in a liquid tone, placing down the cup of mead at the end of a good pull

"And a partner as deep as the North Star," said Sam, taking up the cup and finishing the little that remained

"Well, really, now I think we must be moving," said Humphrey, observing the emptiness of the vessel

"But we'll gie 'em another song?" said Grandfer Cantle "I'm as full of notes as a bird!"

"Thank you, Grandfer," said Wildeve "But we will not trouble you now Some other day must do for that—when I have a party"

"Be jown'd if I don't learn ten new songs for't, or I won't learn a line!" said Grandfer Cattle "And you may be sure I won't disappoint ye by biding away, Mr Wildeve"

"I quite believe you," said that gentleman

All then took their leave, wishing their entertainer long life and happiness as a married man, with recapitulations which occupied some time Wildeve attended them to the door, beyond which the deep dyed upward stretch of heath stood awaiting them, an amplitude of darkness reigning from their feet almost to the zenith, where a definite form first became visible in the lowering forehead of Rainbarrow Diving into the dense obscurity in a line headed by Sam the turf-cutter, they pursued their trackless way home

When the scratching of the furze against their leggings had faded upon the ear, Wildeve returned to the room where he had left Thomasin and her aunt The women were gone

They could only have left the house in one way, by the back window, and this was open

Wildeve laughed to himself, remained a moment thinking, and idly returned to the front room Here his glance fell upon a bottle of wine which stood on the mantelpiece "Ah—old Dowden!" he murmured, and going to the kitchen door shouted, "Is anybody here who can take something to old Dowden?"

There was no reply The room was empty, the lad who acted as his factotum having gone to bed Wildeve came back, put on his hat, took the bottle, and left the house, turning the key in the door, for there was no guest at the inn tonight As soon as he was on the road the little bonfire on Mistover Knap again met his eye

"Still waiting, are you, my lady?" he murmured

However, he did not proceed that way just then, but leaving the hill to the left of him, he stumbled over a rutted road that brought him to a cottage which, like all other habitations on the heath at this hour, was only saved from being invisible by a faint shine from its bedroom window This house was the home of Olly Dowden, the besom-maker, and he entered

The lower room was in darkness, but by feeling his way he found a table, whereon he placed the bottle, and a minute later emerged again upon the heath He stood and looked north-east at the undying little fire—high up above him, though not so high as Rainbarrow

We have been told what happens when a woman deliberates, and the epigram is not always terminable with woman, provided that one be in the case, and that a fair one Wildeve stood, and stood longer, and breathed perplexedly, and then said to himself with resignation, "Yes—by Heaven, I must go to her, I suppose!"

Instead of turning in the direction of home, he pressed on rapidly by a path under Rainbarrow towards what was evidently a signal light

VI THE FIGURE AGAINST THE SKY

WHEN the whole Egdon concourse had left the site of the bonfire to its accustomed loneliness, a closely wrapped female figure approached the barrow from that quarter of the heath in which the little fire lay. Had the reddleman been watching he might have recognized her as the woman who had first stood there so singularly, and vanished at the approach of strangers. She ascended to her old position at the top, where the red coals of the perishing fire greeted her like living eyes in the corpse of day. There she stood still, around her stretching the vast night atmosphere, whose incomplete darkness in comparison with the total darkness of the heath below it might have represented a venial beside a mortal sin.

That she was tall and straight in build, that she was ladylike in her movements, was all that could be learnt of her just now, her form being wrapped in a shawl folded in the old cornerwise fashion, and her head in a large kerchief, a protection not superfluous at this hour and place. Her back was towards the wind, which blew from the north-west, but whether she had avoided that aspect because of the chilly gusts which played about her exceptional position, or because her interest lay in the south east, did not at first appear.

Her reason for standing so dead still as the pivot of this circle of heath-country was just as obscure. Her extraordinary fixity, her conspicuous loneliness, her heedlessness of night, betokened among other things an absence of fear. A tract of country unaltered from that sinister condition which made Caesar anxious every year to get clear of its glooms before the autumnal equinox, a kind of landscape and weather which leads travelers from the South to describe our island as Homer's Cimmerian land, was not, on the face of it, friendly to women.

It might reasonably have been supposed that she was listening to the wind, which rose somewhat as the night advanced, and laid hold of the attention. The wind, indeed, seemed made for the scene, as the scene seemed made for the hour. Part of its tone was quite special, what was heard there could be heard nowhere else. Gusts in innumerable series followed each other from the north-west, and when each one of them raced past the sound of its progress resolved into three. Treble, tenor, and bass notes were to be found therein. The general ricochet of the whole over pits and prominences had the gravest pitch of the chime. Next there could be heard the baritone buzz of a holly tree. Below these in force, above them in pitch, a dwindled voice strove hard at a husky tune, which was the peculiar local sound alluded to. Thinner and less immediately traceable than the other two, it was far more impressive than either. In it lay what may be called the linguistic peculiarity of the heath, and being audible nowhere on earth off a heath, it afforded a shadow of reason for the woman's tenseness, which continued as unbroken as ever.

Throughout the blowing of these plaintive November winds that note bore a great resemblance to the ruins of human song which remain to the throat of fourscore and ten. It was a worn whisper, dry and papery, and it brushed

so distinctly across the ear that, by the accustomed, the material minutiae in which it originated could be realized as by touch. It was the united products of infinitesimal vegetable causes, and these were neither stems, leaves, fruit, blades, prickles, lichen, nor moss.

They were the mummied heath bells of the past summer, originally tender and purple, now washed colorless by Michaelmas rains, and dried to dead skins by October suns. So low was an individual sound from these that a combination of hundreds only just emerged from silence, and the myriads of the whole declivity reached the woman's ear but as a shriveled and intermittent recitative. Yet scarcely a single accent among the many afloat tonight could have such power to impress a listener with thoughts of its origin. One inwardly saw the infinity of those combined multitudes, and perceived that each of the tiny trumpets was seized on, entered, scoured and emerged from by the wind as thoroughly as if it were as vast as a crater.

"The spirit moved them." A meaning of the phrase forced itself upon the attention, and an emotional listener's fetichistic mood might have ended in one of more advanced quality. It was not, after all, that the left-hand expanse of old blooms spoke, or the right-hand, or those of the slope in front, but it was the single person of something else speaking through each in turn.

Suddenly, on the barrow, there mingled with all this wild rhetoric of night a sound which modulated so naturally into the rest that its beginning and ending were hardly to be distinguished. The bluffs, and the bushes, and the heather-bells had broken silence, at last, so did the woman, and her articulation was but as another phrase of the same discourse as theirs. Thrown out on the winds it became twined in with them, and with them it flew away.

What she uttered was a lengthened sighing, apparently at something in her mind which had led to her presence here. There was a spasmodic abandonment about it as if, in allowing herself to utter the sound, the woman's brain had authorized what it could not regulate. One point was evident in this, that she had been existing in a suppressed state, and not in one of languor, or stagnation.

Far away down the valley the faint shine from the window of the inn still lasted on, and a few additional moments proved that the window, or what was within it, had more to do with the woman's sigh than had either her own actions or the scene immediately around. She lifted her left hand, which held a closed telescope. This she rapidly extended, as if she were well accustomed to the operation, and raising it to her eye directed it towards the light beaming from the inn.

The handkerchief which had hooded her head was now a little thrown back, her face being somewhat elevated. A profile was visible against the dull monochrome of cloud around her, and it was as though side shadows from the features of Sappho and Mrs. Siddons had converged upwards from the tomb to form an image like neither but suggesting both. This, however, was mere superficiality. In respect of character a face may make certain admissions by its outline, but it fully confesses only in its changes. So much is this the case that what is called the play of the features often helps more in understanding a man or woman than the earnest labors of all the other members together.

Thus the night revealed little of her whose form it was embracing, for the mobile parts of her countenance could not be seen

At last she gave up her spying attitude, closed the telescope, and turned to the decaying embers. From these no appreciable beams now radiated, except when a more than usually smart gust brushed over their faces and raised a fitful glow which came and went like the blush of a girl. She stooped over the silent circle, and selecting from the brands a piece of stick which bore the largest live coal at its end, brought it to where she had been standing before.

She held the brand to the ground, blowing the red coal with her mouth at the same time, till it faintly illuminated the sod, and revealed a small object, which turned out to be an hour-glass, though she wore a watch. She blew long enough to show that the sand had all slipped through.

"Ah!" she said, as if surprised.

The light raised by her breath had been very fitful, and a momentary irradiation of flesh was all that it had disclosed of her face. That consisted of two matchless lips and a cheek only, her head being still enveloped. She threw away the stick, took the glass in her hand, the telescope under her arm, and moved on.

Along the ridge ran a faint foot-track, which the lady followed. Those who knew it well called it a path, and, while a mere visitor would have passed it unnoticed even by day, the regular haunters of the heath were at no loss for it at midnight. The whole secret of following these incipient paths, when there was not light enough in the atmosphere to show a turnpike road, lay in the development of the sense of touch in the feet, which comes with years of night-rambling in little-trodden spots. To a walker practiced in such places a difference between impact on maiden herbage, and on the crippled stalks of a slight footway, is perceptible through the thickest boot or shoe.

The solitary figure who walked this beat took no notice of the windy tune still played on the dead heath bells. She did not turn her head to look at a group of dark creatures further on, who fled from her presence as she skirted a ravine where they fed. They were about a score of the small wild ponies known as heath-croppers. They roamed at large on the undulations of Egdon, out in numbers too few to detract much from the solitude.

The pedestrian noticed nothing just now, and a clue to her abstraction was afforded by a trivial incident. A bramble caught hold of her skirt, and checked her progress. Instead of putting it off and hastening along, she yielded herself up to the pull, and stood passively still. When she began to extricate herself it was by turning round and round, and so unwinding the prickly switch. She was in a desponding reverie.

Her course was in the direction of the small undying fire which had drawn the attention of the men on Rainbarrow and of Wildeve in the valley below. A faint illumination from its rays began to glow upon her face, and the fire soon revealed itself to be lit, not on the level ground, but on a salient corner or redan of earth, at the junction of two converging bank fences. Outside was a ditch, dry except immediately under the fire, where there was a large pool, bearded all round by heather and rushes. In the smooth water of the pool the fire appeared upside down.

The banks meeting behind were bare of a hedge, save such as was formed

by disconnected tufts of furze, standing upon stems along the top, like impaled heads above a city wall. A white mast, fitted up with spars and other nautical tackle, could be seen rising against the dark clouds whenever the flames played brightly enough to reach it. Altogether the scene had much the appearance of a fortification upon which had been kindled a beacon fire.

Nobody was visible, but ever and anon a whitish something moved above the bank from behind, and vanished again. This was a small human hand, in the act of lifting pieces of fuel into the fire, but for all that could be seen the hand, like that which troubled Belshazzar, was there alone. Occasionally an ember rolled off the bank, and dropped with a hiss into the pool.

At one side of the pool rough steps built of clods enabled any one who wished to do so to mount the bank, which the woman did. Within was a paddock in an uncultivated state, though bearing evidence of having once been tilled, but the heath and fern had insidiously crept in, and were reasserting their old supremacy. Further ahead were dimly visible an irregular dwelling house, garden, and outbuildings, backed by a clump of firs.

The young lady—for youth had revealed its presence in her buoyant bound up the bank—walked along the top instead of descending inside, and came to the corner where the fire was burning. One reason for the permanence of the blaze was now manifest: the fuel consisted of hard pieces of wood, cleft and sawn—the knotty boles of old thorn trees which grew in twos and threes about the hillsides. A yet unconsumed pile of these lay in the inner angle of the bank, and from this corner the upturned face of a little boy greeted her eyes. He was dilatorily throwing up a piece of wood into the fire every now and then, a business which seemed to have engaged him a considerable part of the evening, for his face was somewhat weary.

"I am glad you have come, Miss Eustacia," he said, with a sigh of relief. "I don't like biding by myself."

"Nonsense! I have only been a little way for a walk. I have been gone only twenty minutes."

"It seemed long," murmured the sad boy. "And you have been so many times."

"Why, I thought you would be pleased to have a bonfire. Are you not much obliged to me for making you one?"

"Yes, but there's nobody here to play with me."

"I suppose nobody has come while I've been away?"

"Nobody except your grandfather. He looked out of doors once for 'ee. I told him you were walking round upon the hill to look at the other bonfires."

"A good boy."

"I think I hear him coming again, miss."

An old man came into the remoter light of the fire from the direction of the homestead. He was the same who had overtaken the reddleman on the road that afternoon. He looked wistfully to the top of the bank at the woman who stood there, and his teeth, which were quite unimpaired, showed like Parian from his parted lips.

"When are you coming indoors, Eustacia?" he asked. "'Tis almost bedtime. I've been home these two hours, and am tired out. Surely 'tis somewhat childish

of you to stay out playing at bonfires so long, and wasting such fuel My precious thorn roots, the rarest of all firing, that I laid by on purpose for Christmas—you have burnt 'em nearly all!"

"I promised Johnny a bonfire, and it pleases him not to let it go out just yet," said Eustacia, in a way which told at once that she was absolute queen here Grandfather, you go in to bed I shall follow you soon You like the fire, don't you, Johnny?"

The boy looked up doubtfully at her and murmured, "I don't think I want it any longer"

Her grandfather had turned back again, and did not hear the boy's reply As soon as the white-haired man had vanished she said in a tone of pique to the child, "Ungrateful little boy, how can you contradict me? Never shall you have a bonfire again unless you keep it up now Come, tell me you like to do things for me, and don't deny it"

The repressed child said, "Yes, I do, miss," and continued to stir the fire perfunctorily

"Stay a little longer and I will give you a crooked sixpence," said Eustacia, more gently "Put in one piece of wood every two or three minutes, but not too much at once I am going to walk along the ridge a little longer, but I shall keep on coming to you And if you hear a frog jump into the pond with a flounce, like a stone thrown in, be sure you run and tell me, because it is a sign of rain"

"Yes, Eustacia"

"Miss Vye, sir"

"Miss Vy—stacia"

"That will do Now put in one stick more"

The little slave went on feeding the fire as before He seemed a mere automaton, galvanized into moving and speaking by the wayward Eustacia's will He might have been the brass statue which Albertus Magnus is said to have animated just so far as to make it chatter, and move, and be his servant

Before going on her walk again the young girl stood still on the bank for a few instants and listened It was to the full as lonely a place as Rainbarrow, though at rather a lower level, and it was more sheltered from wind and weather on account of the few firs to the north The bank which enclosed the homestead, and protected it from the lawless state of the world without, was formed of thick square clods, dug from the ditch on the outside, and built up with a slight batter or incline, which forms no slight defense where hedges will not grow because of the wind and the wilderness, and where wall materials are unattainable Otherwise the situation was quite open, commanding the whole length of the valley which reached to the river behind Wildeve's house High above this to the right, and much nearer thitherward than the Quiet Woman Inn, the blurred contour of Rainbarrow obstructed the sky

After her attentive survey of the wild slopes and hollow ravines a gesture of impatience escaped Eustacia She vented petulant words every now and then, but there were sighs between her words, and sudden listenings between her sighs Descending from her perch she again sauntered off towards Rainbarrow, though this time she did not go the whole way

Twice she reappeared at intervals of a few minutes, and each time she said—"Not any flounce into the pond yet, little man?"

"No, Miss Eustacia," the child replied

"Well," she said at last, "I shall soon be going in, and then I will give you the crooked sixpence, and let you go home"

"Thank'ee, Miss Eustacia," said the tired stoker, breathing more easily And Eustacia again strolled away from the fire, but this time not towards Rainbarrow She skirted the bank and went round to the wicket before the house, where she stood motionless, looking at the scene

Fifty yards off rose the corner of the two converging banks, with the fire upon it within the bank, lifting up to the fire one stick at a time, just as before, the figure of the little child She idly watched him as he occasionally climbed up in the nook of the bank and stood beside the brands The wind blew the smoke, and the child's hair, and the corner of his pinafore, all in the same direction the breeze died, and the pinafore and hair lay still, and the smoke went up straight

While Eustacia looked on from this distance the boy's form visibly started he slid down the bank and ran across towards the white gate

"Well?" said Eustacia

"A hop-frog have jumped into the pond Yes, I heard 'en!"

"Then it is going to rain, and you had better go home You will not be afraid?" She spoke hurriedly, as if her heart had leapt into her throat at the boy's words

"No, because I shall hae the crooked sixpence"

"Yes, here it is Now run as fast as you can—not that way—through the garden here No other boy in the heath has had such a bonfire as yours"

The boy, who clearly had had too much of a good thing, marched away into the shadows with alacrity When he was gone Eustacia, leaving her telescope and hour-glass by the gate, brushed forward from the wicket towards the angle of the bank, under the fire

Here, screened by the outwork, she waited In a few moments a splash was audible from the pond outside Had the child been there he would have said that a second frog had jumped in, but by most people the sound would have been likened to the fall of a stone into the water Eustacia stepped upon the bank

"Yes?" she said, and held her breath

Thereupon the contour of a man became dimly visible against the low-reaching sky over the valley, beyond the outer margin of the pool He came round it and leapt upon the bank beside her A low laugh escaped her—the third utterance which the girl had indulged in tonight The first, when she stood upon Rainbarrow, had expressed anxiety, the second, on the ridge, had expressed impatience, the present was one of triumphant pleasure She let her joyous eyes rest upon him without speaking, as upon some wondrous thing she had created out of chaos

"I have come," said the man, who was Wildeve "You give me no peace Why do you not leave me alone? I have seen your bonfire all the evening"

The words were not without emotion, and retained their level tone as if by a careful equipoise between imminent extremes

At this unexpectedly repressing manner in her lover the girl seemed to repress herself also "Of course you have seen my fire," she answered with languid calmness, artificially maintained "Why shouldn't I have a bonfire on the Fifth-of-November, like other denizens of the heath?"

"I knew it was meant for me"

"How did you know it? I have had no word with you since you—you chose her, and walked about with her, and deserted me entirely, as if I had never been yours body and soul so ir retrievably!"

"Eustacia! could I forget that last autumn at this same day of the month and at this same place you lighted exactly such a fire as a signal for me to come and see you? Why should there have been a bonfire again by Captain Vye's house if not for the same purpose?"

"Yes, yes—I own it," she cried under her breath, with a drowsy fervor of manner and tone which was quite peculiar to her "Don't begin speaking to me as you did, Damon, you will drive me to say words I would not wish to say to you I had given you up, and resolved not to think of you any more, and then I heard the news, and I came out and got the fire ready because I thought that you had been faithful to me"

"What have you heard to make you think that?" said Wildeve, astonished

"That you did not marry her!" she murmured exultingly "And I knew it was because you loved me best, and couldn't do it Damon, you have been cruel to me to go away, and I have said I would never forgive you I do not think I can forgive you entirely, even now—it is too much for a woman of any spirit to quite overlook"

"If I had known you wished to call me up here only to reproach me, I wouldn't have come"

"But I don't mind it, and I do forgive you now that you have not married her, and have come back to me!"

"Who told you that I had not married her?"

"My grandfather He took a long walk today, and as he was coming home he overtook some person who told him of a broken-off wedding he thought it might be yours, and I knew it was"

"Does anybody else know?"

"I suppose not Now, Damon, do you see why I lit my signal fire? You did not think I would have lit it if I had imagined you to have become the husband of this woman It is insulting my pride to suppose that"

Wildeve was silent it was evident that he had supposed as much

"Did you indeed think I believed you were married?" she again demanded earnestly "Then you wronged me, and upon my life and heart I can hardly bear to recognize that you have such ill thoughts of me! Damon, you are not worthy of me I see it, and yet I love you Never mind let it go—I must bear your mean opinion as best I may It is true, is it not," she added, with an ill-concealed anxiety, on his making no demonstration, "that you could not bring yourself to give me up, and are still going to love me best of all?"

"Yes, or why should I have come?" he said touchily "Not that fidelity will

be any great merit in me after your kind speech about my unworthiness, which should have been said by myself if by anybody, and comes with an ill grace from you. However, the curse of inflammability is upon me, and I must live under it, and take any snub from a woman. It has brought me down from engineering to innkeeping: what lower stage it has in store for me I have yet to learn." He continued to look upon her gloomily.

She seized the moment, and throwing back the shawl so that the firelight shone full upon her face and throat, said with a smile, "Have you seen anything better than that in your travels?"

Eustacia was not one to commit herself to such a position without good ground. He said quietly, "No."

"Not even on the shoulders of Thomasin?"

"Thomasin is a pleasing and innocent woman."

"That's nothing to do with it," she cried with quick passionateness. "We will leave her out, there are only you and me now to think of." After a long look at him she resumed with the old quiescent warmth. "Must I go on weakly confessing to you things a woman ought to conceal, and own that no words can express how gloomy I have been because of that dreadful belief I held till two hours ago—that you had quite deserted me?"

"I am sorry I caused you that pain."

"But perhaps it is not wholly because of you that I get gloomy," she archly added. "It is in my nature to feel like that. It was born in my blood, I suppose."

"Hypochondriasis?"

"Or else it was coming into this wild heath. I was happy enough at Budmouth. O the times, O the days at Budmouth! But Egdon will be brighter again now."

"I hope it will," said Wildeve moodily. "Do you know the consequence of this recall to me, my old darling? I shall come to see you again as before, at Rainbarrow."

"Of course you will."

"And yet I declare that until I got here tonight I intended, after this one good-bye, never to meet you again."

"I don't thank you for that," she said, turning away, while indignation spread through her like subterranean heat. "You may come again to Rainbarrow if you like, but you won't see me, and you may call, but I shall not listen, and you may tempt me, but I won't give myself to you any more."

"You have said as much before, sweet, but such natures as yours don't so easily adhere to their words. Neither, for the matter of that, do such natures as mine."

"This is the pleasure I have won by my trouble," she whispered bitterly. "Why did I try to recall you? Damon, a strange warring takes place in my mind occasionally. I think when I become calm after your woundings, 'Do I embrace a cloud of common fog after all?' You are a chameleon, and now you are at your worst color. Go home, or I shall hate you!"

He looked absently towards Rainbarrow while one might have counted

twenty, and said, as if he did not much mind all this, "Yes, I will go home Do you mean to see me again?"

"If you own to me that the wedding is broken off because you love me best"

"I don't think it would be good policy," said Wildeve, smiling "You would get to know the extent of your power too clearly"

"But tell me!"

"You know"

"Where is she now?"

"I don't know I prefer not to speak of her to you I have not yet married her I have come in obedience to your call That is enough"

"I merely lit that fire because I was dull, and thought I would get a little excitement by calling you up and triumphing over you as the Witch of Endor called up Samuel I determined you should come, and you have come! I have shown my power A mile and half hither, and a mile and half back again to your home—three miles in the dark for me Have I not shown my power?"

He shook his head at her "I know you too well, my Eustacia, I know you too well There isn't a note in you which I don't know, and that hot little bosom couldn't play such a cold-blooded trick to save its life I saw a woman on Rainbarrow at dusk looking down towards my house I think I drew out you before you drew out me"

The revived embers of an old passion glowed clearly in Wildeve now, and he leant forward as if about to put his face towards her cheek

"O no," she said, intractably moving to the other side of the decayed fire "What did you mean by that?"

"Perhaps I may kiss your hand?"

"No, you may not"

"Then I may shake your hand?"

"No"

"Then I wish you good-night without caring for either Good-bye, good-bye"

She returned no answer, and with the bow of a dancing-master he vanished on the other side of the pool as he had come

Eustacia sighed it was no fragile maiden sigh, but a sigh which shook her like a shiver Whenever a flash of reason darted like an electric light upon her lover—as it sometimes would—and showed his imperfections, she shivered thus But it was over in a second, and she loved on She knew that he trifled with her, but she loved on She scattered the half burnt brands, went indoors immediately, and up to her bedroom without a light Amid the rustles which denoted her to be undressing in the darkness other heavy breaths frequently came, and the same kind of shudder occasionally moved through her when, ten minutes later, she lay on her bed asleep

VII QUEEN OF NIGHT

EUSTACIA VYE was the raw material of a divinity On Olympus she would have done well with a little preparation She had the passions and instincts which make a model goddess, that is, those which make not quite a model woman Had it been possible for the earth and mankind to be entirely in her grasp for a while, had she handled the distaff, the spindle, and the shears at her own free will, few in the world would have noticed the change of government There would have been the same inequality of lot, the same heaping up of favors here, of contumely there, the same generosity before justice, the same perpetual dilemmas, the same captious alternation of caresses and blows that we endure now

She was in person full-limbed and somewhat heavy, without ruddiness, as without pallor, and soft to the touch as a cloud To see her hair was to fancy that a whole winter did not contain darkness enough to form its shadow it closed over her forehead like nightfall extinguishing the western glow

Her nerves extended into those tresses, and her temper could always be softened by stroking them down When her hair was brushed she would instantly sink into stillness and look like the Sphinx If, in passing under one of the Egdon banks, any of its thick skeins were caught, as they sometimes were, by a prickly tuft of the large *Ulex Europaeus*—which will act as a sort of hair-brush—she would go back a few steps, and pass against it a second time

She had Pagan eyes, full of nocturnal mysteries Their light, as it came and went, and came again, was partially hampered by their oppressive lids and lashes, and of these the under lid was much fuller than it usually is with English women This enabled her to indulge in reverie without seeming to do so she might have been believed capable of sleeping without closing them up Assuming that the souls of men and women were visible essences, you could fancy the color of Eustacia's soul to be flame-like The sparks from it that rose into her dark pupils gave the same impression

The mouth seemed formed less to speak than to quiver, less to quiver than to kiss Some might have added, less to kiss than to curl Viewed sideways, the closing-line of her lips formed, with almost geometric precision, the curve so well known in the arts of design as the *cima-recta*, or ogee The sight of such a flexible bend as that on grim Egdon was quite an apparition It was felt at once that that mouth did not come over from Sleswig with a band of Saxon pirates whose lips met like the two halves of a muffin One had fancied that such lip-curves were mostly lurking underground in the South as fragments of forgotten marbles So fine were the lines of her lips that, though full, each corner of her mouth was as clearly cut as the point of a spear This keenness of corner was only blunted when she was given over to sudden fits of gloom, one of the phases of the night-side of sentiment which she knew too well for her years

Her presence brought memories of such things as Bourbon roses, rubies, and tropical midnights, her moods recalled lotus-eaters and the march in "Athalie",

her motions, the ebb and flow of the sea, her voice, the viola In a dim light, and with a slight rearrangement of her hair, her general figure might have stood for that of either of the higher female deities The new moon behind her head, an old helmet upon it, a diadem of accidental dewdrops round her brow, would have been adjuncts sufficient to strike the note of Artemis, Athena, or Hera respectively, with as close an approximation to the antique as that which passes muster on many respected canvases

But celestial imperiousness, love, wrath, and fervor had proved to be somewhat thrown away on netherward Egdon Her power was limited, and the consciousness of this limitation had biased her development Egdon was her Hades, and since coming there she had imbibed much of what was dark in its tone, though inwardly and eternally unreconciled thereto Her appearance accorded well with this smouldering rebelliousness, and the shady splendor of her beauty was the real surface of the sad and stifled warmth within her A true Tartarean dignity sat upon her brow, and not factitiously or with marks of constraint, for it had grown in her with years

Across the upper part of her head she wore a thin fillet of black velvet, restraining the luxuriance of her shady hair, in a way which added much to this class of majesty by irregularly clouding her forehead "Nothing can embellish a beautiful face more than a narrow band drawn over the brow," says Richter Some of the neighboring girls wore colored ribbon for the same purpose, and sported metallic ornaments elsewhere, but if any one suggested colored ribbon and metallic ornaments to Eustacia Vye she laughed and went on

Why did a woman of this sort live on Egdon Heath? Budmouth was her native place, a fashionable seaside resort at that date She was the daughter of the bandmaster of a regiment which had been quartered there—a Corfiote by birth, and a fine musician—who met his future wife during her trip thither with her father the captain, a man of good family The marriage was scarcely in accord with the old man's wishes, for the bandmaster's pockets were as light as his occupation But the musician did his best, adopted his wife's name, made England permanently his home, took great trouble with his child's education, the expenses of which were defrayed by the grandfather, and throve as the chief local musician till her mother's death, when he left off thriving, drank, and died also The girl was left to the care of her grandfather, who, since three of his ribs became broken in a shipwreck, had lived in this airy perch on Egdon, a spot which had taken his fancy because the house was to be had for next to nothing, and because a remote blue tinge on the horizon between the hills, visible from the cottage door, was traditionally believed to be the English Channel She hated the change, she felt like one banished, but here she was forced to abide

Thus it happened that in Eustacia's brain were juxtaposed the strangest assortment of ideas, from old time and from new There was no middle distance in her perspective romantic recollections of sunny afternoons on an esplanade, with military bands, officers, and gallants around, stood like gilded letters upon the dark tablet of surrounding Egdon Every bizarre effect that could result from the random intertwining of watering place glitter with the

grand solemnity of a heath, was to be found in her. Seeing nothing of human life now, she imagined all the more of what she had seen.

Where did her dignity come from? By a latent vein from Alcinous' line, her father hailing from Phaeacia's isle?—or from Fitzalan and De Vere, her maternal grandfather having had a cousin in the peerage? Perhaps it was the gift of Heaven—a happy convergence of natural laws. Among other things opportunity had of late years been denied her of learning to be undignified, for she lived lonely. Isolation on a heath renders vulgarity well nigh impossible. It would have been as easy for the heath-ponies, bats, and snakes to be vulgar as for her. A narrow life in Budmouth might have completely demeaned her.

The only way to look queenly without realms or hearts to queen it over is to look as if you had lost them, and Eustacia did that to a triumph. In the captain's cottage she could suggest mansions she had never seen. Perhaps that was because she frequented a vaster mansion than any of them, the open hills. Like the summer condition of the place around her, she was an embodiment of the phrase "a populous solitude"—apparently so listless, void, and quiet, she was really busy and full.

To be loved to madness—such was her great desire. Love was to her the one cordial which could drive away the eating loneliness of her days. And she seemed to long for the abstraction called passionate love more than for any particular lover.

She could show a most reproachful look at times, but it was directed less against human beings than against certain creatures of her mind, the chief of these being Destiny, through whose interference she dimly fancied it arose that love alighted only on gliding youth—that any love she might win would sink simultaneously with the sand in the glass. She thought of it with an ever-growing consciousness of cruelty, which tended to breed actions of reckless unconventionality, framed to snatch a year's, a week's, even an hour's passion from anywhere while it could be won. Through want of it she had sung without being merry, possessed without enjoying, outshone without triumphing. Her loneliness deepened her desire. On Egdon, coldest and meanest kisses were at famine prices, and where was a mouth matching hers to be found?

Fidelity in love for fidelity's sake had less attraction for her than for most women, fidelity because of love's grip had much. A blaze of love, and extinction, was better than a lantern glimmer of the same which should last long years. On this head she knew by prevision what most women learn only by experience. She had mentally walked round love, told the towers thereof, considered its palaces, and concluded that love was but a doleful joy. Yet she desired it, as one in a desert would be thankful for brackish water.

She often repeated her prayers, not at particular times, but, like the unaffectedly devout, when she desired to pray. Her prayer was always spontaneous, and often ran thus, "O deliver my heart from this fearful gloom and loneliness send me great love from somewhere, else I shall die."

Her high gods were William the Conqueror, Strafford, and Napoleon Bonaparte, as they had appeared in the Lady's History used at the establishment in which she was educated. Had she been a mother she would have christened her boys such names as Saul or Sisera in preference to Jacob or David, neither

of whom she admired. At school she had used to side with the Philistines in several battles, and had wondered if Pontius Pilate were as handsome as he was frank and fair.

Thus she was a girl of some forwardness of mind, indeed, weighed in relation to her situation among the very rearward of thinkers, very original. Her instincts towards social non-conformity were at the root of this. In the matter of holidays, her mood was that of horses who, when turned out to grass, enjoy looking upon their kind at work on the highway. She only valued rest to herself when it came in the midst of other people's labor. Hence she hated Sundays when all was at rest, and often said they would be the death of her. To see the heathmen in their Sunday condition, that is, with their hands in their pockets, their boots newly oiled, and not laced up (a particularly Sunday sign), walking leisurely among the turves and furze-faggots they had cut during the week, and kicking them critically as if their use were unknown, was a fearful heaviness to her. To relieve the tedium of this untimely day she would overhaul the cupboards containing her grandfather's old charts and other rubbish, humming Saturday night ballads of the country people the while. But on Saturday nights she would frequently sing a psalm, and it was always on a weekday that she read the Bible, that she might be unoppressed with a sense of doing her duty.

Such views of life were to some extent the natural begettings of her situation upon her nature. To dwell on a heath without studying its meanings was like wedding a foreigner without learning his tongue. The subtle beauties of the heath were lost to Eustacia, she only caught its vapors. An environment which would have made a contented woman a poet, a suffering woman a devotee, a pious woman a psalmist, even a giddy woman thoughtful, made a rebellious woman saturnine.

Eustacia had got beyond the vision of some marriage of inexpressible glory, yet, though her emotions were in full vigor, she cared for no meaner union. Thus we see her in a strange state of isolation. To have lost the godlike conceit that we may do what we will, and not to have acquired a homely zest for doing what we can, shows a grandeur of temper which cannot be objected to in the abstract, for it denotes a mind that, though disappointed, forswears compromise. But, if congenial to philosophy, it is apt to be dangerous to the commonwealth. In a world where doing means marrying, and the commonwealth is one of hearts and hands, the same peril attends the condition.

And so we see our Eustacia—for at times she was not altogether unlovable—arriving at that stage of enlightenment which feels that nothing is worth while, and filling up the spare hours of her existence by idealizing Wildeve for want of a better object. This was the sole reason of his ascendancy: she knew it herself. At moments her pride rebelled against her passion for him, and she even had longed to be free. But there was only one circumstance which could dislodge him, and that was the advent of a greater man.

For the rest, she suffered much from depression of spirits, and took slow walks to recover them, in which she carried her grandfather's telescope and her grandmother's hour-glass—the latter because of a peculiar pleasure she derived from watching a material representation of time's gradual glide away. She

seldom schemed, but when she did scheme, her plans showed rather the comprehensive strategy of a general than the small arts called womanish, though she could utter oracles of Delphian ambiguity when she did not choose to be direct. In heaven she will probably sit between the Heloises and the Cleopatras.

VIII THOSE WHO ARE FOUND WHERE THERE IS SAID TO BE NOBODY

AS soon as the sad little boy had withdrawn from the fire he clasped the money tight in the palm of his hand, as if thereby to fortify his courage, and began to run. There was really little danger in allowing a child to go home alone on this part of Egdon Heath. The distance to the boy's house was not more than three-eighths of a mile, his father's cottage, and one other a few yards further on, forming part of the small hamlet of Mistover Knap: the third and only remaining house was that of Captain Vye and Eustacia, which stood quite away from the small cottages, and was the loneliest of lonely houses on these thinly populated slopes.

He ran until he was out of breath, and then, becoming more courageous, walked leisurely along, singing in an old voice a little song about a sailor-boy and a fair one, and bright gold in store. In the middle of this the child stopped from a pit under the hill ahead of him shone a light, whence proceeded a cloud of floating dust and a smacking noise.

Only unusual sights and sounds frightened the boy. The shriveled voice of the heath did not alarm him, for that was familiar. The thorn-bushes which arose in his path from time to time were less satisfactory, for they whistled gloomily, and had a ghastly habit after dark of putting on the shapes of jumping madmen, sprawling giants, and hideous cripples. Lights were not uncommon this evening, but the nature of all of them was different from this. Discretion rather than terror prompted the boy to turn back instead of passing the light, with a view of asking Miss Eustacia Vye to let her servant accompany him home.

When the boy had reascended to the top of the valley he found the fire to be still burning on the bank, though lower than before. Beside it, instead of Eustacia's solitary form, he saw two persons, the second being a man. The boy crept along under the bank to ascertain from the nature of the proceedings if it would be prudent to interrupt so splendid a creature as Miss Eustacia on his poor trivial account.

After listening under the bank for some minutes to the talk he turned in a perplexed and doubting manner and began to withdraw as silently as he had come. That he did not, upon the whole, think it advisable to interrupt her conversation with Wildeve, without being prepared to bear the whole weight of her displeasure, was obvious.

Here was a Scyllæo-Charybdean position for a poor boy. Pausing when again safe from discovery he finally decided to face the pit phenomenon as the lesser evil. With a heavy sigh he retraced the slope, and followed the path he had followed before.

The light had gone, the rising dust had disappeared—he hoped for ever. He marched resolutely along, and found nothing to alarm him till, coming within a few yards of the sandpit, he heard a slight noise in front, which led him to halt. The halt was but momentary, for the noise resolved itself into the steady bites of two animals grazing.

"Two he'th-croppers down here," he said aloud. "I have never known 'em come down so far afore."

The animals were in the direct line of his path, but that the child thought little of, he had played round the fetlocks of horses from his infancy. On coming nearer, however, the boy was somewhat surprised to find that the little creatures did not run off, and that each wore a clog, to prevent his going astray, this signified that they had been broken in. He could now see the interior of the pit, which, being in the side of the hill, had a level entrance. In the innermost corner the square outline of a van appeared, with its back towards him. A light came from the interior, and threw a moving shadow upon the vertical face of gravel at the further side of the pit into which the vehicle faced.

The child assumed that this was the cart of a gypsy, and his dread of those wanderers reached but to that mild pitch which titillates rather than pains. Only a few inches of mud wall kept him and his family from being gypsies themselves. He skirted the gravel-pit at a respectful distance, ascending the slope, and came forward upon the brow, in order to look into the open door of the van and see the original of the shadow.

The picture alarmed the boy. By a little stove inside the van sat a figure red from head to heels—the man who had been Thomasin's friend. He was darning a stocking, which was red like the rest of him. Moreover, as he darned he smoked a pipe, the stem and bowl of which were red also.

At this moment one of the heath-croppers feeding in the outer shadows was audibly shaking off the clog attached to its foot. Aroused by the sound, the reddleman laid down his stocking, lit a lantern which hung beside him, and came out from the van. In sticking up the candle he lifted the lantern to his face, and the light shone into the whites of his eyes and upon his ivory teeth, which, in contrast with the red surrounding, lent him a startling aspect enough to the gaze of a juvenile. The boy knew too well for his peace of mind upon whose lair he had lighted. Uglier persons than gypsies were known to cross Egdon at times, and a reddleman was one of them.

"How I wish 'twas only a gypsy!" he murmured.

The man was by this time coming back from the horses. In his fear of being seen the boy rendered detection certain by nervous motion. The heather and peat stratum overhung the brow of the pit in mats, hiding the actual verge. The boy had stepped beyond the solid ground, the heather now gave way, and down he rolled over the scarp of gray sand to the very foot of the man.

The red man opened the lantern and turned it upon the figure of the prostrate boy.

"Who be ye?" he said.

"Johnny Nunsuch, master!"

"What were you doing up there?"

"I don't know."

"Watching me, I suppose?"

"Yes, master "

"What did you watch me for?"

"Because I was coming home from Miss Vye's bonfire "

"Beest hurt?"

"No "

"Why, yes, you be your hand is bleeding Come under my tilt and let me tie it up "

"Please let me look for my sixpence "

"How did you come by that?"

"Miss Vye gied it to me for keeping up her bonfire "

The sixpence was found, and the man went to the van, the boy behind, almost holding his breath

The man took a piece of rag from a satchel containing sewing materials, tore off a strip, which, like everything else, was tinged red, and proceeded to bind up the wound

"My eyes have got foggy-like—please may I sit down, master?" said the boy

"To be sure, poor chap 'Tis enough to make you feel fainty Sit on that bundle "

The man finished tying up the gash, and the boy said, "I think I'll go home now, master "

"You are rather afraid of me Do you know what I be?"

The child surveyed his vermilion figure up and down with much misgiving, and finally said, "Yes "

"Well, what?"

"The reddleman!" he faltered

"Yes, that's what I be Though there's more than one You little children think there's only one cuckoo, one fox, one giant, one devil, and one reddleman, when there's lots of us all "

"Is there? You won't carry me off in your bags, will ye, master? 'Tis said that the reddleman will sometimes "

"Nonsense All that reddlemen do is sell reddle You see all these bags at the back of my cart? They are not full of little boys—only full of red stuff "

"Was you born a reddleman?"

"No, I took to it I should be as white as you if I were to give up the trade—that is, I should be white in time—perhaps six months not at first, because 'tis grow'd into my skin and won't wash out Now, you'll never be afraid of a reddleman again, will ye?"

"No, never Willy Orchard said he seed a red ghost here t'other day—perhaps that was you?"

"I was here t'other day "

"Were you making that dusty light I saw by now?"

"O yes I was beating out some bags And have you had a good bonfire up there? I saw the light Why did Miss Vye want a bonfire so bad that she should give you sixpence to keep it up?"

"I don't know I was tired, but she made me bide and keep up the fire just the same, while she kept going up across Rainbarrow way "

"And how long did that last?"

"Until a hop-frog jumped into the pond"

The reddleman suddenly ceased to talk idly "A hop-frog?" he inquired "Hop-frogs don't jump into ponds this time of year"

"They do, for I heard one"

"Certain-sure?"

"Yes She told me afore that I should hear'n, and so I did They say she's clever and deep, and perhaps she charmed 'en to come"

"And what then?"

"Then I came down here, and I was afeard, and I went back, but I didn't like to speak to her, because of the gentleman, and I came on here again"

"A gentleman—ah! What did she say to him, my man?"

"Told him she supposed he had not married the other woman because he liked his old sweetheart best, and things like that"

"What did the gentleman say to her, my sonny?"

"He only said he did like her best, and how he was coming to see her again under Rainbarrow o' nights"

"Ha!" cried the reddleman, slapping his hand against the side of his van so that the whole fabric shook under the blow "That's the secret o't!"

The little boy jumped clean from the stool

"My man, don't you be afraid," said the dealer in red, suddenly becoming gentle "I forgot you were here That's only a curious way reddlemen have of going mad for a moment, but they don't hurt anybody And what did the lady say then?"

"I can't mind Please, Master Reddleman, may I go home-along now?"

"Ay, to be sure you may I'll go a bit of ways with you"

He conducted the boy out of the gravel-pit and into the path leading to his mother's cottage When the little figure had vanished in the darkness the reddleman returned, resumed his seat by the fire, and proceeded to darn again

IX LOVE LEADS A SHREWD MAN INTO STRATEGY

REDDLEMEN of the old school are now but seldom seen Since the introduction of railways Wessex farmers have managed to do without these Mephistophelian visitants, and the bright pigment so largely used by shepherds in preparing sheep for the fair is obtained by other routes Even those who yet survive are losing the poetry of existence which characterized them when the pursuit of the trade meant periodical journeys to the pit whence the material was dug, a regular camping out from month to month, except in the depth of winter, a peregrination among farms which could be counted by the hundred, and in spite of this Arab existence the preservation of that respectability which is insured by the never-failing production of a well-lined purse

Reddle spreads its lively hues over everything it lights on, and stamps unmistakably, as with the mark of Cain, any person who has handled it half an hour

A child's first sight of a reddleman was an epoch in his life That blood colored figure was a sublimation of all the horrid dreams which had afflicted the juvenile spirit since imagination began "The reddleman is coming for you!" had been the formulated threat of Wessex mothers for many generations He was successfully supplanted for a while, at the beginning of the present century, by Bonaparte, but as process of time rendered the latter personage stale and ineffective the older phrase resumed its early prominence And now the reddleman has in his turn followed Bonaparte to the land of worn out bogies, and his place is filled by modern inventions

The reddleman lived like a gypsy, but gypsies he scorned He was about as thriving as traveling basket and mat makers, but he had nothing to do with them He was more decently born and brought up than the cattle-drovers who passed and repassed him in his wanderings, but they merely nodded to him His stock was more valuable than that of peddlers, but they did not think so, and passed his cart with eyes straight ahead He was such an unnatural color to look at that the men of roundabouts and wax-work shows seemed gentle men beside him, but he considered them low company, and remained aloof Among all these squatters and folks of the road the reddleman continually found himself, yet he was not of them His occupation tended to isolate him, and isolated he was mostly seen to be

It was sometimes suggested that reddlemen were criminals for whose misdeeds other men had wrongfully suffered that in escaping the law they had not escaped their own consciences, and had taken to the trade as a lifelong penance Else why should they have chosen it? In the present case such a question would have been particularly apposite The reddleman who had entered Egdon that afternoon was an instance of the pleasing being wasted to form the groundwork of the singular, when an ugly foundation would have done just as well for that purpose The one point that was forbidding about this reddleman was his color Freed from that he would have been as agreeable a specimen of rustic manhood as one would often see A keen observer might have been inclined to think—which was, indeed, partly the truth—that he had relinquished his proper station in life for want of interest in it More over, after looking at him one would have hazarded the guess that good nature, and an acuteness as extreme as it could be without verging on craft, formed the frame-work of his character

While he darned the stocking his face became rigid with thought Softer expressions followed this, and then again recurred the tender sadness which had sat upon him during his drive along the highway that afternoon Presently his needle stopped He laid down the stocking, arose from his seat, and took a leathern pouch from a hook in the corner of the van This contained among other articles a brown-paper packet, which, to judge from the hinge-like character of its worn folds, seemed to have been carefully opened and closed a good many times He sat down on a three-legged milking-stool that formed the only seat in the van, and, examining his packet by the light of a candle, took thence an old letter and spread it open The writing had originally been traced on white paper, but the letter had now assumed a pale red tinge from the accident of his situation, and the black strokes of writing thereon looked

like the twigs of a winter hedge against a vermillion sunset The letter bore a date some two years previous to that time, and was signed "Thomasin Yeo bright" It ran as follows —

"Dear Diggory Venn,—The question you put when you overtook me coming home from Pond close gave me such a surprise that I am afraid I did not make you exactly understand what I meant Of course, if my aunt had not met me I could have explained all then at once, but as it was there was no chance I have been quite uneasy since, as you know I do not wish to pain you, yet I fear I shall be doing so now in contradicting what I seemed to say then I cannot, Diggory, marry you, or think of letting you call me your sweetheart I could not, indeed, Diggory I hope you will not much mind my saying this, and feel in a great pain It makes me very sad when I think it may, for I like you very much, and I always put you next to my cousin Clym in my mind There are so many reasons why we cannot be married that I can hardly name them all in a letter I did not in the least expect that you were going to speak on such a thing when you followed me, because I had never thought of you in the sense of a lover at all You must not becall me for laughing when you spoke, you mistook when you thought I laughed at you as a foolish man I laughed because the idea was so odd, and not at you at all The great reason with my own personal self for not letting you court me is, that I do not feel the things a woman ought to feel who consents to walk with you with the meaning of being your wife It is not as you think, that I have another in my mind, for I do not encourage anybody, and never have in my life Another reason is my aunt She would not, I know, agree to it, even if I wished to have you She likes you very well, but she will want me to look a little higher than a small dairy farmer, and marry a professional man I hope you will not set your heart against me for writing plainly, but I felt you might try to see me again, and it is better that we should not meet I shall always think of you as a good man, and be anxious for your well-doing I send this by Jane Orchard's little maid,—And remain, Diggory, your faithful friend,

"THOMASIN YEOBRIGHT

"To Mr Venn, Dairy farmer"

Since the arrival of that letter, on a certain autumn morning long ago, the reddleman and Thomasin had not met till today During the interval he had shifted his position even further from hers than it had originally been, by adopting the reddle trade, though he was really in very good circumstances still Indeed, seeing that his expenditure was only one-fourth of his income, he might have been called a prosperous man

Rejected suitors take to roaming as naturally as unhived bees, and the business to which he had cynically devoted himself was in many ways congenial to Venn But his wanderings, by mere stress of old emotions, had frequently taken an Egdon direction, though he never intruded upon her who attracted him thither To be in Thomasin's heath, and near her, yet unseen, was the one ewe-lamb of pleasure left to him

Then came the incident of that day, and the reddleman, still loving her well, was excited by this accidental service to her at a critical juncture to vow an active devotion to her cause, instead of, as hitherto, sighing and holding aloof After what had happened it was impossible that he should not doubt the honesty of Wildeve's intentions But her hope was apparently centered upon him, and dismissing his regrets Venn determined to aid her to be happy in

her own chosen way That this way was, of all others, the most distressing to himself, was awkward enough, but the reddleman's love was generous

His first active step in watching Thomasin's interests was taken about seven o'clock the next evening, and was dictated by the news which he had learnt from the sad boy That Eustacia was somehow the cause of Wildeve's carelessness in relation to the marriage had at once been Venn's conclusion on hearing of the secret meeting between them It did not occur to his mind that Eustacia's love signal to Wildeve was the tender effect upon the deserted beauty of the intelligence which her grandfather had brought home His instinct was to regard her as a conspirator against rather than as an antecedent obstacle to Thomasin's happiness

During the day he had been exceedingly anxious to learn the condition of Thomasin, but he did not venture to intrude upon a threshold to which he was a stranger, particularly at such an unpleasant moment as this He had occupied his time in moving with his ponies and load to a new point in the heath, eastward to his previous station, and here he selected a nook with a careful eye to shelter from wind and rain, which seemed to mean that his stay there was to be a comparatively extended one After this he returned on foot some part of the way that he had come, and, it being now dark, he diverged to the left till he stood behind a holly-bush on the edge of a pit not twenty yards from Rainbarrow

He watched for a meeting there, but he watched in vain Nobody except himself came near the spot that night

But the loss of his labor produced little effect upon the reddleman He had stood in the shoes of Tantalus, and seemed to look upon a certain mass of disappointment as the natural preface to all realizations, without which preface they would give cause for alarm

The same hour the next evening found him again at the same place, but Eustacia and Wildeve, the expected trysters, did not appear

He pursued precisely the same course yet four nights longer, and without success But on the next, being the day-week of their previous meeting, he saw a female shape floating along the ridge and the outline of a young man ascending from the valley They met in the little ditch encircling the barrow—the original excavation from which it had been thrown up by the ancient British people

The reddleman, stung with suspicion of wrong to Thomasin, was aroused to strategy in a moment He instantly left the bush and crept forward on his hands and knees When he had got as close as he might safely venture without discovery he found that, owing to a cross-wind, the conversation of the trysting pair could not be overheard

Near him, as in divers places about the heath, were areas strewn with large turves, which lay edgeways and upside-down awaiting removal by Timothy Fairway, previous to the winter weather He took two of these as he lay, and dragged them over him till one covered his head and shoulders, the other his back and legs The reddleman would now have been quite invisible, even by daylight, the turves, standing upon him with the heather upwards, looked precisely as if they were growing He crept along again, and the turves upon

his back crept with him. Had he approached without any covering the chances are that he would not have been perceived in the dusk, approaching thus, it was as though he burrowed underground. In this manner he came quite close to where the two were standing.

"Wish to consult me on the matter?" reached his ears in the rich, impetuous accents of Eustacia Vye. "Consult me? It is an indignity to me to talk so. I won't bear it any longer!" She began weeping. "I have loved you, and have shown you that I loved you, much to my regret, and yet you can come and say in that frigid way that you wish to consult with me whether it would not be better to marry Thomasin. Better—of course it would be. Marry her, she is nearer to your own position in life than I am!"

"Yes, yes, that's very well," said Wildeve preemptorily. "But we must look at things as they are. Whatever blame may attach to me for having brought it about, Thomasin's position is at present much worse than yours. I simply tell you that I am in a strait."

"But you shall not tell me! You must see that it is only harassing me. Damon, you have not acted well, you have sunk in my opinion. You have not valued my courtesy—the courtesy of a lady in loving you—who used to think of far more ambitious things. But it was Thomasin's fault. She won you away from me, and she deserves to suffer for it. Where is she staying now? Not that I care, nor where I am myself. Ah, if I were dead and gone how glad she would be! Where is she, I ask?"

"Thomasin is now staying at her aunt's shut up in a bedroom, and keeping out of everybody's sight," he said indifferently.

"I don't think you care much about her even now," said Eustacia with sudden joyousness, "for if you did you wouldn't talk so coolly about her. Do you talk so coolly to her about me? Ah, I expect you do! Why did you originally go away from me? I don't think I can ever forgive you, except on one condition, that whenever you desert me, you come back again, sorry that you served me so."

"I never wish to desert you."

"I do not thank you for that. I should hate it to be all smooth. Indeed, I think I like you to desert me a little once now and then. Love is the dismalest thing where the lover is quite honest. O, it is a shame to say so, but it is true!" She indulged in a little laugh. "My low spirits begin at the very idea. Don't you offer me tame love, or away you go!"

"I wish Tamsie were not such a confoundedly good little woman," said Wildeve, "so that I could be faithful to you without injuring a worthy person. It is I who am the sinner after all, I am not worth the little finger of either of you."

"But you must not sacrifice yourself to her from any sense of justice," replied Eustacia quickly. "If you do not love her it is the most merciful thing in the long run to leave her as she is. That's always the best way. There, now I have been unwomanly, I suppose. When you have left me, I am always angry with myself for things that I have said to you."

Wildeve walked a pace or two among the heather without replying. The pause was filled up by the intonation of a pollard thorn a little way to wind-

ward, the breezes filtering through its unyielding twigs as through a strainer. It was as if the night sang dirges with clenched teeth.

She continued, half sorrowfully, "Since meeting you last, it has occurred to me once or twice that perhaps it was not for love of me you did not marry her. Tell me, Damon, I'll try to bear it. Had I nothing whatever to do with the matter?"

"Do you press me to tell?"

"Yes, I must know. I see I have been too ready to believe in my own power."

"Well, the immediate reason was that the license would not do for the place, and before I could get another she ran away. Up to that point you had nothing to do with it. Since then her aunt has spoken to me in a tone which I don't at all like."

"Yes, yes! I am nothing in it—I am nothing in it. You only trifle with me. Heaven, what can I, Eustacia Vye, be made of to think so much of you!"

"Nonsense, do not be so passionate. Eustacia, how we roved among these bushes last year, when the hot days had got cool, and the shades of the hills kept us almost invisible in the hollows!"

She remained in moody silence till she said, "Yes, and how I used to laugh at you for daring to look up to me! But you have well made me suffer for that since."

"Yes, you served me cruelly enough until I thought I had found some one fairer than you. A blessed find for me, Eustacia."

"Do you still think you found somebody fairer?"

"Sometimes I do, sometimes I don't. The scales are balanced so nicely that a feather would turn them."

"But don't you really care whether I meet you or whether I don't?" she said slowly.

"I care a little, but not enough to break my rest," replied the young man languidly. "No, all that's past. I find there are two flowers where I thought there was only one. Perhaps there are three, or four, or any number as good as the first. Mine is a curious fate. Who would have thought that all this could happen to me?"

She interrupted with a suppressed fire of which either love or anger seemed an equally possible issue, "Do you love me now?"

"Who can say?"

"Tell me, I will know it!"

"I do, and I do not," said he mischievously. "That is, I have my times and my seasons. One moment you are too tall, another moment you are too do-nothing, another too melancholy, another too dark, another I don't know what, except—that you are not the whole world to me that you used to be, my dear. But you are a pleasant lady to know, and nice to meet, and I dare say as sweet as ever—almost."

Eustacia was silent, and she turned from him, till she said, in a voice of suspended mightiness, "I am for a walk, and this is my way."

"Well, I can do worse than follow you."

"You know you can't do otherwise, for all your moods and changes!" she answered defiantly. "Say what you will, try as you may, keep away from

me all that you can—you will never forget me You will love me all your life long You would jump to marry me!"

"So I would!" said Wildeve "Such strange thoughts as I've had from time to time, Eustacia, and they come to me this moment You hate the heath as much as ever, that I know"

"I do," she murmured deeply "'Tis my cross, my misery, and will be my death!"

"I abhor it too," said he "How mournfully the wind blows round us now!"

She did not answer Its tone was indeed solemn and pervasive Compound utterances addressed themselves to their senses, and it was possible to view by ear the features of the neighborhood Acoustic pictures were returned from the darkened scenery, they could hear where the tracts of heather began and ended, where the furze was growing stalky and tall, where it had been recently cut, in what direction the fir-clump lay, and how near was the pit in which the hollies grew, for these differing features had their voices no less than their shapes and colors

"God, how lonely it is!" resumed Wildeve "What are picturesque ravines and mists to us who see nothing else? Why should we stay here? Will you go with me to America? I have kindred in Wisconsin"

"That wants consideration"

"It seems impossible to do well here, unless one were a wild bird or a landscape-painter Well?"

"Give me time," she softly said, taking his hand "America is so far away Are you going to walk with me a little way?"

As Eustacia uttered the latter words she retired from the base of the barrow, and Wildeve followed her, so that the reddleman could hear no more

He lifted the turves and arose Their black figures sank and disappeared from against the sky They were as two horns which the sluggish heath had put forth from its crown, like a mollusc, and had now again drawn in

The reddleman's walk across the vale, and over into the next where his cart lay, was not sprightly for a slim young fellow of twenty-four His spirit was perturbed to aching The breezes that blew around his mouth in that walk carried off in them the accents of a commination

He entered the van, where there was a fire in a stove Without lighting his candle he sat down at once on the three-legged stool, and pondered on what he had seen and heard touching that still loved-one of his He uttered a sound which was neither sigh nor sob, but was even more indicative than either of a troubled mind

"My Tamsie," he whispered heavily "What can be done? Yes, I will see that Eustacia Vye"

X A DESPERATE ATTEMPT AT PERSUASION

THE NEXT morning, at the time when the height of the sun appeared very insignificant from any part of the heath as compared with the altitude of Rainbarrow, and when all the little hills in the lower levels were like an archipelago in fog-formed Aegean, the reddleman came from the brambled nook which he had adopted as his quarters and ascended the slopes of Mistorver Knap

Though these shaggy hills were apparently so solitary, several keen round eyes were always ready on such a wintry morning as this to converge upon a passer-by Feathered species sojourned here in hiding which would have created wonder if found elsewhere A bustard haunted the spot, and not many years before this five and twenty might have been seen in Egdon at one time Marsh-harriers looked up from the valley by Wildev's A cream colored courser had used to visit this hill, a bird so rare that not more than a dozen have ever been seen in England, but a barbarian rested neither night nor day till he had shot the African truant, and after that event cream-colored coursers thought fit to enter Egdon no more

A traveler who should walk and observe any of these visitants as Venn observed them now could feel himself to be in direct communication with regions unknown to man Here in front of him was a wild mallard—just arrived from the home of the north wind The creature brought within him an amplitude of northern knowledge Glacial catastrophes, snow-storm episodes, glittering auroral effects, Polaris in the zenith, Franklin underfoot,—the category of his commonplaces was wonderful But the bird, like many other philosophers, seemed as he looked at the reddleman to think that a present moment of comfortable reality was worth a decade of memories

Venn passed on through these towards the house of the isolated beauty who lived up among them and despised them The day was Sunday, but as going to church, except to be married or buried, was exceptional at Egdon, this made little difference He had determined upon the bold stroke of asking for an interview with Miss Vye—to attack her position as Thomasin's rival either by art or by storm, showing therein, somewhat too conspicuously, the want of gallantry characteristic of a certain astute sort of men, from clowns to kings The great Frederick making war on the beautiful Archduchess, Napoleon refusing terms to the beautiful Queen of Prussia, were not more dead to difference of sex than the reddleman was, in his peculiar way, in planning the displacement of Eustacia

To call at the captain's cottage was always more or less an undertaking for the inferior inhabitants Though occasionally chatty, his moods were erratic, and nobody could be certain how he would behave at any particular moment Eustacia was reserved, and lived very much to herself Except the daughter of one of the cotters, who was their servant, and a lad who worked in the garden and stable, scarcely any one but themselves ever entered the house They were the only genteel people of the district except the Yeobrights, and though far

from rich, they did not feel that necessity for preserving a friendly face towards every man, bird, and beast which influenced their poorer neighbors

When the reddleman entered the garden the old man was looking through his glass at the stain of blue in the distant landscape, the little anchors on his buttons twinkling in the sun. He recognized Venn as his companion on the highway, but made no remark on that circumstance, merely saying, "Ah, reddleman—you here? Have a glass of grog?"

Venn declined, on the plea of it being too early, and stated that his business was with Miss Vye. The captain surveyed him from cap to waistcoat and from waistcoat to leggings for a few moments, and finally asked him to go indoors.

Miss Vye was not to be seen by anybody just then, and the reddleman waited in the window-bench of the kitchen, his hands hanging across his divergent knees, and his cap hanging from his hands.

"I suppose the young lady is not up yet?" he presently said to the servant.

"Not quite yet. Folks never call upon ladies at this time of day."

"Then I'll step outside," said Venn. "If she is willing to see me, will she please send out word, and I'll come in."

The reddleman left the house and loitered on the hill adjoining. A considerable time elapsed, and no request for his presence was brought. He was beginning to think that his scheme had failed, when he beheld the form of Eustacia herself coming leisurely towards him. A sense of novelty in giving audience to that singular figure had been sufficient to draw her forth.

She seemed to feel, after a bare look at Diggory Venn, that the man had come on a strange errand, and that he was not so mean as she had thought him, for her close approach did not cause him to writhe uneasily, or shift his feet, or show any of those little signs which escape an ingenuous rustic at the advent of the uncommon in womankind. On his inquiring if he might have a conversation with her she replied, "Yes, walk beside me", and continued to move on.

Before they had gone far it occurred to the perspicacious reddleman that he would have acted more wisely by appearing less unimpressible, and he resolved to correct the error as soon as he could find opportunity.

"I have made so bold, miss, as to step across and tell you some strange news which has come to my ears about that man."

"Ah! what man?"

He jerked his elbow to the south-east—the direction of the Quiet Woman. Eustacia turned quickly to him. "Do you mean Mr. Wildeve?"

"Yes, there is trouble in a household on account of him, and I have come to let you know of it, because I believe you might have power to drive it away."

"I? What is the trouble?"

"It is quite a secret. It is that he may refuse to marry Thomasin Yeobright after all."

Eustacia, though set inwardly pulsing by his words, was equal to her part in such a drama as this. She replied coldly, "I do not wish to listen to this, and you must not expect me to interfere."

"But, miss, you will hear one word?"

"I cannot I am not interested in the marriage, and even if I were I could not compel Mr Wildeve to do my bidding"

"As the only lady on the heath I think you might," said Venn with subtle indirectness "This is how the case stands Mr Wildeve would marry Thomasin at once, and make all matters smooth, if so be there were not another woman in the case This other woman is some person he has picked up with, and meets on the heath occasionally, I believe He will never marry her, and yet through her he may never marry the woman who loves him dearly Now, if you, miss, who have so much sway over us men-folk, were to insist that he should treat your young neighbor Tamsin with honorable kindness and give up the other woman, he would perhaps do it, and save her a good deal of misery"

"Ah, my life!" said Eustacia, with a laugh which unclosed her lips, so that the sun shone into her mouth as into a tulip, and lent it a similar scarlet fire "You think too much of my influence over men-folk indeed, reddleman If I had such a power as you imagine I would go straight and use it for the good of anybody who has been kind to me—which Thomasin Yeobright has not particularly, to my knowledge"

"Can it be that you really don't know of it—how much she has always thought of you?"

"I have never heard a word of it Although we live only two miles apart I have never been inside her aunt's house in my life"

The superciliousness that lurked in her manner told Venn that thus far he had utterly failed He inwardly sighed and felt it necessary to unmask his second argument

"Well, leaving that out of the question, 'tis in your power, I assure you, Miss Vye, to do a great deal of good to another woman"

She shook her head

"Your comeliness is law with Mr Wildeve It is law with all men who see ye They say, 'This well-favored lady coming—what's her name? How handsome!' Handsomer than Thomasin Yeobright," the reddleman persisted, saying to himself, "God forgive a rascal for lying!" And she was handsomer, but the reddleman was far from thinking so There was a certain obscurity in Eustacia's beauty, and Venn's eye was not trained In her winter dress, as now, she was like the tiger-beetle, which, when observed in dull situations, seems to be of the quietest neutral color, but under a full illumination blazes with dazzling splendor

Eustacia could not help replying, though conscious that she endangered her dignity thereby "Many women are lovelier than Thomasin," she said, "so not much attaches to that"

The reddleman suffered the wound and went on "He is a man who notices the looks of women, and you could twist him to your will like withywind, if you only had the mind"

"Surely what she cannot do who has been so much with him I cannot do living up here away from him"

The reddleman wheeled and looked her in the face "Miss Vye!" he said

"Why do you say that—as if you doubted me?" She spoke faintly, and her

breathing was quick "The idea of your speaking in that tone to me!" she added, with a forced smile of hauteur "What could have been in your mind to lead you to speak like that?"

"Miss Vye, why should you make-believe that you don't know this man?—I know why, certainly He is beneath you, and you are ashamed"

"You are mistaken What do you mean?"

The reddleman had decided to play the card of truth "I was at the meeting by Rainbarrow last night and heard every word," he said "The woman that stands between Wildeva and Thomasin is yourself"

It was a disconcerting lift of the curtain, and the mortification of Candaules' wife glowed in her The moment had arrived when her lip would tremble in spite of herself, and when the gasp could no longer be kept down

"I am unwell," she said hurriedly "No—it is not that—I am not in a humor to hear you further Leave me, please"

"I must speak, Miss Vye, in spite of paining you What I would put before you is this However it may come about—whether she is to blame, or you—her case is without doubt worse than yours Your giving up Mr Wildeva will be a real advantage to you, for how could you marry him? Now she cannot get off so easily—everybody will blame her if she loses him Then I ask you—not because her right is best, but because her situation is worst—to give him up to her"

"No—I won't, I won't!" she said impetuously, quite forgetful of her previous manner towards the reddleman as an underling "Nobody has ever been served so! It was going on well—I will not be beaten down—by an inferior woman like her It is very well for you to come and plead for her, but is she not herself the cause of all her own trouble? Am I not to show favor to any person I may choose without asking permission of a parcel of cottagers? She has come between me and my inclination, and now that she finds herself rightly punished she gets you to plead for her!"

"Indeed," said Venn earnestly, "she knows nothing whatever about it It is only I who ask you to give him up It will be better for her and you both People will say bad things if they find out that a lady secretly meets a man who has ill-used another woman"

"I have *not* injured her he was mine before he was hers! He came back—because—because he liked me best!" she said wildly "But I lose all self-respect in talking to you What am I giving way to!"

"I can keep secrets," said Venn gently "You need not fear I am the only man who knows of your meetings with him There is but one thing more to speak of, and then I will be gone I heard you say to him that you hated living here—that Egdon heath was a jail to you"

"I did say so There is a sort of beauty in the scenery, I know, but it is a jail for me The man you mention does not save me from that feeling, though he lives here I should have cared nothing for him had there been a better person near"

The reddleman looked hopeful after these words from her his third attempt seemed promising "As we have now opened our minds a bit, miss," he said,

"I'll tell you what I have got to propose Since I have taken to the reddle trade I travel a good deal, as you know"

She inclined her head, and swept round so that her eyes rested in the misty vale beneath them

"And in my travels I go near Budmouth Now Budmouth is a wonderful place—wonderful—a great salt sheening sea bending into the land like a bow—thousands of gentlepeople walking up and down—bands of music playing—officers by sea and officers by land walking among the rest—out of every ten folk you meet nine of 'em in love"

"I know it," she said disdainfully "I know Budmouth better than you I was born there My father came to be a military musician there from abroad Ah, my soul, Budmouth! I wish I was there now"

The reddleman was surprised to see how a slow fire could blaze on occasion "If you were, miss," he replied, "in a week's time you would think no more of Wildeve than of one of those he'th-croppers that we see yond Now, I could get you there"

"How?" said Eustacia, with intense curiosity in her heavy eyes

"My uncle has been for five and twenty years the trusty man of a rich widow-lady who has a beautiful house facing the sea This lady has become old and lame, and she wants a young company-keeper to read and sing to her, but can't get one to her mind to save her life, though she've advertised in the papers, and tried half a dozen She would jump to get you, and uncle would make it all easy"

"I should have to work, perhaps?"

"No, not real work you'd have a little to do, such as reading and that You would not be wanted till New Year's Day"

"I knew it meant work," she said, drooping to languor again

"I confess there would be a trifle to do in the way of amusing her, but though idle people might call it work, working people would call it play Think of the company and the life you'd lead, miss, the gaiety you'd see, and the gentleman you'd marry My uncle is to inquire for a trustworthy young lady from the country, as she don't like town girls"

"It is to wear myself out to please her! and I won't go O, if I could live in a gay town as a lady should, and go my own ways, and do my own doings, I'd give the wrinkled half of my life! Yes, reddleman, that would I"

"Help me to get Thomasin happy, miss, and the chance shall be yours," urged her companion

"Chance!—'tis no chance," she said proudly "What can a poor man like you offer me, indeed?—I am going indoors I have nothing more to say Don't your horses want feeding, or your reddlebags want mending, or don't you want to find buyers for your goods, that you stay idling here like this?"

Venn spoke not another word With his hands behind him he turned away, that she might not see the hopeless disappointment in his face The mental clearness and power he had found in this lonely girl had indeed filled his manner with misgiving even from the first few minutes of close quarters with her Her youth and situation had led him to expect a simplicity quite at the beck of his method But a system of inducement which might have carried weaker

country lasses along with it had merely repelled Eustacia. As a rule, the word Budmouth meant fascination on Egdon. That rising port and watering-place, if truly mirrored in the minds of the heath folk, must have combined, in a charming and indescribable manner, a Carthaginian bustle of building with Tarentine luxuriousness and Baian health and beauty. Eustacia felt little less extravagantly about the place, but she would not sink her independence to get there.

When Diggory Venn had gone quite away, Eustacia walked to the bank and looked down the wild and picturesque vale towards the sun, which was also in the direction of Wildeve's. The mist had now so far collapsed that the tips of the trees and bushes around his house could just be discerned, as if boring upwards through a vast white cobweb which cloaked them from the day. There was no doubt that her mind was inclined thitherward, indefinitely, fancifully—twining and untwining about him as the single object within her horizon on which dreams might crystallize. The man who had begun by being merely her amusement, and would never have been more than her hobby but for his skill in deserting her at the right moments, was now again her desire. Cessation in his love making had revived her love. Such feeling as Eustacia had idly given to Wildeve was dammed into a flood by Thomasin. She had used to tease Wildeve, but that was before another had favored him. Often a drop of irony into an indifferent situation renders the whole piquant.

"I will never give him up—never!" she said impetuously.

The reddleman's hint that rumor might show her to disadvantage had no permanent terror for Eustacia. She was as unconcerned at that contingency as a goddess at a lack of linen. This did not originate in inherent shamelessness, but in her living too far from the world to feel the impact of public opinion. Zenobia in the desert could hardly have cared what was said about her at Rome. As far as social ethics were concerned Eustacia approached the savage state, though in emotion she was all the while an epicure. She had advanced to the secret recesses of sensuousness, yet had hardly crossed the threshold of conventionality.

XI THE DISHONESTY OF AN HONEST WOMAN

THE REDDLEMAN had left Eustacia's presence with desponding views on Thomasin's future happiness, but he was awakened to the fact that one other channel remained untried by seeing, as he followed the way to his van, the form of Mrs Yeobright slowly walking towards the Quiet Woman. He went across to her, and could almost perceive in her anxious face that this journey of hers to Wildeve was undertaken with the same object as his own to Eustacia.

She did not conceal the fact. "Then," said the reddleman, "you may as well leave it alone, Mrs Yeobright."

"I half think so myself," she said. "But nothing else remains to be done besides pressing the question upon him."

"I should like to say a word first," said Venn, firmly. "Mr Wildeve is not

the only man who has asked Thomasin to marry him, and why should not another have a chance? Mrs Yeobright, I should be glad to marry your niece, and would have done it any time these last two years. There, now it is out, and I have never told anybody before but herself."

Mrs Yeobright was not demonstrative, but her eyes involuntarily glanced towards his singular though shapely figure.

"Looks are not everything," said the reddleman, noticing the glance. "There's many a calling that don't bring in so much as mine, if it comes to money, and perhaps I am not so much worse off than Wildeve. There is nobody so poor as these professional fellows who have failed, and if you shouldn't like my redness—well, I am not red by birth, you know, I only took to this business for a freak, and I might turn my hand to something else in good time."

"I am much obliged to you for your interest in my niece, but I fear there would be objections. More than that, she is devoted to this man."

"True, or I shouldn't have done what I have this morning."

"Otherwise there would be no pain in the case, and you would not see me going to his house now. What was Thomasin's answer when you told her of your feelings?"

"She wrote that you would object to me, and other things."

"She was in a measure right. You must not take this unkindly. I merely state it as a truth. You have been good to her, and we do not forget it. But as she was unwilling on her own account to be your wife, that settles the point without my wishes being concerned."

"Yes. But there is a difference between then and now, ma'am. She is distressed now, and I have thought that if you were to talk to her about me, and think favorably of me yourself, there might be a chance of winning her round, and getting her quite independent of this Wildeve's backward and forward play, and his not knowing whether he'll have her or no."

Mrs Yeobright shook her head. "Thomasin thinks, and I think with her, that she ought to be Wildeve's wife, if she means to appear before the world without a slur upon her name. If they marry soon, everybody will believe that an accident did really prevent the wedding. If not, it may cast a shade upon her character—at any rate make her ridiculous. In short, if it is anyhow possible they must marry now."

"I thought that till half an hour ago. But, after all, why should her going off with him to Anglebury for a few hours do her any harm? Anybody who knows how pure she is will feel any such thought to be quite unjust. I have been trying this morning to help on this marriage with Wildeve—yes, I, ma'am—in the belief that I ought to do it, because she was so wrapped up in him. But I much question if I was right, after all. However, nothing came of it. And now I offer myself."

Mrs Yeobright appeared disinclined to enter further into the question. "I fear I must go on," she said. "I do not see that anything else can be done."

And she went on. But though this conversation did not divert Thomasin's aunt from her purposed interview with Wildeve, it made a considerable difference in her mode of conducting that interview. She thanked God for the weapon which the reddleman had put into her hands.

Wildeve was at home when she reached the inn. He showed her silently into the parlor, and closed the door. Mrs. Yeobright began—

"I have thought it my duty to call today. A new proposal has been made to me, which has rather astonished me. It will affect Thomasin greatly, and I have decided that it should at least be mentioned to you."

"Yes? What is it?" he said civilly.

"It is, of course, in reference to her future. You may not be aware that another man has shown himself anxious to marry Thomasin. Now, though I have not encouraged him yet, I cannot conscientiously refuse him a chance any longer. I don't wish to be short with you, but I must be fair to him and to her."

"Who is the man?" said Wildeve with surprise.

"One who has been in love with her longer than she has with you. He proposed to her two years ago. At that time she refused him."

"Well?"

"He has seen her lately, and has asked me for permission to pay his addresses to her. She may not refuse him twice."

"What is his name?"

Mrs. Yeobright declined to say "He is a man Thomasin likes," she added, "and one whose constancy she respects at least. It seems to me that what she refused then she would be glad to get now. She is much annoyed at her awkward position."

"She never once told me of this old lover."

"The gentlest women are not such fools as to show *every* card."

"Well, if she wants him I suppose she must have him."

"It is easy enough to say that, but you don't see the difficulty. He wants her much more than she wants him, and before I can encourage anything of the sort I must have a clear understanding from you that you will not interfere to injure an arrangement which I promote in the belief that it is for the best. Suppose, when they are engaged, and everything is smoothly arranged for their marriage, that you should step between them and renew your suit? You might not win her back, but you might cause much unhappiness."

"Of course I should do no such thing," said Wildeve. "But they are not engaged yet. How do you know that Thomasin would accept him?"

"That's a question I have carefully put to myself, and upon the whole the probabilities are in favor of her accepting him in time. I flatter myself that I have some influence over her. She is pliable, and I can be strong in my recommendations of him."

"And in your disparagement of me at the same time?"

"Well, you may depend upon my not praising you," she said dryly. "And if this seems like maneuvering, you must remember that her position is peculiar, and that she has been hardly used. I shall also be helped in making the match by her own desire to escape from the humiliation of her present state, and a woman's pride in these cases will lead her a very great way. A little managing may be required to bring her round, but I am equal to that, provided that you agree to the one thing indispensable, that is, to make a distinct

declaration that she is to think no more of you as a possible husband That will pique her into accepting him "

"I can hardly say that just now, Mrs Yeobright It is so sudden "

"And so my whole plan is interfered with! It is very inconvenient that you refuse to help my family even to the small extent of saying distinctly you will have nothing to do with us "

Wildeve reflected uncomfortably "I confess I was not prepared for this," he said "Of course I'll give her up if you wish, if it is necessary But I thought I might be her husband "

"We have heard that before "

"Now, Mrs Yeobright, don't let us disagree Give me a fair time I don't want to stand in the way of any better chance she may have, only I wish you had let me know earlier I will write to you or call in a day or two Will that suffice?"

"Yes," she replied, "provided you promise not to communicate with Thomasin without my knowledge "

"I promise that," he said And the interview then terminated, Mrs Yeobright returning homeward as she had come

By far the greatest effect of her simple strategy on that day was, as often happens, in a quarter quite outside her view when arranging it In the first place, her visit sent Wildeve the same evening after dark to Eustacia's house at Mistover

At this hour the lonely dwelling was closely blinded and shuttered from the chill and darkness without Wildeve's clandestine plan with her was to take a little gravel in his hand and hold it to the crevice at the top of the window-shutter, which was on the outside, so that it should fall with a gentle rustle, resembling that of a mouse, between shutter and glass This precaution in attracting her attention was to avoid arousing the suspicions of her grandfather

The soft words, "I hear, wait for me," in Eustacia's voice from within told him that she was alone

He waited in his customary manner by walking round the enclosure and idling by the pool, for Wildeve was never asked into the house by his proud though condescending mistress She showed no sign of coming out in a hurry The time wore on, and he began to grow impatient In the course of twenty minutes she appeared from round the corner, and advanced as if merely taking an airing

"You would not have kept me so long had you known what I come about," he said with bitterness "Still, you are worth waiting for "

"What has happened?" said Eustacia "I did not know you were in trouble I too am gloomy enough "

"I am not in trouble," said he "It is merely that affairs have come to a head, and I must take a clear course "

"What course is that?" she asked with attentive interest

"And can you forget so soon what I proposed to you the other night? Why, take you from this place, and carry you away with me abroad "

"I have not forgotten But why have you come so unexpectedly to repeat the

question, when you only promised to come next Saturday? I thought I was to have plenty of time to consider "

"Yes, but the situation is different now "

"Explain to me "

"I don't want to explain, for I may pain you "

"But I must know the reason of this hurry "

"It is simply my ardor, dear Eustacia Everything is smooth now "

"Then why are you so ruffled? "

"I am not aware of it All is as it should be Mrs Yeobright—but she is nothing to us "

"Ah, I knew she had something to do with it! Come, I don't like reserve "

"No—she has nothing She only says she wishes me to give up Thomasin because another man is anxious to marry her The woman, now she no longer needs me, actually shows off!" Wildev's vexation had escaped him in spite of himself

Eustacia was silent a long while "You are in the awkward position of an official who is no longer wanted," she said in a changed tone

"It seems so But I have not yet seen Thomasin "

"And that irritates you Don't deny it, Damon You are actually nettled by this slight from an unexpected quarter "

"Well? "

"And you come to get me because you cannot get her This is certainly a new position altogether I am to be a stop gap "

"Please remember that I proposed the same thing the other day "

Eustacia again remained in a sort of stupefied silence What curious feeling was this coming over her? Was it really possible that her interest in Wildev had been so entirely the result of antagonism that the glory and the dream departed from the man with the first sound that he was no longer coveted by her rival? She was, then, secure of him at last Thomasin no longer required him What a humiliating victory! He loved her best, she thought, and yet—dared she to murmur such treacherous criticism ever so softly?—what was the man worth whom a woman inferior to herself did not value? The sentiment which lurks more or less in all animate nature—that of not desiring the undesired of others—was lively as a passion in the supersubtle, epicurean heart of Eustacia Her social superiority over him, which hitherto had scarcely ever impressed her, became unpleasantly insistent, and for the first time she felt that she had stooped in loving him

"Well, darling, you agree? " said Wildev

"If it could be London, or even Budmouth, instead of America," she murmured languidly "Well, I will think It is too great a thing for me to decide off-hand I wish I hated the heath less—or loved you more "

"You can be painfully frank You loved me a month ago warmly enough to go anywhere with me "

"And you loved Thomasin "

"Yes, perhaps that was where the reason lay," he returned, with almost a sneer "I don't hate her now "

"Exactly The only thing is that you can no longer get her "

"Come—no taunts, Eustacia, or we shall quarrel. If you don't agree to go with me, and agree shortly, I shall go by myself."

"Or try Thomasin again. Damon, how strange it seems that you could have married her or me indifferently, and only have come to me because I am—cheapest! Yes, yes—it is true. There was a time when I should have exclaimed against a man of that sort, and been quite wild, but it is all past now."

"Will you go, dearest? Come secretly with me to Bristol, marry me, and turn our backs upon this dog-hole of England for ever? Say Yes."

"I want to get away from here at almost any cost," she said with weariness, "but I don't like to go with you. Give me more time to decide."

"I have already," said Wildeve. "Well, I give you one more week."

"A little longer, so that I may tell you decisively. I have to consider so many things. Fancy Thomasin being anxious to get rid of you! I cannot forget it."

"Never mind that. Say Monday week. I will be here precisely at this time."

"Let it be at Rainbarrow," said she. "This is too near home, my grandfather may be walking out."

"Thank you, dear. On Monday week at this time I will be at the Barrow. Till then good-bye."

"Good-bye. No, no, you must not touch me now. Shaking hands is enough till I have made up my mind."

Eustacia watched his shadowy form till it had disappeared. She placed her hand to her forehead and breathed heavily, and then her rich, romantic lips parted under that homely impulse—a yawn. She was immediately angry at having betrayed even to herself the possible evanescence of her passion for him. She could not admit at once that she might have over-estimated Wildeve, for to perceive his mediocrity now was to admit her own great folly heretofore. And the discovery that she was the owner of a disposition so purely that of the dog in the manger, had something in it which at first made her ashamed.

The fruit of Mrs. Yeobright's diplomacy was indeed remarkable, though not as yet of the kind she had anticipated. It had appreciably influenced Wildeve, but it was influencing Eustacia far more. Her lover was no longer to her an exciting man whom many women strove for, and herself could only retain by striving with them. He was a superfluity.

She went indoors in that peculiar state of misery which is not exactly grief, and which especially attends the dawns of reason in the latter days of an ill-judged, transient love. To be conscious that the end of the dream is approaching, and yet has not absolutely come, is one of the most wearisome as well as the most curious stages along the course between the beginning of a passion and its end.

Her grandfather had returned, and was busily engaged in pouring some gallons of newly arrived rum into the square bottles of his square cellaret. Whenever these home supplies were exhausted he would go to the Quiet Woman, and, standing with his back to the fire, grog in hand, tell remarkable stories of how he had lived seven years under the waterline of his ship, and other naval wonders, to the natives, who hoped too earnestly for a treat of ale from the teller to exhibit any doubts of his truth.

He had been there this evening "I suppose you have heard the Egdon news, Eustacia?" he said, without looking up from the bottles "The men have been talking about it at the Woman as if it were of national importance"

"I have heard none," she said

"Young Clym Yeobright, as they call him, is coming home next week to spend Christmas with his mother He is a fine fellow by this time, it seems I suppose you remember him?"

"I never saw him in my life"

"Ah, true, he left before you came here I well remember him as a promising boy"

"Where has he been living all these years?"

"In that rookery of pomp and vanity, Paris, I believe"

BOOK SECOND THE ARRIVAL

I TIDINGS OF THE COMER

ON FINE days at this time of the year, and earlier, certain ephemeral operations were apt to disturb, in their trifling way, the majestic calm of Egdon Heath They were activities which, beside those of a town, a village, or even a farm, would have appeared as the ferment of stagnation merely, a creeping of the flesh of somnolence But here, away from comparisons, shut in by the stable hills, among which mere walking had the novelty of pageantry, and where any man could imagine himself to be Adam without the least difficulty, they attracted the attention of every bird within eyeshot, every reptile not yet asleep, and set the surrounding rabbits curiously watching from hillocks at a safe distance

The performance was that of bringing together and building into a stack the furze faggots which Humphrey had been cutting for the captain's use during the foregoing fine days The stack was at the end of the dwelling, and the men engaged in building it were Humphrey and Sam, the old man looking on

It was a fine and quiet afternoon, about three o'clock, but the winter solstice having stealthily come on, the lowness of the sun caused the hour to seem later than it actually was, there being little here to remind an inhabitant that he must unlearn his summer experience of the sky as a dial In the course of many days and weeks sunrise had advanced its quarters from north east to south-east, sunset had receded from north-west to south-west, but Egdon had hardly heeded the change

Eustacia was indoors in the dining-room, which was really more like a kitchen, having a stone floor and a gaping chimney-corner The air was still, and while she lingered a moment here alone sounds of voices in conversation came to her ears directly down the chimney She entered the recess, and, listening, looked up the old irregular shaft, with its cavernous hollows, where the smoke blundered about on its way to the square bit of sky at the top, from

which the daylight struck down with a pallid glare upon the tatters of soot draping the flue as sea weed drapes a rocky fissure

She remembered the furze stack was not far from the chimney, and the voices were those of the workers

Her grandfather joined in the conversation "That lad ought never to have left home His father's occupation would have suited him best, and the boy should have followed on I don't believe in these new moves in families My father was a sailor, so was I, and so should my son have been if I had had one"

"The place he's been living at is Paris," said Humphrey, "and they tell me 'tis where the king's head was cut off years ago My poor mother used to tell me about that business 'Hummy,' she used to say, 'I was a young maid then, and as I was at home ironing mother's caps one afternoon the parson came in and said, 'They've cut the king's head off, Jane, and what 'twill be next God knows''"

"A good many of us knew as well as He before long," said the captain, chuckling "I lived seven years under water on account of it in my boyhood—in that damned surgery of the *Triumph*, seeing men brought down to the cockpit with their legs and arms blown to Jericho And so the young man has settled in Paris Manager to a diamond merchant, or some such thing, is he not?"

"Yes, sir, that's it 'Tis a blazing great business that he belongs to, so I've heard his mother say—like a king's palace, as far as diments go"

"I can well mind when he left home," said Sam

"'Tis a good thing for the feller," said Humphrey "A sight of times better to be selling diments than nobbling about here"

"It must cost a good few shillings to deal at such a place"

"A good few indeed, my man," replied the captain "Yes, you may make away with a deal of money and be neither drunkard nor glutton"

"They say, too, that Clym Yeobright is become a real perusing man, with the strangest notions about things There, that's because he went to school early, such as the school was"

"Strange notions, has he?" said the old man "Ah, there's too much of that sending to school in these days! It only does harm Every gatepost and barn's door you come to is sure to have some bad word or other chalked upon it by the young rascals a woman can hardly pass for shame sometimes If they'd never been taught how to write they wouldn't have been able to scribble such villany Their fathers couldn't do it, and the country was all the better for it"

"Now, I should think, cap'n, that Miss Eustacia had about as much in her head that comes from books as anybody about here?"

"Perhaps if Miss Eustacia, too, had less romantic nonsense in her head it would be better for her," said the captain shortly, after which he walked away

"I say, Sam," observed Humphrey when the old man was gone, "she and Clym Yeobright would make a very pretty pigeon pair—hey? If they wouldn't I'll be dazed! Both of one mind about niceties for certain, and learned in print, and always thinking about high doctrine—there couldn't be a better couple if they were made o' purpose Clym's family is as good as hers His father was a

farmer, that's true, but his mother was a sort of lady, as we know Nothing would please me better than to see them two man and wife"

"They'd look very natty, arm-in crook together, and their best clothes on, whether or no, if he's at all the well-favored fellow he used to be"

"They would, Humphrey Well, I should like to see the chap terrible much after so many years If I knew for certain when he was coming I'd stroll out three or four miles to meet him and help carry anything for'n, though I suppose he's altered from the boy he was They say he can talk French as fast as a maid can eat blackberries, and if so, depend upon it we who have stayed at home shall seem no more than scroff in his eyes"

"Coming across the water to Budmouth by steamer, isn't he?"

"Yes, but how he's coming from Budmouth I don't know"

"That's a bad trouble about his cousin Thomasin I wonder such a nice notioned fellow as Clym likes to come home into it What a nunnywatch we were in, to be sure, when we heard they weren't married at all, after singing to 'em as man and wife that night! Be dazed if I should like a relation of mine to have been made such a fool of by a man It makes the family look small"

"Yes Poor maid, her heart has ached enough about it Her health is suffering from it, I hear, for she will bide entirely indoors We never see her out now, scampering over the furze with a face as red as a rose, as she used to do"

"I've heard she wouldn't have Wildeve now if he asked her"

"You have? 'Tis news to me"

While the furze gatherers had desultorily conversed thus Eustacia's face gradually bent to the hearth in a profound reverie, her toe unconsciously tapping the dry turf which lay burning at her feet

The subject of their discourse had been keenly interesting to her A young and clever man was coming into that lonely heath from, of all contrasting places in the world, Paris It was like a man coming from heaven More singular still, the heathmen had instinctively coupled her and this man together in their minds as a pair born for each other

That five minutes of overhearing furnished Eustacia with visions enough to fill the whole blank afternoon Such sudden alternations from mental vacuity do sometimes occur thus quietly She could never have believed in the morning that her colorless inner world would before night become as animated as water under a microscope, and that without the arrival of a single visitor The words of Sam and Humphrey on the harmony between the unknown and herself had on her mind the effect of the invading Bard's prelude in the "Castle of Indolence," at which myriads of imprisoned shapes arose where had previously appeared the stillness of a void

Involved in these imaginings she knew nothing of time When she became conscious of externals it was dusk The furze-rick was finished, the men had gone home Eustacia went upstairs, thinking that she would take a walk at this her usual time, and she determined that her walk should be in the direction of Blooms-End, the birthplace of young Yeobright and the present home of his mother She had no reason for walking elsewhere, and why should she not go that way? The scene of a day-dream is sufficient for a pilgrimage at nineteen To look at the palings before the Yeobrights' house had the dignity

of a necessary performance Strange that such a piece of idling should have seemed an important errand

She put on her bonnet, and, leaving the house, descended the hill on the side towards Blooms End, where she walked slowly along the valley for a distance of a mile and a half This brought her to a spot in which the green bottom of the dale began to widen, the furze bushes to recede yet further from the path on each side, till they were diminished to an isolated one here and there by the increasing fertility of the soil Beyond the irregular carpet of grass was a row of white palings, which marked the verge of the heath in this latitude They showed upon the dusky scene that they bordered as distinctly as white lace on velvet Behind the white palings was a little garden, behind the garden an old, irregular, thatched house, facing the heath, and commanding a full view of the valley This was the obscure, removed spot to which was about to return a man whose latter life had been passed in the French capital—the center and vortex of the fashionable world

II THE PEOPLE AT BLOOMS END MAKE READY

ALL THAT afternoon the expected arrival of the subject of Eustacia's ruminations created a bustle of preparation at Blooms-End Thomasin had been persuaded by her aunt, and by an instinctive impulse of loyalty towards her cousin Clym, to bestir herself on his account with an alacrity unusual in her during these most sorrowful days of her life At the time that Eustacia was listening to the rick-makers' conversation on Clym's return, Thomasin was climbing into a loft over her aunt's fuel-house, where the store-apples were kept, to search out the best and largest of them for the coming holiday-time

The loft was lighted by a semicircular hole, through which the pigeons crept to their lodgings in the same high quarters of the premises, and from this hole the sun shone in a bright yellow patch upon the figure of the maiden as she knelt and plunged her naked arms into the soft brown fern, which, from its abundance, was used on Egdon in packing away stores of all kinds The pigeons were flying about her head with the greatest unconcern, and the face of her aunt was just visible above the floor of the loft, lit by a few stray motes of light, as she stood half-way up the ladder, looking at a spot into which she was not climber enough to venture

"Now a few russets, Tamsin He used to like them almost as well as rib-stones"

Thomasin turned and rolled aside the fern from another nook, where more mellow fruit greeted her with its ripe smell Before picking them out she stopped a moment

"Dear Clym, I wonder how your face looks now?" she said, gazing abstractedly at the pigeon-hole, which admitted the sunlight so directly upon her brown hair and transparent tissues that it almost seemed to shine through her

"If he could have been dear to you in another way," said Mrs Yeobright from the ladder, "this might have been a happy meeting"

"Is there any use in saying what can do no good, aunt?"

"Yes," said her aunt, with some warmth "To thoroughly fill the air with the past misfortune, so that other girls may take warning and keep clear of it"

Thomasin lowered her face to the apples again "I am a warning to others, just as thieves and drunkards and gamblers are," she said in a low voice "What a class to belong to! Do I really belong to them? 'Tis absurd! Yet why, aunt, does everybody keep on making me think that I do, by the way they behave towards me? Why don't people judge me by my acts? Now, look at me as I kneel here, picking up these apples—do I look like a lost woman? I wish all good women were as good as I!" she added vehemently

"Strangers don't see you as I do," said Mrs Yeobright, "they judge from false report Well, it is a silly job, and I am partly to blame"

"How quickly a rash thing can be done!" replied the girl Her lips were quivering, and tears so crowded themselves into her eyes that she could hardly distinguish apples from fern as she continued industriously searching to hide her weakness

"As soon as you have finished getting the apples," her aunt said, descending the ladder, "come down, and we'll go for the holly There is nobody on the heath this afternoon, and you need not fear being stared at We must get some berries, or Clym will never believe in our preparations"

Thomasin came down when the apples were collected, and together they went through the white palings to the heath beyond The open hills were airy and clear, and the remote atmosphere appeared, as it often appears on a fine winter day, in distinct planes of illumination independently toned, the rays which lit the nearer tracts of landscape streaming visibly across those further off a stratum of ensaffroned light was imposed on a stratum of deep blue, and behind these lay still remoter scenes wrapped in frigid gray

They reached the place where the hollies grew, which was in a conical pit, so that the tops of the trees were not much above the general level of the ground Thomasin stepped up into a fork of one of the bushes, as she had done under happier circumstances on many similar occasions, and with a small chopper that they had brought she began to lop off the heavily berried boughs

"Don't scratch your face," said her aunt, who stood at the edge of the pit, regarding the girl as she held on amid the glistening green and scarlet masses of the tree "Will you walk with me to meet him this evening?"

"I should like to Else it would seem as if I had forgotten him," said Thomasin, tossing out a bough "Not that that would matter much, I belong to one man, nothing can alter that And that man I must marry, for my pride's sake"

"I am afraid—" began Mrs Yeobright

"Ah, you think, 'That weak girl—how is she going to get a man to marry her when she chooses?' But let me tell you one thing, aunt Mr Wildeve is not a profligate man, any more than I am an improper woman He has an unfortunate manner, and doesn't try to make people like him if they don't wish to do it of their own accord"

"Thomasin," said Mrs Yeobright quietly, fixing her eye upon her niece, "do you think you deceive me in your defense of Mr Wildeve?"

"How do you mean?"

"I have long had a suspicion that your love for him has changed its color since you have found him not to be the saint you thought him, and that you act a part to me."

"He wished to marry me, and I wish to marry him."

"Now, I put it to you would you at this present moment agree to be his wife if that had not happened to entangle you with him?"

Thomasin looked into the tree and appeared much disturbed. "Aunt," she said presently, "I have, I think, a right to refuse to answer that question."

"Yes, you have."

"You may think what you choose. I have never implied to you by word or deed that I have grown to think otherwise of him, and I never will. And I shall marry him."

"Well, wait till he repeats his offer. I think he may do it, now that he knows—something I told him. I don't for a moment dispute that it is the most proper thing for you to marry him. Much as I have objected to him in bygone days, I agree with you now, you may be sure. It is the only way out of a false position, and a very galling one."

"What did you tell him?"

"That he was standing in the way of another lover of yours."

"Aunt," said Thomasin, with round eyes, "what do you mean?"

"Don't be alarmed, it was my duty. I can say no more about it now, but when it is over I will tell you exactly what I said, and why I said it."

Thomasin was perforce content.

"And you will keep the secret of my would-be marriage from Clym for the present?" she next asked.

"I have given my word to. But what is the use of it? He must soon know what has happened. A mere look at your face will show him that something is wrong."

Thomasin turned and regarded her aunt from the tree. "Now, hearken to me," she said, her delicate voice expanding into firmness by a force which was other than physical. "Tell him nothing. If he finds out that I am not worthy to be his cousin, let him. But, since he loved me once, we will not pain him by telling him my trouble too soon. The air is full of the story, I know, but gossips will not dare to speak of it to him for the first few days. His closeness to me is the very thing that will hinder the tale from reaching him early. If I am not made safe from sneers in a week or two I will tell him myself."

The earnestness with which Thomasin spoke prevented further objections. Her aunt simply said, "Very well. He should by rights have been told at the time that the wedding was going to be. He will never forgive you for your secrecy."

"Yes, he will, when he knows it was because I wished to spare him, and that I did not expect him home so soon. And you must not let me stand in the way of your Christmas party. Putting it off would only make matters worse."

"Of course I shall not. I do not wish to show myself beaten before all Egdon,

and the sport of a man like Wildevé We have enough berries now, I think, and we had better take them home By the time we have decked the house with this and hung up the mistletoe, we must think of starting to meet him "

Thomasin came out of the tree, shook from her hair and dress the loose berries which had fallen thereon, and went down the hill with her aunt, each woman bearing half the gathered boughs It was now nearly four o'clock, and the sunlight was leaving the vales When the west grew red the two relatives came again from the house and plunged into the heath in a different direction from the first, towards a point in the distant highway along which the expected man was to return

III HOW A LITTLE SOUND PRODUCED A GREAT DREAM

EUSTACIA stood just within the heath, straining her eyes in the direction of Mrs Yeobright's house and premises No light, sound, or movement was perceptible there The evening was chilly, the spot was dark and lonely She inferred that the guest had not yet come, and after lingering ten or fifteen minutes she turned again towards home

She had not far retraced her steps when sounds in front of her betokened the approach of persons in conversation along the same path Soon their heads became visible against the sky They were walking slowly, and though it was too dark for much discovery of character from aspect, the gait of them showed that they were not workers on the heath Eustacia stepped a little out of the foot-track to let them pass They were two women and a man, and the voices of the women were those of Mrs Yeobright and Thomasin

They went by her, and at the moment of passing appeared to discern her dusky form There came to her ears in a masculine voice, "Good night!"

She murmured a reply, glided by them, and turned round She could not, for a moment, believe that chance, unrequested, had brought into her presence the soul of the house she had gone to inspect, the man without whom her inspection would not have been thought of

She strained her eyes to see them, but was unable Such was her intentness, however, that it seemed as if her ears were performing the functions of seeing as well as hearing This extension of power can almost be believed in at such moments The deaf Dr Kitto was probably under the influence of a parallel fancy when he described his body as having become, by long endeavor, so sensitive to vibrations that he had gained the power of perceiving by it as by ears

She could follow every word that the rambles uttered They were talking no secrets They were merely indulging in the ordinary vivacious chat of relatives who have long been parted in person though not in soul But it was not to the words that Eustacia listened, she could not even have recalled, a few minutes later, what the words were It was to the alternating voice that gave out about one-tenth of them—the voice that had wished her good night Sometimes this throat uttered Yes, sometimes it uttered No, sometimes it made inquiries about a timeworn denizen of the place Once it surprised her notions

by remarking upon the friendliness and geniality written in the faces of the hills around

The three voices passed on, and decayed and died out upon her ear. Thus much had been granted her, and all besides withheld. No event could have been more exciting. During the greater part of the afternoon she had been entrancing herself by imagining the fascination which must attend a man come direct from beautiful Paris—laden with its atmosphere, familiar with its charms. And this man had greeted her.

With the departure of the figures the profuse articulations of the women wasted away from her memory, but the accents of the other stayed on. Was there anything in the voice of Mrs. Yeobright's son—for Clym it was—startling as a sound? No, it was simply comprehensive. All emotional things were possible to the speaker of that "good night." Eustacia's imagination supplied the rest—except the solution to one riddle. What *could* the tastes of that man be who saw friendliness and geniality in these shaggy hills?

On such occasions as this a thousand ideas pass through a highly charged woman's head, and they indicate themselves on her face, but the changes, though actual, are minute. Eustacia's features went through a rhythmical succession of them. She glowed, remembering the mendacity of the imagination, she flagged, then she freshened, then she fired, then she cooled again. It was a cycle of aspects, produced by a cycle of visions.

Eustacia entered her own house, she was excited. Her grandfather was enjoying himself over the fire, raking about the ashes and exposing the red-hot surface of the turves, so that their lurid glare irradiated the chimney-corner with the hues of a furnace.

"Why is it that we are never friendly with the Yeobrights?" she said, coming forward and stretching her soft hands over the warmth. "I wish we were. They seem to be very nice people."

"Be hanged if I know why," said the captain. "I liked the old man well enough, though he was as rough as a hedge. But you would never have cared to go there, even if you might have, I am well sure."

"Why shouldn't I?"

"Your town tastes would find them far too countrified. They sit in the kitchen, drink mead and elder-wine, and sand the floor to keep it clean. A sensible way of life, but how would you like it?"

"I thought Mrs. Yeobright was a ladylike woman? A curate's daughter, was she not?"

"Yes, but she was obliged to live as her husband did, and I suppose she has taken kindly to it by this time. Ah, I recollect that I once accidentally offended her, and I have never seen her since."

That night was an eventful one to Eustacia's brain, and one which she hardly ever forgot. She dreamt a dream, and few human beings, from Nebuchadnezzar to the Swaffham tinker, ever dreamed a more remarkable one. Such an elaborately developed, perplexing, exciting dream was certainly never dreamed by a girl in Eustacia's situation before. It had as many ramifications as the Cretan labyrinth, as many fluctuations as the Northern Lights, as much color as a parterre in June, and was as crowded with figures as a

coronation To Queen Scheherazade the dream might have seemed not far removed from commonplace, and to a girl just returned from all the courts of Europe it might have seemed not more than interesting But amid the circumstances of Eustacia's life it was as wonderful as a dream could be

There was, however, gradually evolved from its transformation scenes a less extravagant episode, in which the heath dimly appeared behind the general brilliancy of the action She was dancing to wondrous music, and her partner was the man in silver armor, who had accompanied her through the previous fantastic changes, the visor of his helmet being closed The mazes of the dance were ecstatic Soft whispering came into her ear from under the radiant helmet, and she felt like a woman in Paradise Suddenly these two wheeled out from the mass of dancers, dived into one of the pools of the heath, and came out somewhere beneath into an iridescent hollow, arched with rainbows "It must be here," said the voice by her side, and blushing up she saw him removing his casque to kiss her At that moment there was a cracking noise, and his figure fell into fragments like a pack of cards

She cried aloud, "O that I had seen his face!"

Eustacia awoke The cracking had been that of the window-shutter downstairs, which the maid servant was opening to let in the day, now slowly increasing to Nature's meager allowance at this sickly time of the year "O that I had seen his face!" she said again "'Twas meant for Mr Yeobright!"

When she became cooler she perceived that many of the phases of the dream had naturally arisen out of the images and fancies of the day before But this detracted little from its interest, which lay in the excellent fuel it provided for newly kindled fervor She was at the modulating point between indifference and love, at the stage called "having a fancy for" It occurs once in the history of the most gigantic passions, and it is a period when they are in the hands of the weakest will

The perfervid woman was by this time half in love with a vision The fantastic nature of her passion, which lowered her as an intellect, raised her as a soul If she had had a little more self-control she would have attenuated the emotion to nothing by sheer reasoning, and so have killed it off If she had had a little less pride she might have gone and circumambulated the Yeobrights' premises at Blooms End at any maidenly sacrifice until she had seen him But Eustacia did neither of these things She acted as the most exemplary might have acted, being so influenced, she took an airing twice or thrice a day upon the Egdon hills, and kept her eyes employed

The first occasion passed, and he did not come that way

She promenaded a second time, and was again the sole wanderer there

The third time there was a dense fog she looked around, but without much hope Even if he had been walking within twenty yards of her she could not have seen him

At the fourth attempt to encounter him it began to rain in torrents, and she turned back

The fifth sally was in the afternoon it was fine, and she remained out long, walking to the very top of the valley in which Blooms-End lay She saw the white paling about half a mile off, but he did not appear It was almost with

heartsickness that she came home, and with a sense of shame at her weakness. She resolved to look for the man from Paris no more.

But Providence is nothing if not coquettish, and no sooner had Eustacia formed this resolve than the opportunity came which, while sought, had been entirely withheld.

IV EUSTACIA IS LED ON TO AN ADVENTURE

IN THE evening of this last day of expectation, which was the twenty-third of December, Eustacia was at home alone. She had passed the recent hour in lamenting over a rumor newly come to her ears—that Yeobright's visit to his mother was to be of short duration, and would end some time the next week. "Naturally," she said to herself. A man in the full swing of his activities in a gay city would not afford to linger long on Egdon Heath. That she would behold face to face the owner of the awakening voice within the limits of such a holiday was most unlikely, unless she were to haunt the environs of his mother's house like a robin, to do which was difficult and unseemly.

The customary expedient of provincial girls and men in such circumstances is churchgoing. In an ordinary village or country town one can safely calculate that, either on Christmas-day or the Sunday contiguous, any native home for the holidays, who has not through age or ennui lost the appetite for seeing and being seen, will turn up in some pew or other, shining with hope, self-consciousness, and new clothes. Thus the congregation on Christmas morning is mostly a Tussaud collection of celebrities who have been born in the neighborhood. Hither the mistress, left neglected at home all the year, can steal and observe the development of the returned lover who has forgotten her, and think as she watches him over her prayer-book that he may throb with a renewed fidelity when novelties have lost their charm. And hither a comparatively recent settler like Eustacia may betake herself to scrutinize the person of a native son who left home before her advent upon the scene, and consider if the friendship of his parents be worth cultivating during his next absence in order to secure a knowledge of him on his next return.

But these tender schemes were not feasible among the scattered inhabitants of Egdon Heath. In name they were parishioners, but virtually they belonged to no parish at all. People who came to these few isolated houses to keep Christmas with their friends remained in their friends' chimney-corners drinking mead and other comforting liquors till they left again for good and all. Rain, snow, ice, mud everywhere around, they did not care to trudge two or three miles to sit wet-footed and splashed to the nape of their necks among those who, though in some measure neighbors, lived close to the church, and entered it clean and dry. Eustacia knew it was ten to one that Clym Yeobright would go to no church at all during his few days of leave, and that it would be a waste of labor for her to go driving the pony and gig over a bad road in hope to see him there.

It was dusk, and she was sitting by the fire in the dining room or hall, which they occupied at this time of the year in preference to the parlor, because of its

large hearth, constructed for turf-fires, a fuel the captain was partial to in the winter season. The only visible articles in the room were those on the window-sill, which showed their shapes against the low sky: the middle article being the old hour-glass, and the other two a pair of ancient British urns which had been dug from a barrow near, and were used as flower-pots for two razor-leaved cactuses. Somebody knocked at the door. The servant was out, so was her grandfather. The person, after waiting a minute, came in and tapped at the door of the room.

"Who's there?" said Eustacia.

"Please, Cap'n Vye, will you let us—"

Eustacia arose and went to the door. "I cannot allow you to come in so boldly. You should have waited."

"The cap'n said I might come in without any fuss," was answered in a lad's pleasant voice.

"Oh, did he?" said Eustacia, more gently. "What do you want, Charley?"

"Please will your grandfather lend us his fuel-house to try over our parts in, tonight at seven o'clock?"

"What, are you one of the Egdon mummers for this year?"

"Yes, miss. The cap'n used to let the old mummers practice here."

"I know it. Yes, you may use the fuel-house if you like," said Eustacia languidly.

The choice of Captain Vye's fuel-house as the scene of rehearsal was dictated by the fact that his dwelling was nearly in the center of the heath. The fuel-house was as roomy as a barn, and was a most desirable place for such a purpose. The lads who formed the company of players lived at different scattered points around, and by meeting in this spot the distances to be traversed by all the comers would be about equally proportioned.

Of mummers and mumming Eustacia had the greatest contempt. The mummers themselves were not afflicted with any such feeling for their art, though at the same time they were not enthusiastic. A traditional pastime is to be distinguished from a mere revival in no more striking feature than in this, that while in the revival all is excitement and fervor, the survival is carried on with a stolidity and absence of stir which sets one wondering why a thing that is done so perfunctorily should be kept up at all. Like Balaam and other unwilling prophets, the agents seem moved by an inner compulsion to say and do their allotted parts whether they will or no. This unweeeting manner of performance is the true ring by which, in this refurbishing age, a fossilized survival may be known from a spurious reproduction.

The piece was the well-known play of "Saint George," and all who were behind the scenes assisted in the preparations, including the women of each household. Without the co-operation of sisters and sweethearts the dresses were likely to be a failure, but on the other hand, this class of assistance was not without its drawbacks. The girls could never be brought to respect tradition in designing and decorating the armor, they insisted on attaching loops and bows of silk and velvet in any situation pleasing to their taste. Gorget, gusset, basinet, cuirass, gauntlet, sleeve, all alike in the view of these feminine eyes were practicable spaces whereon to sew scraps of fluttering color.

It might be that Joe, who fought on the side of Christendom, had a sweetheart, and that Jim, who fought on the side of the Moslem, had one likewise. During the making of the costumes it would come to the knowledge of Joe's sweetheart that Jim's was putting brilliant silk scallops at the bottom of her lover's surcoat, in addition to the ribbons of the visor, the bars of which, being invariably formed of colored strips about half an inch wide hanging before the face, were mostly of that material. Joe's sweetheart straightway placed brilliant silk on the scallops of the hem in question, and, going a little further, added ribbon tufts to the shoulder-pieces. Jim's, not to be outdone, would affix bows and rosettes everywhere.

The result was that in the end the Valiant Soldier, of the Christian army, was distinguished by no peculiarity of accouterment from the Turkish Knight, and what was worse, on a casual view Saint George himself might be mistaken for his deadly enemy, the Saracen. The guisers themselves, though inwardly regretting this confusion of persons, could not afford to offend those by whose assistance they so largely profited, and the innovations were allowed to stand.

There was, it is true, a limit to this tendency to uniformity. The Leech or Doctor preserved his character intact: his darker habiliments, peculiar hat, and the bottle of physic slung under his arm, could never be mistaken. And the same might be said of the conventional figure of Father Christmas, with his gigantic club, an older man, who accompanied the band as general protector in long night journeys from parish to parish, and was bearer of the purse.

Seven o'clock, the hour of the rehearsal, came round, and in a short time Eustacia could hear voices in the fuel-house. To dissipate in some trifling measure her abiding sense of the murkiness of human life she went to the "linhay" or lean-to shed, which formed the root-store of their dwelling and abutted on the fuel-house. Here was a small rough hole in the mud wall, originally made for pigeons, through which the interior of the next shed could be viewed. A light came from it now, and Eustacia stepped upon a stool to look in upon the scene.

On a ledge in the fuel-house stood three tall rush-lights, and by the light of them seven or eight lads were marching about, haranguing, and confusing each other, in endeavors to perfect themselves in the play. Humphrey and Sam, the furze and turf cutters, were there looking on, so also was Timothy Fairway, who leant against the wall and prompted the boys from memory, interspersing among the set words remarks and anecdotes of the superior days when he and others were the Egdon mummers-elect that these lads were now.

"Well, ye be as well up to it as ever ye will be," he said. "Not that such mumming would have passed in our time. Harry as the Saracen should strut a bit more, and John needn't holler his inside out. Beyond that perhaps you'll do. Have you got all your clothes ready?"

"We shall by Monday."

"Your first outing will be Monday night, I suppose?"

"Yes. At Mrs Yeobright's."

"Oh, Mrs Yeobright's. What makes her want to see ye? I should think a middle-aged woman was tired of mumming."

"She's got up a bit of a party, because 'tis the first Christmas that her son Clym has been home for a long time"

"To be sure, to be sure—her party! I am going myself I almost forgot it, upon my life"

Eustacia's face flagged There was to be a party at the Yeobrights', she, naturally, had nothing to do with it She was a stranger to such local gatherings, and had always held them as scarcely appertaining to her sphere But had she been going, what an opportunity would have been afforded her of seeing the man whose influence was penetrating her like summer sun! To increase that influence was coveted excitement, to cast it off might be to regain serenity, to leave it as it stood was tantalizing

The lads and men prepared to leave the premises, and Eustacia returned to her fireside She was immersed in thought, but not for long In a few minutes the lad Charley, who had come to ask permission to use the place, returned with the key to the kitchen Eustacia heard him, and opening the door into the passage said, "Charley, come here"

The lad was surprised He entered the front room, not without blushing, for he, like many, had felt the power of this girl's face and form

She pointed to a seat by the fire, and entered the other side of the chimney-corner herself It could be seen in her face that whatever motive she might have had in asking the youth indoors would soon appear

"Which part do you play, Charley—the Turkish Knight, do you not?" inquired the beauty, looking across the smoke of the fire to him on the other side

"Yes, miss, the Turkish Knight," he replied diffidently

"Is yours a long part?"

"Nine speeches, about"

"Can you repeat them to me? If so I should like to hear them."

The lad smiled into the glowing turf and began—

"Here come I, a Turkish Knight,
Who learnt in Turkish land to fight,"

continuing the discourse throughout the scenes to the concluding catastrophe of his fall by the hand of Saint George

Eustacia had occasionally heard the part recited before When the lad ended she began, precisely in the same words, and ranted on without a hitch or divergence till she too reached the end It was the same thing, yet how different Like in form, it had the added softness and finish of a Raffaele after Perugino, which, while faithfully reproducing the original subject, entirely distances the original art

Charley's eyes rounded with surprise "Well, you be a clever lady!" he said, in admiration "I've been three weeks learning mine"

"I have heard it before," she quietly observed "Now, would you do anything to please me, Charley?"

"I'd do a good deal, miss"

"Would you let me play your part for one night?"

"O miss! But your woman's gown—you couldn't"

"I can get boy's clothes—at least all that would be wanted besides the mum-

ming dress What should I have to give you to lend me your things, to let me take your place for an hour or two on Monday night, and on no account say a word about who or what I am? You would, of course, have to excuse yourself from playing that night, and to say that somebody—a cousin of Miss Vye's—would act for you The other mummers have never spoken to me in their lives, so that it would be safe enough, and if it were not, I should not mind Now, what must I give you to agree to this? Half a crown?"

The youth shook his head

"Five shillings?"

He shook his head again "Money won't do it," he said, brushing the iron head of the fire-dog with the hollow of his hand

"What will, then, Charley?" said Eustacia in a disappointed tone

"You know what you forbade me at the May-poling, miss," murmured the lad, without looking at her, and still stroking the fire-dog's head

"Yes," said Eustacia, with a little more hauteur "You wanted to join hands with me in the ring, if I recollect?"

"Half an hour of that, and I'll agree, miss"

Eustacia regarded the youth steadfastly He was three years younger than herself, but apparently not backward for his age "Half an hour of what?" she said, though she guessed what

"Holding your hand in mine"

She was silent "Make it a quarter of an hour," she said

"Yes, Miss Eustacia—I will, if I may kiss it too A quarter of an hour And I'll swear to do the best I can to let you take my place without anybody knowing Don't you think somebody might know your tongue, miss?"

"It is possible But I will put a pebble in my mouth to make it less likely Very well, you shall be allowed to have my hand as soon as you bring the dress and your sword and staff I don't want you any longer now"

Charley departed, and Eustacia felt more and more interest in life Here was something to do here was some one to see, and a charmingly adventurous way to see him "Ah," she said to herself, "want of an object to live for—that's all is the matter with me!"

Eustacia's manner was as a rule of a slumberous sort, her passions being of the massive rather than the vivacious kind But when aroused she would make a dash which, just for the time, was not unlike the move of a naturally lively person

On the question of recognition she was somewhat indifferent By the acting lads themselves she was not likely to be known With the guests who might be assembled she was hardly so secure Yet detection, after all, would be no such dreadful thing The fact only could be detected, her true motive never It would be instantly set down as the passing freak of a girl whose ways were already considered singular That she was doing for an earnest reason what would most naturally be done in jest was at any rate a safe secret

The next evening Eustacia stood punctually at the fuel-house door, waiting for the dusk which was to bring Charley with the trappings Her grandfather was at home tonight, and she would be unable to ask her confederate indoors

He appeared on the dark ridge of heathland, like a fly on a negro, bearing the articles with him, and came up breathless with his walk

"Here are the things," he whispered, placing them upon the threshold "And now, Miss Eustacia—"

"The payment It is quite ready I am as good as my word"

She leant against the door-post, and gave him her hand Charley took it in both his own with a tenderness beyond description, unless it was like that of a child holding a captured sparrow

"Why, there's a glove on it!" he said in a deprecating way

"I have been walking," she observed

"But, miss!"

"Well—it is hardly fair" She pulled off the glove, and gave him her bare hand

They stood together minute after minute, without further speech, each looking at the blackening scene, and each thinking his or her own thoughts

"I think I won't use it all up tonight," said Charley devotedly, when six or eight minutes had been passed by him caressing her hand "May I have the other few minutes another time?"

"As you like," said she without the least emotion "But it must be over in a week Now, there is only one thing I want you to do to wait while I put on the dress, and then to see if I do my part properly But let me look first indoors"

She vanished for a minute or two, and went in Her grandfather was safely asleep in his chair "Now, then," she said, on returning, "walk down the garden a little way, and when I am ready I'll call you"

Charley walked and waited, and presently heard a soft whistle He returned to the fuel-house door

"Did you whistle, Miss Vye?"

"Yes, come in," reached him in Eustacia's voice from a back quarter "I must not strike a light till the door is shut, or it may be seen shining Push your hat into the hole through to the wash-house, if you can feel your way across"

Charley did as commanded, and she struck the light, revealing herself to be changed in sex, brilliant in colors, and armed from top to toe Perhaps she quailed a little under Charley's vigorous gaze, but whether any shyness at her male attire appeared upon her countenance could not be seen by reason of the strips of ribbon which used to cover the face in mumming costumes, representing the barred visor of the mediaeval helmet

"It fits pretty well," she said, looking down at the white overalls, "except that the tunic, or whatever you call it, is long in the sleeve The bottom of the overalls I can turn up inside Now pay attention"

Eustacia then proceeded in her delivery, striking the sword against the staff or lance at the minatory phrases, in the orthodox mumming manner, and strutting up and down Charley seasoned his admiration with criticism of the gentlest kind, for the touch of Eustacia's hand yet remained with him

"And now for your excuse to the others," she said "Where do you meet before you go to Mrs Yeobright's?"

"We thought of meeting here, miss, if you have nothing to say against it At eight o'clock, so as to get there by nine"

"Yes Well, you of course must not appear I will march in about five minutes late, ready-dressed, and tell them that you can't come I have decided that the best plan will be for you to be sent somewhere by me, to make a real thing of the excuse Our two heath-croppers are in the habit of straying into the meads, and tomorrow evening you can go and see if they are gone there I'll manage the rest Now you may leave me"

"Yes, miss But I think I'll have one minute more of what I am owed, if you don't mind"

Eustacia gave him her hand as before

"One minute," she said, and counted on till she reached seven or eight minutes Hand and person she then withdrew to a distance of several feet, and recovered some of her old dignity The contract completed, she raised between them a barrier impenetrable as a wall

"There, 'tis all gone, and I didn't mean quite all," he said, with a sigh

"You had good measure," said she, turning away

"Yes, miss Well, 'tis over, and now I'll get home-along"

V THROUGH THE MOONLIGHT

THE NEXT evening the mummers were assembled in the same spot, awaiting the entrance of the Turkish Knight

"Twenty minutes after eight by the Quiet Woman, and Charley not come"

"Ten minutes past by Blooms-End"

"It wants ten minutes to, by Grandfer Cantle's watch"

"And 'tis five minutes past by the captain's clock"

On Egdon there was no absolute hour of the day The time at any moment was a number of varying doctrines professed by the different hamlets, some of them having originally grown up from a common root, and then become divided by secession, some having been alien from the beginning West Egdon believed in Blooms-End time, East Egdon in the time of the Quiet Woman Inn Grandfer Cantle's watch had numbered many followers in years gone by, but since he had grown older faiths were shaken Thus, the mummers having gathered hither from scattered points, each came with his own tenets on early and late, and they waited a little longer as a compromise

Eustacia had watched the assemblage through the hole, and seeing that now was the proper moment to enter, she went from the "linhay" and boldly pulled the bobbins of the fuel-house door Her grandfather was safe at the Quiet Woman

"Here's Charley at last! How late you be, Charley"

"'Tis not Charley," said the Turkish Knight from within his visor "'Tis a cousin of Miss Vye's, come to take Charley's place from curiosity He was obliged to go and look for the heath-croppers that have got into the meads,

and I agreed to take his place, as he knew he couldn't come back here again tonight I know the part as well as he "

Her graceful gait, elegant figure, and dignified manner in general won the mummers to the opinion that they had gained by the exchange, if the newcomer were perfect in his part

"It don't matter—if you be not too young," said Saint George Eustacia's voice had sounded somewhat more juvenile and fluty than Charley's

"I know every word of it, I tell you," said Eustacia decisively Dash being all that was required to carry her triumphantly through, she adopted as much as was necessary "Go ahead, lads, with the try-over I'll challenge any of you to find a mistake in me "

The play was hastily rehearsed, whereupon the other mummers were delighted with the new knight They extinguished the candles at half-past eight, and set out upon the heath in the direction of Mrs Yeobright's house at Blooms-End

There was a slight hoar-frost that night, and the moon, though not more than half full, threw a spirited and enticing brightness upon the fantastic figures of the mumming band, whose plumes and ribbons rustled in their walk like autumn leaves Their path was not over Rainbarrow now, but down a valley which left that ancient elevation a little to the east The bottom of the vale was green to a width of ten yards or thereabouts, and the shining facets of frost upon the blades of grass seemed to move on with the shadows of those they surrounded The masses of furze and heath to the right and left were dark as ever, a mere half-moon was powerless to silver such sable features as theirs

Half-an-hour of walking and talking brought them to the spot in the valley where the grass riband widened and led up to the front of the house At sight of the place Eustacia, who had felt a few passing doubts during her walk with the youths, again was glad that the adventure had been undertaken She had come out to see a man who might possibly have the power to deliver her soul from a most deadly oppression What was Wildev? Interesting, but inadequate Perhaps she would see a sufficient hero tonight

As they drew nearer to the front of the house the mummers became aware that music and dancing were briskly flourishing within Every now and then a long, low note from the serpent, which was the chief wind instrument played at these times, advanced further into the heath than the thin treble part, and reached their ears alone, and next a more than usually loud tread from a dancer would come the same way With nearer approach these fragmentary sounds became pieced together, and were found to be the salient points of the tune called "Nancy's Fancy "

He was there, of course Who was she that he danced with? Perhaps some unknown woman, far beneath her in culture, was by that most subtle of lures sealing his fate this very instant To dance with a man is to concentrate a twelvemonth's regulation fire upon him in the fragment of an hour To pass to courtship without acquaintance, to pass to marriage without courtship, is a skipping of terms reserved for those alone who tread this royal road She would see how his heart lay by keen observation of them all

The enterprising lady followed the mumming company through the gate in

the white paling, and stood before the open porch. The house was encrusted with heavy thatchings, which dropped between the upper windows the front, upon which the moonbeams directly played, had originally been white, but a huge pyracanth now darkened the greater portion.

It became at once evident that the dance was proceeding immediately within the surface of the door, no apartment intervening. The brushing of skirts and elbows, sometimes the bumping of shoulders, could be heard against the very panels. Eustacia, though living within two miles of the place, had never seen the interior of this quaint old habitation. Between Captain Vye and the Yeobrights there had never existed much acquaintance, the former having come as a stranger and purchased the long-empty house at Mistover Knap not long before the death of Mrs. Yeobright's husband, and with that event and the departure of her son such friendship as had grown up became quite broken off.

"Is there no passage inside the door, then?" asked Eustacia as they stood within the porch.

"No," said the lad who played the Saracen. "The door opens right upon the front sitting-room, where the spree's going on."

"So that we cannot open the door without stopping the dance?"

"That's it. Here we must bide till they have done, for they always bolt the back door after dark."

"They won't be much longer," said Father Christmas.

This assertion, however, was hardly borne out by the event. Again the instruments ended the tune, again they recommenced with as much fire and pathos as if it were the first strain. The air was now that one without any particular beginning, middle, or end, which perhaps, among all the dances which throng an inspired fiddler's fancy, best conveys the idea of the interminable—the celebrated "Devil's Dream." The fury of personal movement that was kindled by the fury of the notes could be approximately imagined by these outsiders under the moon, from the occasional kicks of toes and heels against the door, whenever the whirl round had been of more than customary velocity.

The first five minutes of listening was interesting enough to the mummers. The five minutes extended to ten minutes, and these to a quarter of an hour, but no signs of ceasing were audible in the lively Dream. The bumping against the door, the laughter, the stamping, were all as vigorous as ever, and the pleasure in being outside lessened considerably.

"Why does Mrs. Yeobright give parties of this sort?" Eustacia asked, a little surprised to hear merriment so pronounced.

"It is not one of her bettermost parlor parties. She's asked the plain neighbors and workpeople without drawing any lines, just to give 'em a good supper and such like. Her son and she wait upon the folks."

"I see," said Eustacia.

"'Tis the last strain, I think," said Saint George, with his ear to the panel.

"A young man and woman have just swung into this corner, and he's saying to her, 'Ah, the pity, 'tis over for us this time, my own!'"

"Thank God," said the Turkish Knight, stamping, and taking from the wall the conventional staff that each of the mummers carried. Her boots being

thinner than those of the young men, the hoar had damped her feet and made them cold

"Upon my song 'tis another ten minutes for us," said the Valiant Soldier, looking through the keyhole as the tune modulated into another without stopping "Grandfer Cattle is standing in this corner, waiting his turn"

"'Twon't be long, 'tis a six-handed reel," said the Doctor

"Why not go in, dancing or no? They sent for us," said the Saracen

"Certainly not," said Eustacia authoritatively, as she paced smartly up and down from door to gate to warm herself "We should burst into the middle of them and stop the dance, and that would be unmannerly"

"He thinks himself somebody because he has had a bit more schooling than we," said the Doctor

"You may go to the deuce!" said Eustacia

There was a whispered conversation between three or four of them, and one turned to her

"Will you tell us one thing?" he said, not without gentleness "Be you Miss Vye? We think you must be"

"You may think what you like," said Eustacia slowly "But honorable lads will not tell tales upon a lady"

"We'll say nothing, miss That's upon our honor"

"Thank you," she replied

At this moment the fiddles finished off with a screech, and the serpent emitted a last note that nearly lifted the roof When, from the comparative quiet within, the mummers judged that the dancers had taken their seats, Father Christmas advanced, lifted the latch, and put his head inside the door

"Ah, the mummers, the mummers!" cried several guests at once "Clear a space for the mummers"

Hump-backed Father Christmas then made a complete entry, swinging his huge club, and in a general way clearing the stage for the actors proper, while he informed the company in smart verse that he was come, welcome or welcome not, concluding his speech with

"Make room, make room, my gallant boys,
And give us space to rhyme,
We've come to show Saint George's play,
Upon this Christmas time"

The guests were now arranging themselves at one end of the room, the fiddler was mending a string, the serpent-player was emptying his mouthpiece, and the play began First of those outside the Valiant Soldier entered, in the interest of Saint George—

"Here come I, the Valiant Soldier,
Slasher is my name,"

and so on This speech concluded with a challenge to the infidel, at the end of which it was Eustacia's duty to enter as the Turkish Knight She, with the rest who were not yet on, had hitherto remained in the moonlight which streamed

under the porch With no apparent effort or backwardness she came in, beginning—

“Here come I, a Turkish Knight,
Who learnt in Turkish land to fight,
I’ll fight this man with courage bold
If his blood’s hot I’ll make it cold!”

During her declamation Eustacia held her head erect, and spoke as roughly as she could, feeling pretty secure from observation But the concentration upon her part necessary to prevent discovery, the newness of the scene, the shine of the candles, and the confusing effect upon her vision of the ribboned visor which hid her features, left her absolutely unable to perceive who were present as spectators On the further side of a table bearing candles she could faintly discern faces, and that was all

Meanwhile Jim Starks as the Valiant Soldier had come forward, and, with a glare upon the Turk, replied—

“If, then, thou art that Turkish Knight,
Draw out thy sword, and let us fight!”

And fight they did, the issue of the combat being that the Valiant Soldier was slain by a preternaturally inadequate thrust from Eustacia, Jim, in his ardor for genuine histrionic art, coming down like a log upon the stone floor with force enough to dislocate his shoulder Then, after more words from the Turkish Knight, rather too faintly delivered, and statements that he’d fight Saint George and all his crew, Saint George himself magnificently entered with the well known flourish—

“Here come I, Saint George, the valiant man,
With naked sword and spear in hand,
Who fought the dragon and brought him to the slaughter,
And by this won fair Sabra, the King of Egypt’s daughter,
What mortal man would dare to stand
Before me with my sword in hand?”

This was the lad who had first recognized Eustacia, and when she now, as the Turk, replied with suitable defiance, and at once began the combat, the young fellow took especial care to use his sword as gently as possible Being wounded, the Knight fell upon one knee, according to the direction The Doctor now entered, restored the Knight by giving him a draught from the bottle which he carried, and the fight was again resumed, the Turk sinking by degrees until quite overcome—dying as hard in this venerable drama as he is said to do at the present day

This gradual sinking to the earth was, in fact, one reason why Eustacia had thought that the part of the Turkish Knight, though not the shortest, would suit her best A direct fall from upright to horizontal, which was the end of the other fighting characters, was not an elegant or decorous part for a girl But it was easy to die like a Turk, by a dogged decline

Eustacia was now among the number of the slain, though not on the floor, for she had managed to retire into a sitting position against the clock-case, so

that her head was well elevated. The play proceeded between Saint George, the Saracen, the Doctor, and Father Christmas, and Eustacia, having no more to do, for the first time found leisure to observe the scene around, and to search for the form that had drawn her hither.

VI THE TWO STAND FACE TO FACE

THE ROOM had been arranged with a view to the dancing, the large oak table having been moved back till it stood as a breastwork to the fireplace. At each end, behind, and in the chimney-corner were grouped the guests, many of them being warm-faced and panting, among whom Eustacia cursorily recognized some well-to-do persons from beyond the heath. Thomasin, as she had expected, was not visible, and Eustacia recollected that a light had shone from an upper window when they were outside—the window, probably, of Thomasin's room. A nose, chin, hands, knees, and toes projected from the seat within the chimney opening, which members she found to unite in the person of Grandfather Cattle, Mrs. Yeobright's occasional assistant in the garden, and therefore one of the invited. The smoke went up from an Etna of turf in front of him, played round the notches of the chimney crook, struck against the salt box, and got lost among the flitches.

Another part of the room soon riveted her gaze. At the other side of the chimney stood the settle, which is the necessary supplement to a fire so open that nothing less than a strong breeze will carry up the smoke. It is, to the hearths of old-fashioned cavernous fireplaces, what the east belt of trees is to the exposed country estate, or the north wall to the garden. Outside the settle candles gutter, locks of hair wave, young women shiver, and old men sneeze. Inside is Paradise. Not a symptom of a draught disturbs the air, the sitters' backs are as warm as their faces, and songs and old tales are drawn from the occupants by the comfortable heat, like fruit from melon-plants in a frame.

It was, however, not with those who sat in the settle that Eustacia was concerned. A face showed itself with marked distinctness against the dark-tanned wood of the upper part. The owner, who was leaning against the settle's outer end, was Clement Yeobright, or Clym, as he was called here, she knew it could be nobody else. The spectacle constituted an area of two feet in Rembrandt's intensest manner. A strange power in the loungee's appearance lay in the fact that, though his whole figure was visible, the observer's eye was only aware of his face.

To one of middle age the countenance was that of a young man, though a youth might hardly have seen any necessity for the term of immaturity. But it was really one of those faces which convey less the idea of so many years as its age than of so much experience as its store. The number of their years may have adequately summed up Jared, Mahalaleel, and the rest of the antediluvians, but the age of a modern man is to be measured by the intensity of his history.

The face was well shaped, even excellently. But the mind within was beginning to use it as a mere waste tablet whereon to trace its idiosyncrasies as they developed themselves. The beauty here visible would in no long time be ruth-

lessly overrun by its parasite, thought, which might just as well have fed upon a plainer exterior where there was nothing it could harm. Had Heaven preserved Yeobright from a wearing habit of meditation, people would have said, "A handsome man." Had his brain unfolded under sharper contours they would have said, "A thoughtful man." But an inner strenuousness was preying upon an outer symmetry, and they rated his look as singular.

Hence people who began by beholding him ended by perusing him. His countenance was overlaid with legible meanings. Without being thought worn, he yet had certain marks derived from a perception of his surroundings, such as are not unfrequently found on men at the end of the four or five years of endeavor which follow the close of placid pupilage. He already showed that thought is a disease of flesh, and indirectly bore evidence that ideal physical beauty is incompatible with emotional development and a full recognition of the coil of things. Mental luminousness must be fed with the oil of life, even though there is already a physical need for it, and the pitiful sight of two demands on one supply was just showing itself here.

When standing before certain men the philosopher regrets that thinkers are but perishable tissue, the artist that perishable tissue has to think. Thus to deplore, each from his point of view, the mutually destructive interdependence of spirit and flesh would have been instinctive with these in critically observing Yeobright.

As for his look, it was a natural cheerfulness striving against depression from without, and not quite succeeding. The look suggested isolation, but it revealed something more. As is usual with bright natures, the deity that lies ignominiously chained with an ephemeral human carcass shone out of him like a ray.

The effect upon Eustacia was palpable. The extraordinary pitch of excitement that she had reached beforehand would, indeed, have caused her to be influenced by the most commonplace man. She was troubled at Yeobright's presence.

The remainder of the play ended. The Saracen's head was cut off, and Saint George stood as victor. Nobody commented, any more than they would have commented on the fact of mushrooms coming in autumn or snowdrops in spring. They took the piece as phlegmatically as did the actors themselves. It was a phase of cheerfulness which was, as a matter of course, to be passed through every Christmas, and there was no more to be said.

They sang the plaintive chant which follows the play, during which all the dead men rise to their feet in a silent and awful manner, like the ghosts of Napoleon's soldiers in the *Midnight Review*. Afterwards the door opened, and Fairway appeared on the threshold, accompanied by Christian and another. They had been waiting outside for the conclusion of the play, as the players had waited for the conclusion of the dance.

"Come in, come in," said Mrs. Yeobright, and Clym went forward to welcome them. "How is it you are so late? Grandfer Cantle has been here ever so long, and we thought you'd have come with him, as you live so near one another."

"Well, I should have come earlier," Mr. Fairway said, and paused to look along the beam of the ceiling for a nail to hang his hat on, but, finding his

accustomed one to be occupied by the mistletoe, and all the nails in the walls to be burdened with bunches of holly, he at last relieved himself of the hat by ticklishly balancing it between the candle-box and the head of the clock case "I should have come earlier, ma'am," he resumed, with a more composed air, "but I know what parties be, and how there's none too much room in folks' houses at such times, so I thought I wouldn't come till you'd got settled a bit"

"And I thought so too, Mrs Yeobright," said Christian earnestly, "but father there was so eager that he had no manners at all, and left home almost afore 'twas dark I told him 'twas barely decent in a' old man to come so oversoon, but words be wind"

"Kik! I wasn't going to bide waiting about till half the game was over! I'm as light as a kite when anything's going on!" crowed Grandfer Cante from the chimney-seat

Fairway had meanwhile concluded a critical gaze at Yeobright "Now, you may not believe it," he said to the rest of the room, "but I should never have knowed this gentleman if I had met him anywhere off his own he'th he's altered so much"

"You too have altered, and for the better, I think, Timothy," said Yeobright, surveying the firm figure of Fairway

"Master Yeobright, look me over, too I have altered for the better, haven't I, hey?" said Grandfer Cante, rising, and placing himself something above half an inch from Clym's eye, to induce the most searching criticism

"To be sure we will," said Fairway, taking the candle and moving it over the surface of the Grandfer's countenance, the subject of his scrutiny irradiating himself with light and pleasant smiles, and giving himself jerks of juvenility

"You haven't changed much," said Yeobright

"If there's any difference, Grandfer is younger," appended Fairway decisively

"And yet not my own doing, and I feel no pride in it," said the pleased ancient "But I can't be cured of my vagaries, them I plead guilty to Yes, Master Cante always was that, as we know But I am nothing by the side of you, Mister Clym"

"Nor any o' us," said Humphrey, in a low rich tone of admiration, not intended to reach anybody's ears

"Really, there would have been nobody here who could have stood as decent second to him, or even thurd, if I hadn't been a soldier in the Bang-up Locals (as we was called for our smartness)," said Grandfer Cante "And even as 'tis we all look a little scammish beside him But in the year four 'twas said there wasn't a finer figure in the whole South Wessex than I, as I looked when dashing past the shop-winders with the rest of our company on the day we ran out o' Budmouth because it was thoughted that Boney had landed round the point There was I, straight as a young poplar, wi' my firelock, and my bagnet, and my spatterdashes, and my stock sawing my jaws off, and my accoutrements sheening like the seven stars! Yes, neighbors, I was a pretty sight in my soldiering days You ought to have seen me in four!"

"'Tis his mother's side where Master Clym's figure comes from, bless ye," said Timothy "I know'd her brothers well Longer coffins were never made in

the whole county of Wessex, and 'tis said that poor George's knees were crumpled up a little e'en as 'twas"

"Coffins, where?" inquired Christian, drawing nearer "Have the ghost of one appeared to anybody, Master Fairway?"

"No, no Don't let your mind so mislead your ears, Christian, and be a man," said Timothy reproachfully

"I will," said Christian "But now I think o't my shadder last night seemed just the shape of a coffin What is it a sign of when your shade's like a coffin, neighbors? It can't be nothing to be afeard of, I suppose?"

"Afeard, no!" said the Grandfer "Faith, I was never afeard of nothing except Boney, or I shouldn't ha' been the soldier I was Yes, 'tis a thousand pities you didn't see me in four!"

By this time the mummers were preparing to leave, but Mrs Yeobright stopped them by asking them to sit down and have a little supper To this invitation Father Christmas, in the name of them all, readily agreed

Eustacia was happy in the opportunity of staying a little longer The cold and frosty night without was doubly frigid to her But the lingering was not without its difficulties Mrs Yeobright, for want of room in the larger apartment, placed a bench for the mummers immediately inside the pantry door, which opened from the sitting-room Here they seated themselves in a row, the door being left open thus they were still virtually in the same apartment Mrs Yeobright now murmured a few words to her son, who crossed the room to the pantry, striking his head against the mistletoe as he passed, and brought the mummers beef and bread, cake, pastry, mead, and elder-wine, the waiting being done by him and his mother, that the little maid servant might sit as guest The mummers doffed their helmets, and began to eat and drink

"But you will surely have some?" said Clym to the Turkish Knight, as he stood before that warrior, tray in hand She had refused, and still sat covered, only the sparkle of her eyes being visible between the ribbons which covered her face

"None, thank you," replied Eustacia

"He's quite a youngster," said the Saracen apologetically, "and you must excuse him He's not one of the old set, but have jined us because t'other couldn't come"

"But he will take something?" persisted Yeobright "Try a glass of mead or elder-wine"

"Yes, you had better try that," said the Saracen "It will keep the cold out going home-along"

Though Eustacia could not eat without uncovering her face she could drink easily enough beneath her disguise The elder-wine was accordingly accepted, and the glass vanished inside the ribbons

At moments during this performance Eustacia was half in doubt about the security of her position, yet it had a fearful joy A series of attentions paid to her, and yet not to her but to some imaginary person, by the first man she had ever been inclined to adore, complicated her emotions indescribably She had loved him partly because he was exceptional in this scene, and partly because she had determined to love him, chiefly because she was in desperate

need of loving somebody after wearying of Wildeva. Believing that she must love him in spite of herself, she had been influenced after the fashion of the second Lord Lyttleton and other persons, who have dreamed that they were to die on a certain day, and by stress of a morbid imagination have actually brought about that event. Once let a maiden admit the possibility of her being stricken with love for some one at a certain hour and place, and the thing is as good as done.

Did anything at this moment suggest to Yeobright the sex of the creature whom that fantastic guise inclosed, how extended was her scope both in feeling and in making others feel, and how far her compass transcended that of her companions in the band? When the disguised Queen of Love appeared before Aeneas a preternatural perfume accompanied her presence and betrayed her quality. If such a mysterious emanation ever was projected by the emotions of an earthly woman upon their object, it must have signified Eustacia's presence to Yeobright now. He looked at her wistfully, then seemed to fall into a reverie, as if he were forgetting what he observed. The momentary situation ended, he passed on, and Eustacia sipped her wine without knowing what she drank. The man for whom she had predetermined to nourish a passion went into the small room, and across it to the further extremity.

The mummers, as has been stated, were seated on a bench, one end of which extended into the small apartment, or pantry, for want of space in the outer room. Eustacia, partly from shyness, had chosen the innermost seat, which thus commanded a view of the interior of the pantry as well as the room containing the guests. When Clym passed down the pantry her eyes followed him in the gloom which prevailed there. At the remote end was a door which, just as he was about to open it for himself, was opened by somebody within, and light streamed forth.

The person was Thomasin, with a candle, looking anxious, pale, and interesting. Yeobright appeared glad to see her, and pressed her hand. "That's right, Tamsie," he said heartily, as though recalled to himself by the sight of her. "you have decided to come down. I am glad of it."

"Hush—no, no," she said quickly. "I only came to speak to you."

"But why not join us?"

"I cannot. At least I would rather not. I am not well enough, and we shall have plenty of time together now you are going to be home a good long holiday."

"It isn't nearly so pleasant without you. Are you really ill?"

"Just a little, my old cousin—here," she said, playfully sweeping her hand across her heart.

"Ah, mother should have asked somebody else to be present tonight, perhaps?"

"O no, indeed. I merely stepped down, Clym, to ask you—' Here he followed her through the doorway into the private room beyond, and, the door closing, Eustacia and the mummer who sat next to her, the only other witness of the performance, saw and heard no more.

The heat flew to Eustacia's head and cheeks. She instantly guessed that Clym, having been home only these two or three days, had not as yet been

made acquainted with Thomasin's painful situation with regard to Wildeve, and seeing her living there just as she had been living before he left home, he naturally suspected nothing. Eustacia felt a wild jealousy of Thomasin on the instant. Though Thomasin might possibly have tender sentiments towards another man as yet, how long could they be expected to last when she was shut up here with this interesting and traveled cousin of hers? There was no knowing what affection might not soon break out between the two, so constantly in each other's society, and not a distracting object near Clym's boyish love for her might have languished, but it might easily be revived again.

Eustacia was nettled by her own contrivances. What a sheer waste of herself to be dressed thus while another was shining to advantage! Had she known the full effect of the encounter she would have moved heaven and earth to get here in a natural manner. The power of her face all lost, the charm of her emotions all disguised, the fascination of her coquetry denied existence, nothing but a voice left to her—she had a sense of the doom of Echo. "Nobody here respects me," she said. She had overlooked the fact that, in coming as a boy among other boys, she would be treated as a boy. The slight, though of her own causing, and self-explanatory, she was unable to dismiss as unwittingly shown, so sensitive had the situation made her.

Women have done much for themselves in histrionic dress. To look far below those who, like a certain fair personator of Polly Peachum early in the last century, and another Lydia Languish early in this, have won not only love but ducal coronets into the bargain, whole shoals of them have reached to the initial satisfaction of getting love almost whence they would. But the Turkish Knight was denied even the chance of achieving this by the fluttering ribbons which she dared not brush aside.

Yeobright returned to the room without his cousin. When within two or three feet of Eustacia he stopped, as if again arrested by a thought. He was gazing at her. She looked another way, disconcerted, and wondered how long this purgatory was to last. After lingering a few seconds he passed on again.

To court their own discomfiture by love is a common instinct with certain perfervid women. Conflicting sensations of love, fear, and shame reduced Eustacia to a state of the utmost uneasiness. To escape was her great and immediate desire. The other mummets appeared to be in no hurry to leave, and murmuring to the lad who sat next to her that she preferred waiting for them outside the house, she moved to the door as imperceptibly as possible, opened it, and slipped out.

The calm, lone scene reassured her. She went forward to the palings and leant over them, looking at the moon. She had stood thus but a little time when the door again opened. Expecting to see the remainder of the band Eustacia turned, but no—Clym Yeobright came out as softly as she had done, and closed the door behind him.

He advanced and stood beside her. "I have an odd opinion," he said, "and should like to ask you a question. Are you a woman—or am I wrong?"

"I am a woman."

His eyes lingered on her with great interest. "Do girls often play as mummets now? They never used to."

"They don't now"

"Why did you?"

"To get excitement and shake off depression," she said in low tones

"What depressed you?"

"Life"

"That's a cause of depression a good many have to put up with"

"Yes"

A long silence "And do you find excitement?" asked Clym at last

"At this moment, perhaps"

"Then you are vexed at being discovered?"

"Yes, though I thought I might be"

"I would gladly have asked you to our party had I known you wished to come Have I ever been acquainted with you in my youth?"

"Never"

"Won't you come in again, and stay as long as you like?"

"No I wish not to be further recognized"

"Well, you are safe with me" After remaining in thought a minute he added gently, "I will not intrude upon you longer It is a strange way of meeting, and I will not ask why I find a cultivated woman playing such a part as this"

She did not volunteer the reason which he seemed to hope for, and he wished her good night, going thence round to the back of the house, where he walked up and down by himself for some time before re-entering

Eustacia, warmed with an inner fire, could not wait for her companions after this She flung back the ribbons from her face, opened the gate, and at once struck into the heath She did not hasten along Her grandfather was in bed at this hour, for she so frequently walked upon the hills on moonlight nights that he took no notice of her comings and goings, and, enjoying himself in his own way, left her to do likewise A more important subject than that of getting indoors now engrossed her Yeobright, if he had the least curiosity, would infallibly discover her name What then? She first felt a sort of exultation at the way in which the adventure had terminated, even though at moments between her exultations she was abashed and blushful Then this consideration recurred to chill her What was the use of her exploit? She was at present a total stranger to the Yeobright family The unreasonable nimbus of romance with which she had encircled that man might be her misery How could she allow herself to become so infatuated with a stranger? And to fill the cup of her sorrow there would be Thomasin, living day after day in inflammable proximity to him, for she had just learnt that, contrary to her first belief, he was going to stay at home some considerable time

She reached the wicket at Mistover Knap, but before opening it she turned and faced the heath once more The form of Rainbarrow stood above the hills, and the moon stood above Rainbarrow The air was charged with silence and frost The scene reminded Eustacia of a circumstance which till that moment she had totally forgotten She had promised to meet Wildeve by the Barrow this very night at eight, to give a final answer to his pleading for an elopement

She herself had fixed the evening and the hour. He had probably come to the spot, waited there in the cold, and been greatly disappointed.

"Well, so much the better it did not hurt him," she said serenely. Wildeva had at present the rayless outline of the sun through smoked glass, and she could say such things as that with the greatest facility.

She remained deeply pondering, and Thomasin's winning manner towards her cousin arose again upon Eustacia's mind.

"O that she had been married to Damon before this!" she said. "And she would if it hadn't been for me! If I had only known—if I had only known!"

Eustacia once more lifted her deep stormy eyes to the moonlight, and, sighing that tragic sigh of hers which was so much like a shudder, entered the shadow of the roof. She threw off her trappings in the outhouse, rolled them up, and went indoors to her chamber.

VII A COALITION BETWEEN BEAUTY AND ODDNESS

THE OLD captain's prevailing indifference to his granddaughter's movements left her free as a bird to follow her own courses, but it so happened that he did take upon himself the next morning to ask her why she had walked out so late.

"Only in search of events, grandfather," she said, looking out of the window with that drowsy latency of manner which discovered so much force behind it whenever the trigger was pressed.

"Search of events—one would think you were one of the bucks I knew at one and twenty."

"It is so lonely here."

"So much the better. If I were living in a town my whole time would be taken up in looking after you. I fully expected you would have been home when I returned from the Woman."

"I won't conceal what I did. I wanted an adventure, and I went with the mummers. I played the part of the Turkish Knight."

"No, never? Ha, ha! Good gad! I didn't expect it of you, Eustacia."

"It was my first performance, and it certainly will be my last. Now I have told you—and remember it is a secret."

"Of course. But, Eustacia, you never did—ha! ha! Dammy, how 'twould have pleased me forty years ago! But remember, no more of it, my girl. You may walk on the heath night or day, as you choose, so that you don't bother me, but no figuring in breeches again."

"You need have no fear for me, grandpapa."

Here the conversation ceased, Eustacia's moral training never exceeding in severity a dialogue of this sort, which, if it ever became profitable to good works, would be a result not dear at the price. But her thoughts soon strayed far from her own personality, and, full of a passionate and indescribable solicitude for one to whom she was not even a name, she went forth into the amplitude of tanned wild about her, restless as Ahasuerus the Jew. She was about half a mile from her residence when she beheld a sinister redness arising

from a ravine a little way in advance—dull and lurid like a flame in sunlight, and she guessed it to signify Diggory Venn

When the farmers who had wished to buy in a new stock of reddle during the last month had inquired where Venn was to be found, people replied, "On Egdon Heath" Day after day the answer was the same Now, since Egdon was populated with heath-croppers and furze-cutters rather than with sheep and shepherds, and the downs where most of the latter were to be found lay some to the north, some to the west of Egdon, his reason for camping about there like Israel in Zin was not apparent The position was central and occasionally desirable But the sale of reddle was not Diggory's primary object in remaining on the heath, particularly at so late a period of the year, when most travelers of his class had gone into winter quarters

Eustacia looked at the lonely man Wildeve had told her at their last meeting that Venn had been thrust forward by Mrs Yeobright as one ready and anxious to take his place as Thomasin's betrothed His figure was perfect, his face young and well outlined, his eye bright, his intelligence keen, and his position one which he could readily better if he chose But in spite of possibilities it was not likely that Thomasin would accept this Ishmaelish creature while she had a cousin like Yeobright at her elbow, and Wildeve at the same time not absolutely indifferent Eustacia was not long in guessing that poor Mrs Yeobright, in her anxiety for her niece's future, had mentioned this lover to stimulate the zeal of the other Eustacia was on the side of the Yeobrights now, and entered into the spirit of the aunt's desire

"Good-morning, miss," said the reddleman, taking off his cap of hareskin, and apparently bearing her no ill-will from recollection of their last meeting

"Good morning, reddleman," she said, hardly troubling to lift her heavily shaded eyes to his "I did not know you were so near Is your van here too?"

Venn moved his elbow towards a hollow in which a dense brake of purple-stemmed brambles had grown to such vast dimensions as almost to form a dell Brambles, though churlish when handled, are kindly shelter in early winter, being the latest of the deciduous bushes to lose their leaves The roof and chimney of Venn's caravan showed behind the tracery and tangles of the brake

"You remain near this part?" she asked with more interest

"Yes, I have business here"

"Not altogether the selling of reddle?"

"It has nothing to do with that"

"It has to do with Miss Yeobright?"

Her face seemed to ask for an armed peace, and he therefore said frankly, "Yes, miss, it is on account of her"

"On account of your approaching marriage with her?"

Venn flushed through his stain "Don't make sport of me, Miss Vye," he said

"It isn't true?"

"Certainly not"

She was thus convinced that the reddleman was a mere *pis aller* in Mrs Yeobright's mind, one, moreover, who had not even been informed of his promotion to that lowly standing "It was a mere notion of mine," she said

quietly, and was about to pass by without further speech, when, looking round to the right, she saw a painfully well-known figure serpentine upwards by one of the little paths which led to the top where she stood. Owing to the necessary windings of his course his back was at present towards them. She glanced quickly round, to escape that man there was only one way. Turning to Venn, she said, "Would you allow me to rest a few minutes in your van? The banks are damp for sitting on."

"Certainly miss, I'll make a place for you."

She followed him behind the dell of brambles to his wheeled dwelling, into which Venn mounted, placing the three-legged stool just within the door.

"That is the best I can do for you," he said, stepping down and retiring to the path, where he resumed the smoking of his pipe as he walked up and down.

Eustacia bounded into the vehicle and sat on the stool, ensconced from view on the side towards the trackway. Soon she heard the brushing of other feet than the reddleman's, a not very friendly "Good day" uttered by two men in passing each other, and then the dwindling of the footfall of one of them in a direction onwards. Eustacia stretched her neck forward till she caught a glimpse of a receding back and shoulders, and she felt a wretched twinge of misery, she knew not why. It was the sickening feeling which, if the changed heart has any generosity at all in its composition, accompanies the sudden sight of a once-loved one who is beloved no more.

When Eustacia descended to proceed on her way the reddleman came near. "That was Mr. Wildeve who passed, miss," he said slowly, and expressed by his face that he expected her to feel vexed at having been sitting unseen.

"Yes, I saw him coming up the hill," replied Eustacia. "Why should you tell me that?" It was a bold question, considering the reddleman's knowledge of her past love, but her undemonstrative manner had power to repress the opinions of those she deemed remote from her.

"I am glad to hear that you can ask it," said the reddleman bluntly. "And, now I think of it, it agrees with what I saw last night."

"Ah—what was that?" Eustacia wished to leave him, but wished to know.

"Mr. Wildeve stayed at Rainbarrow a long time waiting for a lady who didn't come."

"You waited too, it seems?"

"Yes, I always do. I was glad to see him disappointed. He will be there again tonight."

"To be again disappointed. The truth is, reddleman, that that young lady, so far from wishing to stand in the way of Thomasin's marriage with Mr. Wildeve, would be very glad to promote it."

Venn felt much astonishment at this avowal, though he did not show it clearly, that exhibition may greet remarks which are one remove from expectation, but it is usually withheld in complicated cases of two removes and upwards. "Indeed, miss," he replied.

"How do you know that Mr. Wildeve will come to Rainbarrow again to night?" she asked.

"I heard him say to himself that he would. He's in a regular temper."

Eustacia looked for a moment what she felt, and she murmured, lifting her deep dark eyes anxiously to his, "I wish I knew what to do I don't want to be uncivil to him, but I don't wish to see him again, and I have some few little things to return to him."

"If you choose to send 'em by me, miss, and a note to tell him that you wish to say no more to him, I'll take it for you quite privately. That would be the most straightforward way of letting him know your mind."

"Very well," said Eustacia. "Come towards my house, and I will bring it out to you."

She went on, and as the path was an infinitely small parting in the shaggy locks of the heath, the reddleman followed exactly in her trail. She saw from a distance that the captain was on the bank sweeping the horizon with his telescope, and bidding Venn to wait where he stood, she entered the house alone.

In ten minutes she returned with a parcel and a note, and said, in placing them in his hand, "Why are you so ready to take these for me?"

"Can you ask that?"

"I suppose you think to serve Thomasin in some way by it. Are you as anxious as ever to help on her marriage?"

Venn was a little moved. "I would sooner have married her myself," he said in a low voice. "But what I feel is that if she cannot be happy without him I will do my duty in helping her to get him, as a man ought."

Eustacia looked curiously at the singular man who spoke thus. What a strange sort of love, to be entirely free from that quality of selfishness which is frequently the chief constituent of the passion, and sometimes its only love! The reddleman's disinterestedness was so well deserving of respect that it overshot respect by being barely comprehended, and she almost thought it absurd.

"Then we are both of one mind at last," she said.

"Yes," replied Venn gloomily. "But if you would tell me, miss, why you take such an interest in her, I should be easier. It is so sudden and strange."

Eustacia appeared at a loss. "I cannot tell you that, reddleman," she said coldly.

Venn said no more. He pocketed the letter, and, bowing to Eustacia, went away.

Rainbarrow had again become blended with night when Wildeve ascended the long acclivity at its base. On his reaching the top a shape grew up from the earth immediately behind him. It was that of Eustacia's emissary. He slapped Wildeve on the shoulder. The feverish young innkeeper and ex-engineer started like Satan at the touch of Ithuriel's spear.

"The meeting is always at eight o'clock, at this place," said Venn, "and here we are—we three."

"We three?" said Wildeve, looking quickly round.

"Yes, you and I, and she. This is she." He held up the letter and parcel.

Wildeve took them wonderingly. "I don't quite see what this means," he said. "How do you come here? There must be some mistake."

"It will be cleared from your mind when you have read the letter. Lanterns

for one" The reddleman struck a light, kindled an inch of tallow-candle which he had brought, and sheltered it with his cap

"Who are you?" said Wildeve, discerning by the candlelight an obscure rubicundity of person in his companion "You are the reddleman I saw on the hill this morning—why, you are the man who—"

"Please read the letter"

"If you had come from the other one I shouldn't have been surprised," murmured Wildeve as he opened the letter and read His face grew serious

"To Mr Wildeve

"After some thought I have decided once and for all that we must hold no further communication The more I consider the matter the more I am convinced that there must be an end to our acquaintance Had you been uniformly faithful to me throughout these two years you might now have some ground for accusing me of heartlessness, but if you calmly consider what I bore during the period of your desertion, and how I passively put up with your courtship of another without once interfering, you will, I think, own that I have a right to consult my own feeling when you come back to me again That these are not what they were towards you may, perhaps, be a fault in me, but it is one which you can scarcely reproach me for when you remember how you left me for Thomasin

"The little articles you gave me in the early part of our friendship are returned by the bearer of this letter They should rightly have been sent back when I first heard of your engagement to her

"EUSTACIA"

By the time that Wildeve reached her name the blankness with which he had read the first half of the letter intensified to mortification "I am made a great fool of, one way and another," he said pettishly "Do you know what is in this letter?"

The reddleman hummed a tune

"Can't you answer me?" asked Wildeve warmly

"Rum-um-tum-tum," sang the reddleman

Wildeve stood looking on the ground beside Venn's feet, till he allowed his eyes to travel upwards over Diggory's form, as illuminated by the candle, to his head and face "Ha-ha! Well, I suppose I deserve it, considering how I have played with them both," he said at last, as much to himself as to Venn "But of all the odd things that ever I knew, the oddest is that you should so run counter to your own interests as to bring this to me"

"My interests?"

"Certainly 'Twas your interest not to do anything which would send me courting Thomasin again, now she has accepted you—or something like it Mrs Yeobright says you are to marry her 'Tisn't true, then?"

"Good Lord! I heard of this before, but didn't believe it When did she say so?"

Wildeve began humming as the reddleman had done

"I don't believe it now," cried Venn

"Rum-um-tum-tum," sang Wildeve

"O Lord—how he can imitate!" said Venn contemptuously "I'll have this out I'll go straight to her"

Diggory withdrew with an emphatic step, Wildeve's eye passing over his form in withering derision, as if he were no more than a heath-cropper. When the reddleman's figure could no longer be seen, Wildeve himself descended and plunged into the rayless hollow of the vale.

To lose the two women—he who had been the well-beloved of both—was too ironical an issue to be endured. He could only decently save himself by Thomasin, and once he became her husband, Eustacia's repentance, he thought, would set in for a long and bitter term. It was no wonder that Wildeve, ignorant of the new man at the back of the scene, should have supposed Eustacia to be playing a part. To believe that the letter was not the result of some momentary pique, to infer that she really gave him up to Thomasin, would have required previous knowledge of her transfiguration by that man's influence. Who was to know that she had grown generous in the greediness of a new passion, that in coveting one cousin she was dealing liberally with another, that in her eagerness to appropriate she gave way?

Full of this resolve to marry in haste, and wring the heart of the proud girl, Wildeve went his way.

Meanwhile Diggory Venn had returned to his van, where he stood looking thoughtfully into the stove. A new vista was opened up to him. But, however promising Mrs. Yeobright's views of him might be as a candidate for her niece's hand, one condition was indispensable to the favor of Thomasin herself, and that was a renunciation of his present wild mode of life. In this he saw little difficulty.

He could not afford to wait till the next day before seeing Thomasin and detailing his plan. He speedily plunged himself into toilet operations, pulled a suit of cloth clothes from a box, and in about twenty minutes stood before the van lantern as a reddleman in nothing but his face, the vermilion shades of which were not to be removed in a day. Closing the door and fastening it with a padlock Venn set off towards Blooms-End.

He had reached the white palings and laid his hand upon the gate when the door of the house opened, and quickly closed again. A female form had glided in. At the same time a man, who had seemingly been standing with the woman in the porch, came forward from the house till he was face to face with Venn. It was Wildeve again.

"Man alive, you've been quick at it," said Diggory sarcastically.

"And you slow, as you will find," said Wildeve. "And," lowering his voice, "you may as well go back again now. I've claimed her, and got her. Good night, reddleman!" Thereupon Wildeve walked away.

Venn's heart sank within him, though it had not risen unduly high. He stood leaning over the palings in an indecisive mood for nearly a quarter of an hour. Then he went up the garden-path, knocked, and asked for Mrs. Yeobright.

Instead of requesting him to enter, she came to the porch. A discourse was carried on between them in low measured tones for the space of ten minutes or more. At the end of the time Mrs. Yeobright went in, and Venn sadly retraced his steps into the heath. When he had again regained his van he lit the lantern, and with an apathetic face at once began to pull off his best clothes,

till in the course of a few minutes he reappeared as the confirmed and irrevocable reddleman that he had seemed before

VIII FIRMNESS IS DISCOVERED IN A GENTLE HEART

ON THAT evening the interior of Blooms-End, though cozy and comfortable, had been rather silent Clym Yeobright was not at home Since the Christmas party he had gone on a few days' visit to a friend about ten miles off

The shadowy form seen by Venn to part from Wildeve in the porch, and quickly withdraw into the house, was Thomasin's On entering she threw down a cloak which had been carelessly wrapped around her, and came forward to the light, where Mrs Yeobright sat at her work-table, drawn up within the settle, so that part of it projected into the chimney corner

"I don't like your going out after dark alone, Tamsin," said her aunt quietly, without looking up from her work

"I have only been just outside the door"

"Well?" inquired Mrs Yeobright, struck by a change in the tone of Thomasin's voice, and observing her Thomasin's cheek was flushed to a pitch far beyond that which it had reached before her troubles, and her eyes glittered

"It was *he* who knocked," she said

"I thought as much"

"He wishes the marriage to be at once"

"Indeed! What—is he anxious?" Mrs Yeobright directed a searching look upon her niece "Why did not Mr Wildeve come in?"

"He did not wish to You are not friends with him, he says He would like the wedding to be the day after tomorrow, quite privately, at the church of his parish—not at ours"

"Oh! And what did you say?"

"I agreed to it," Thomasin answered firmly "I am a practical woman now I don't believe in hearts at all I would marry him under any circumstances since—since Clym's letter"

A letter was lying on Mrs Yeobright's work-basket, and at Thomasin's words her aunt reopened it, and silently read for the tenth time that day

"What is the meaning of this silly story that people are circulating about Thomasin and Mr Wildeve? I should call such a scandal humiliating if there was the least chance of its being true How could such a gross falsehood have arisen? It is said that one should go abroad to hear news of home, and I appear to have done it Of course I contradict the tale everywhere, but it is very vexing, and I wonder how it could have originated It is too ridiculous that such a girl as Thomasin could so mortify us as to get jilted on the wedding-day What has she done?"

"Yes," Mrs Yeobright said sadly, putting down the letter "If you think you can marry him, do so And since Mr Wildeve wishes it to be unceremonious, let it be that too I can do nothing It is all in your own hands now My power over your welfare came to an end when you left this house to go with him

to Budmouth " She continued, half in bitterness, "I may almost ask, why do you consult me in the matter at all? If you had gone and married him without saying a word to me, I could hardly have been angry—simply because, poor girl, you can't do a better thing "

"Don't say that and dishearten me "

"You are right I will not "

"I do not plead for him, aunt Human nature is weak, and I am not a blind woman to insist that he is perfect I did think so, but I don't now But I know my course, and you know that I know it I hope for the best "

"And so do I, and we will both continue to," said Mrs Yeobright, rising and kissing her "Then the wedding, if it comes off, will be on the morning of the very day Clym comes home?"

"Yes I decided that it ought to be over before he came After that you can look him in the face, and so can I Our concealments will matter nothing "

Mrs Yeobright moved her head in thoughtful assent, and presently said, "Do you wish me to give you away? I am willing to undertake that, you know, if you wish, as I was last time After once forbidding the banns, I think I can do no less "

"I don't think I will ask you to come," said Thomasin reluctantly, but with decision "It would be unpleasant, I am almost sure Better let there be only strangers present, and none of my relations at all I would rather have it so I do not wish to do anything which may touch your credit, and I feel that I should be uncomfortable if you were there, after what has passed I am only your niece, and there is no necessity why you should concern yourself more about me "

"Well, he has beaten us," her aunt said "It really seems as if he had been playing with you in this way in revenge for my humbling him as I did by standing up against him at first "

"O no, aunt," murmured Thomasin

They said no more on the subject then Diggory Venn's knock came soon after, and Mrs Yeobright on returning from her interview with him in the porch carelessly observed, "Another lover has come to ask for you "

"No?"

"Yes, that queer young man Venn "

"Asks to pay his addresses to me?"

"Yes, and I told him he was too late "

Thomasin looked silently into the candle-flame "Poor Diggory!" she said, and then aroused herself to other things

The next day was passed in mere mechanical deeds of preparation, both the women being anxious to immerse themselves in these to escape the emotional aspect of the situation Some wearing apparel and other articles were collected anew for Thomasin, and remarks on domestic details were frequently made, so as to obscure any inner misgivings about her future as Wildeve's wife

The appointed morning came The arrangement with Wildeve was that he should meet her at the church to guard against any unpleasant curiosity which might have affected them had they been seen walking off together in the usual country way

Aunt and niece stood together in the bedroom where the bride was dressing. The sun, where it could catch it, made a mirror of Thomasin's hair, which she always wore braided. It was braided according to a calendric system, the more important the day the more numerous the strands in the braid. On ordinary working-days she braided it in threes, on ordinary Sundays in fours, at May-polings, gypsyings, and the like, she braided it in fives. Years ago she had said that when she married she would braid it in sevens. She had braided it in sevens today.

"I have been thinking that I will wear my blue silk after all," she said. "It is my wedding-day, even though there may be something sad about the time. I mean," she added, anxious to correct any wrong impression, "not sad in itself, but in its having had great disappointment and trouble before it."

Mrs Yeobright breathed in a way which might have been called a sigh. "I almost wish Clym had been at home," she said. "Of course you chose the time because of his absence."

"Partly I have felt that I acted unfairly to him in not telling him all, but, as it was done not to grieve him, I thought I would carry out the plan to its end, and tell the whole story when the sky was clear."

"You are a practical little woman," said Mrs Yeobright, smiling. "I wish you and he—no, I don't wish anything. There, it is nine o'clock," she interrupted, hearing a whizz and a dinging downstairs.

"I told Damon I would leave at nine," said Thomasin, hastening out of the room.

Her aunt followed. When Thomasin was going down the little walk from the door to the wicket-gate, Mrs Yeobright looked reluctantly at her, and said, "It is a shame to let you go alone."

"It is necessary," said Thomasin.

"At any rate," added her aunt with forced cheerfulness, "I shall call upon you this afternoon, and bring the cake with me. If Clym has returned by that time he will perhaps come too. I wish to show Mr Wildeve that I bear him no ill-will. Let the past be forgotten. Well, God bless you! There, I don't believe in old superstitions, but I'll do it." She threw a slipper at the retreating figure of the girl, who turned, smiled, and went on again.

A few steps further, and she looked back. "Did you call me, aunt?" she tremulously inquired. "Good-bye!"

Moved by an uncontrollable feeling as she looked upon Mrs Yeobright's worn, wet face, she ran back, when her aunt came forward, and they met again. "O—Tamsie," said the elder, weeping, "I don't like to let you go."

"I—I am—" Thomasin began, giving way likewise. But, quelling her grief, she said "Good-bye!" again and went on.

Then Mrs Yeobright saw a little figure wending its way between the scratching furze-bushes, and diminishing far up the valley—a pale blue spot in a vast field of neutral brown, solitary and undefended, except by the power of her own hope.

But the worst feature in the case was one which did not appear in the landscape, it was the man.

The hour chosen for the ceremony by Thomasin and Wildeve had been so

timed as to enable her to escape the awkwardness of meeting her cousin Clym, who was returning the same morning. To own to the partial truth of what he had heard would be distressing as long as the humiliating position resulting from the event was unimproved. It was only after a second and successful journey to the altar that she could lift up her head and prove the failure of the first attempt a pure accident.

She had not been gone from Blooms-End more than half an hour when Yeobright came up the road from the other direction and entered the house.

"I had an early breakfast," he said to his mother after greeting her. "Now I could eat a little more."

They sat down to the repeated meal, and he went on in a low, anxious voice, apparently imagining that Thomasin had not yet come downstairs, "What's this I have heard about Thomasin and Mr. Wildeve?"

"It is true in many points," said Mrs. Yeobright quietly, "but it is all right now, I hope." She looked at the clock.

"True?"

"Thomasin is gone to him today."

Clym pushed away from his breakfast. "Then there is a scandal of some sort, and that's what's the matter with Thomasin. Was it this that made her ill?"

"Yes. Not a scandal, a misfortune. I will tell you all about it, Clym. You must not be angry, but you must listen, and you'll find that what we have done has been for the best."

She then told him the circumstances. All that he had known of the affair before he had returned from Paris was that there had existed an attachment between Thomasin and Wildeve, which his mother had at first discountenanced, but had since, owing to the arguments of Thomasin, looked upon in a little more favorable light. When she, therefore, proceeded to explain all he was greatly surprised and troubled.

"And she determined that the wedding should be over before you came back," said Mrs. Yeobright, "that there might be no chance of her meeting you, and having a very painful time of it. That's why she has gone to him, they have arranged to be married this morning."

"But I can't understand it," said Yeobright, rising. "'Tis so unlike her. I can see why you did not write to me after her unfortunate return home. But why didn't you let me know when the wedding was going to be—the first time?"

"Well, I felt vexed with her just then. She seemed to me to be obstinate, and when I found that you were nothing in her mind I vowed that she should be nothing in yours. I felt that she was only my niece after all, I told her she might marry, but that I should take no interest in it, and should not bother you about it either."

"It wouldn't have been bothering me. Mother, you did wrong."

"I thought it might disturb you in your business, and that you might throw up your situation, or injure your prospects in some way because of it, so I said nothing. Of course, if they had married at that time in a proper manner, I should have told you at once."

"Tamsin actually being married while we are sitting here!"

"Yes Unless some accident happens again, as it did the first time It may, considering he's the same man"

"Yes, and I believe it will Was it right to let her go? Suppose Wildeve is really a bad fellow?"

"Then he won't come, and she'll come home again"

"You should have looked more into it"

"It is useless to say that," his mother answered, with an impatient look of sorrow "You don't know how hard it has been here with us all these weeks, Clym You don't know what a mortification anything of that sort is to a woman You do n't know the sleepless nights we've had in this house, and the almost bitter words that have passed between us since that fifth of November I hope never to pass seven such weeks again Tamsin has not gone outside the door, and I have been ashamed to look anybody in the face, and now you blame me for letting her do the only thing that can be done to set that trouble straight"

"No," he said slowly "Upon the whole I don't blame you But just consider how sudden it seems to me Here was I, knowing nothing, and then I am told all at once that Tamsie is gone to be married Well, I suppose there was nothing better to do Do you know, mother," he continued after a moment or two, looking suddenly interested in his own past history, "I once thought of Tamsin as a sweetheart? Yes, I did How odd boys are! And when I came home and saw her this time she seemed so much more affectionate than usual, that I was quite reminded of those days, particularly on the night of the party, when she was unwell We had the party just the same—was not that rather cruel to her?"

"It made no difference I had arranged to give one, and it was not worth while to make more gloom than necessary To begin by shutting ourselves up and telling you of Tamsin's misfortunes would have been a poor sort of welcome"

Clym remained thinking "I almost wish you had not had that party," he said, "and for other reasons But I will tell you in a day or two We must think of Tamsin now"

They lapsed into silence "I'll tell you what," said Yeobright again, in a tone which showed some slumbering feeling still, "I don't think it kind to Tamsin to let her be married like this, and neither of us there to keep up her spirits or care a bit about her She hasn't disgraced herself, or done anything to deserve that It is bad enough that the wedding should be so hurried and uncere-monious, without our keeping away from it in addition Upon my soul, 'tis almost a shame I'll go"

"It is over by this time," said his mother with a sigh, "unless they were late, or he—"

"Then I shall be soon enough to see them come out I don't quite like your keeping me in ignorance, mother, after all Really, I half hope he has failed to meet her"

"And ruined her character?"

"Nonsense, that wouldn't ruin Thomasin"

He took up his hat and hastily left the house Mrs Yeobright looked rather unhappy, and sat still, deep in thought But she was not long left alone A few minutes later Clym came back again, and in his company came Diggory Venn

"I find there isn't time for me to get there," said Clym

"Is she married?" Mrs Yeobright inquired, turning to the reddleman a face in which a strange strife of wishes, for and against, was apparent

Venn bowed "She is, ma'am"

"How strange it sounds," murmured Clym

"And he didn't disappoint her this time?" said Mrs Yeobright

"He did not And there is now no slight on her name I was hastening ath'art to tell you at once, as I saw you were not there"

"How came you to be there? How did you know it?" she asked

"I have been in that neighborhood for some time, and I saw them go in," said the reddleman "Wildev came up to the door, punctual as the clock I didn't expect it of him" He did not add, as he might have added, that how he came to be in that neighborhood was not by accident, that, since Wildev's resumption of his right to Thomasin, Venn, with the thoroughness which was part of his character, had determined to see the end of the episode

"Who was there?" said Mrs Yeobright

"Nobody hardly I stood right out of the way, and she did not see me" The reddleman spoke huskily, and looked into the garden

"Who gave her away?"

"Miss Vye"

"How very remarkable! Miss Vye! It is to be considered an honor, I suppose"

"Who's Miss Vye?" said Clym

"Captain Vye's granddaughter, of Mistover Knap"

"A proud girl from Budmouth," said Mrs Yeobright "One not much to my liking People say she's a witch, but of course that's absurd"

The reddleman kept to himself his acquaintance with that fair personage, and also that Eustacia was there because he went to fetch her, in accordance with a promise he had previously given as soon as he learnt that the marriage was to take place He merely said, in continuation of the story

"I was sitting on the churchyard-wall when they came up, one from one way, the other from the other, and Miss Vye was walking thereabouts, looking at the head-stones As soon as they had gone in I went to the door, feeling I should like to see it, as I knew her so well I pulled off my boots because they were so noisy, and went up into the gallery I saw then that the parson and clerk were already there"

"How came Miss Vye to have anything to do with it, if she was only on a walk that way?"

"Because there was nobody else She had gone into the church just before me, not into the gallery The parson looked round before beginning, and as she was the only one near he beckoned to her, and she went up to the rails After that, when it came to signing the book, she pushed up her veil and signed, and Tamsin seemed to thank her for her kindness." The reddleman told the

tale thoughtfully, for there lingered upon his vision the changing color of Wildeve, when Eustacia lifted the thick veil which had concealed her from recognition and looked calmly into his face "And then," said Diggory sadly, "I came away, for her history as Tamsin Yeobright was over"

"I offered to go," said Mrs Yeobright regretfully "But she said it was not necessary"

"Well, it is no matter," said the reddleman "The thing is done at last as it was meant to be at first, and God send her happiness Now I'll wish you good morning"

He placed his cap on his head and went out

From that instant of leaving Mrs Yeobright's door, the reddleman was seen no more in or about Egdon Heath for a space of many months He vanished entirely The nook among the brambles where his van had been standing was as vacant as ever the next morning, and scarcely a sign remained to show that he had been there, excepting a few straws, and a little redness on the turf, which was washed away by the next storm of rain

The report that Diggory had brought of the wedding, correct as far as it went, was deficient in one significant particular, which had escaped him through his being at some distance back in the church When Thomasin was tremblingly engaged in signing her name Wildeve had flung towards Eustacia a glance that said plainly, "I have punished you now" She had replied in a low tone—and he little thought how truly—"You mistake, it gives me sincerest pleasure to see her your wife today"

BOOK THIRD THE FASCINATION

I "MY MIND TO ME A KINGDOM IS"

IN CLYM YEOBRIGHT's face could be dimly seen the typical countenance of the future Should there be a classic period to art hereafter, its Pheidias may produce such faces The view of life as a thing to be put up with, replacing that zest for existence which was so intense in early civilizations, must ultimately enter so thoroughly into the constitution of the advanced races that its facial expression will become accepted as a new artistic departure People already feel that a man who lives without disturbing a curve of feature, or setting a mark of mental concern anywhere upon himself, is too far removed from modern perceptiveness to be a modern type Physically beautiful men—the glory of the race when it was young—are almost an anachronism now, and we may wonder whether, at some time or other, physically beautiful women may not be an anachronism likewise

The truth seems to be that a long line of disillusionive centuries has permanently displaced the Hellenic idea of life, or whatever it may be called What the Greeks only suspected we know well, what their Aeschylus imagined our nursery children feel That old-fashioned reveling in the general situation grows

less and less possible as we uncover the defects of natural laws, and see the quandary that man is in by their operation

The lineaments which will get embodied in ideals based upon this new recognition will probably be akin to those of Yeobright. The observer's eye was arrested, not by his face as a picture, but by his face as a page, not by what it was, but by what it recorded. His features were attractive in the light of symbols, as sounds intrinsically common become attractive in language, and as shapes intrinsically simple become interesting in writing.

He had been a lad of whom something was expected. Beyond this all had been chaos. That he would be successful in an original way, or that he would go to the dogs in an original way, seemed equally probable. The only absolute certainty about him was that he would not stand still in the circumstances amid which he was born.

Hence, when his name was casually mentioned by neighboring yeomen, the listener said, "Ah, Clym Yeobright, what is he doing now?" When the instinctive question about a person is, *What is he doing?* it is felt that he will not be found to be, like most of us, doing nothing in particular. There is an indefinite sense that he must be invading some region of singularity, good or bad. The devout hope is that he is doing well. The secret faith is that he is making a mess of it. Half a dozen comfortable market-men, who were habitual callers at the Quiet Woman as they passed by in their carts, were partial to the topic. In fact, though they were not Egdon men, they could hardly avoid it while they sucked their long clay tubes and regarded the heath through the window. Clym had been so inwoven with the heath in his boyhood that hardly anybody could look upon it without thinking of him. So the subject recurred: if he were making a fortune and a name, so much the better for him, if he were making a tragical figure in the world, so much the better for a narrative.

The fact was that Yeobright's fame had spread to an awkward extent before he left home. "It is bad when your fame outruns your means," said the Spanish Jesuit, Gracian. At the age of six he had asked a Scripture riddle: "Who was the first man known to wear breeches?" and applause had resounded from the very verge of the heath. At seven he painted the Battle of Waterloo with tiger-lily pollen and black currant juice, in the absence of water-colors. By the time he reached twelve he had in this manner been heard of as artist and scholar for at least two miles round. An individual whose fame spreads three or four thousand yards in the time taken by the fame of others similarly situated to travel six or eight hundred, must of necessity have something in him. Possibly Clym's fame, like Homer's, owed something to the accidents of his situation, nevertheless famous he was.

He grew up and was helped out in life. That waggery of fate which started Clive as a writing clerk, Gay as a linen-draper, Keats as a surgeon, and a thousand others in a thousand other odd ways, banished the wild and ascetic heath lad to a trade whose sole concern was with the especial symbols of self-indulgence and vainglory.

The details of this choice of a business for him it is not necessary to give. At the death of his father a neighboring gentleman had kindly undertaken to give the boy a start, and thus assumed the form of sending him to Budmouth.

Yeobright did not wish to go there, but it was the only feasible opening. Thence he went to London, and thence, shortly after, to Paris, where he had remained till now.

Something being expected of him, he had not been at home many days before a great curiosity as to why he stayed on so long began to arise in the heath. The natural term of a holiday had passed, yet he still remained. On the Sunday morning following the week of Thomasin's marriage a discussion on this subject was in progress at a hair-cutting before Fairway's house. Here the local barbering was always done at this hour on this day, to be followed by the great Sunday wash of the inhabitants at noon, which in its turn was followed by the great Sunday dressing an hour later. On Egdon Heath Sunday proper did not begin till dinner time, and even then it was a somewhat battered specimen of the day.

These Sunday-morning hair-cuttings were performed by Fairway, the victim sitting on a chopping-block in front of the house, without a coat, and the neighbors gossiping around, idly observing the locks of hair as they rose upon the wind after the snip, and flew away out of sight to the four quarters of the heavens. Summer and winter the scene was the same, unless the wind were more than usually blustery, when the stool was shifted a few feet round the corner. To complain of cold in sitting out of doors, hatless and coatless, while Fairway told true stories between the cuts of the scissors, would have been to pronounce yourself no man at once. To flinch, exclaim, or move a muscle of the face at the small stabs under the ear received from those instruments, or at scarifications of the neck by the comb, would have been thought a gross breach of good manners, considering that Fairway did it all for nothing. A bleeding about the poll on Sunday afternoons was amply accounted for by the explanation, "I have had my hair cut, you know."

The conversation on Yeobright had been started by a distant view of the young man rambling leisurely across the heath before them.

"A man who is doing well elsewhere wouldn't bide here two or three weeks for nothing," said Fairway. "He's got some project in 's head—depend upon that."

"Well, 'a can't keep a diment shop here," said Sam.

"I don't see why he should have had them two heavy boxes home if he had not been going to bide, and what there is for him to do here the Lord in heaven knows."

Before many more surmises could be indulged in Yeobright had come near, and seeing the hair-cutting group he turned aside to join them. Marching up, and looking critically at their faces for a moment, he said, without introduction, "Now, folks, let me guess what you have been talking about."

"Ay, sure, if you will," said Sam.

"About me."

"Now, it is a thing I shouldn't have dreamed of doing, otherwise," said Fairway in a tone of integrity, "but since you have named it, Master Yeobright, I'll own that we was talking about 'ee. We were wondering what could keep you home here mollyhorning about when you have made such a world-wide name for yourself in the nick-nack trade—now, that's the truth o't."

"I'll tell you," said Yeobright, with unexpected earnestness "I am not sorry to have the opportunity I've come home because, all things considered, I can be a trifle less useless here than anywhere else But I have only lately found this out When I first got away from home I thought this place was not worth troubling about I thought our life here was contemptible To oil your boots instead of blacking them, to dust your coat with a switch instead of a brush was there ever anything more ridiculous? I said "

"So 'tis, so 'tis!"

"No, no—you are wrong, it isn't "

"Beg your pardon, we thought that was your maning "

"Well, this became very depressing as time went on I found that I was trying to be like people who had hardly anything in common with myself I was endeavoring to put off one sort of life for another sort of life, which was not better than the life I had known before It was simply different "

"True, a sight different," said Fairway

"Yes, Paris must be a taking place," said Humphrey "Grand shop-winders, trumpets, and drums, and here be we out of doors in all winds and weathers—"

"But you mistake me," pleaded Clym "All this was very depressing But not so depressing as something I next perceived—that my business was the idlest, vainest, most effeminate business that ever a man could be put to That decided me I would give it up and try to follow some rational occupation among the people I knew best, and to whom I could be of most use I have come home, and this is how I mean to carry out my plan I shall keep a school as near to Egdon as possible, so as to be able to walk over here and have a night-school in my mother's house But I must study a little at first, to get properly qualified Now, neighbors, I must go "

And Clym resumed his walk across the heath

"He'll never carry it out in the world," said Fairway "In a few weeks he'll learn to see things otherwise "

"'Tis good-hearted of the young man," said another "But, for my part, I think he had better mind his business "

II THE NEW COURSE CAUSES DISAPPOINTMENT

YEOBRIGHT loved his kind He had a conviction that the want of most men was knowledge of a sort which brings wisdom rather than affluence He wished to raise the class at the expense of individuals rather than individuals at the expense of the class What was more, he was ready at once to be the first unit sacrificed

In passing from the bucolic to the intellectual life the intermediate stages are usually two at least, frequently many more, and one of these stages is almost sure to be worldly advance We can hardly imagine bucolic placidity quickening to intellectual aims without imagining social aims as the transitional phase Yeobright's local peculiarity was that in striving at high thinking he still cleaved to plain living—nay, wild and meager living in many respects, and brotherliness with clowns

He was a John the Baptist who took ennoblement rather than repentance for his text. Mentally he was in a provincial future, that is, he was in many points abreast with the central town thinkers of his date. Much of this development he may have owed to his studious life in Paris, where he had become acquainted with ethical systems popular at the time.

In consequence of this relatively advanced position, Yeobright might have been called unfortunate. The rural world was not ripe for him. A man should be only partially before his time, to be completely to the vanward in aspirations is fatal to fame. Had Philip's warlike son been intellectually so far ahead as to have attempted civilization without bloodshed, he would have been twice the godlike hero that he seemed, but nobody would have heard of an Alexander.

In the interests of renown the forwardness should lie chiefly in the capacity to handle things. Successful propagandists have succeeded because the doctrine they bring into form is that which their listeners have for some time felt without being able to shape. A man who advocates aesthetic effort and deprecates social effort is only likely to be understood by a class to which social effort has become a stale matter. To argue upon the possibility of culture before luxury to the bucolic world may be to argue truly, but it is an attempt to disturb a sequence to which humanity has been long accustomed. Yeobright preaching to the Egdon eremites that they might rise to a serene comprehensiveness without going through the process of enriching themselves, was not unlike arguing to ancient Chaldeans that in ascending from earth to the pure empyrean it was not necessary to pass first into the intervening heaven of ether.

Was Yeobright's mind well-proportioned? No. A well-proportioned mind is one which shows no particular bias, one of which we may safely say that it will never cause its owner to be confined as a madman, tortured as a heretic, or crucified as a blasphemer. Also, on the other hand, that it will never cause him to be applauded as a prophet, revered as a priest, or exalted as a king. Its usual blessings are happiness and mediocrity. It produces the poetry of Rogers, the paintings of West, the statecraft of North, the spiritual guidance of Sumner, enabling its possessors to find their way to wealth, to wind up well, to step with dignity off the stage, to die comfortably in their beds, and to get the decent monument which, in many cases, they deserve. It never would have allowed Yeobright to do such a ridiculous thing as throw up his business to benefit his fellow-creatures.

He walked along towards home without attending to paths. If any one knew the heath well, it was Clym. He was permeated with its scenes, with its substance, and with its odors. He might be said to be its product. His eyes had first opened thereon, with its appearance all the first images of his memory were mingled, his estimate of life had been colored by it, his toys had been the flint knives and arrow heads which he found there, wondering why stones should "grow" to such odd shapes, his flowers, the purple bells and yellow gorse, his animal kingdom, the snakes and croppers, his society, its human hunters. Take all the varying hates felt by Eustacia Vye towards the heath, and translate them into loves, and you have the heart of Clym. He gazed upon the wide prospect as he walked, and was glad.

To many persons this Egdon was a place which had slipped out of its century.

generations ago, to intrude as an uncouth object into this. It was an obsolete thing, and few cared to study it. How could this be otherwise in the days of square fields, plashed hedges, and meadows, watered on a plan so rectangular that on a fine day they look like silver gridirons? The farmer, in his ride, who could smile at artificial grasses, look with solicitude at the coming corn, and sigh with sadness at the fly-eaten turnips, bestowed upon the distant upland of heath nothing better than a frown. But as for Yeobright, when he looked from the heights on his way he could not help indulging in a barbarous satisfaction at observing that, in some of the attempts at reclamation from the waste, tillage, after holding on for a year or two, had receded again in despair, the ferns and furze-tufts stubbornly reasserting themselves.

He descended into the valley, and soon reached his home at Blooms-End. His mother was snipping dead leaves from the window-plants. She looked up at him as if she did not understand the meaning of his long stay with her, her face had worn that look for several days. He could perceive that the curiosity which had been shown by the hair cutting group amounted in his mother to concern. But she had asked no question with her lips, even when the arrival of his trunks suggested that he was not going to leave her soon. Her silence besought an explanation of him more loudly than words.

"I am not going back to Paris again, mother," he said. "At least, in my old capacity I have given up the business."

Mrs Yeobright turned in pained surprise. "I thought something was amiss, because of the boxes. I wonder you did not tell me sooner."

"I ought to have done it. But I have been in doubt whether you would be pleased with my plan. I was not quite clear on a few points myself. I am going to take an entirely new course."

"I am astonished, Clym. How can you want to do better than you've been doing?"

"Very easily. But I shall not do better in the way you mean, I suppose it will be called doing worse. But I hate that business of mine, and I want to do some worthy thing before I die. As a schoolmaster I think to do it—a schoolmaster to the poor and ignorant, to teach them what nobody else will."

"After all the trouble that has been taken to give you a start, and when there is nothing to do but to keep straight on towards affluence, you say you will be a poor man's schoolmaster. Your fancies will be your ruin, Clym."

Mrs Yeobright spoke calmly, but the force of feeling behind the words was but too apparent to one who knew her as well as her son did. He did not answer. There was in his face that hopelessness of being understood which comes when the objector is constitutionally beyond the reach of a logic that, even under favoring conditions, is almost too coarse a vehicle for the subtlety of the argument.

No more was said on the subject till the end of dinner. His mother then began, as if there had been no interval since the morning. "It disturbs me, Clym, to find that you have come home with such thoughts as those. I hadn't the least idea that you meant to go backward in the world by your own free choice. Of course, I have always supposed you were going to push straight on,

as other men do—all who deserve the name—when they have been put in a good way of doing well”

“I cannot help it,” said Clym, in a troubled tone “Mother, I hate the flashy business Talk about men who deserve the name, can any man deserving the name waste his time in that effeminate way, when he sees half the world going to ruin for want of somebody to buckle to and teach them how to breast the misery they are born to? I get up every morning and see the whole creation groaning and travailing in pain, as St Paul says, and yet there am I, trafficking in glittering splendors with wealthy women and titled libertines, and pandering to the meanest vanities—I, who have health and strength enough for any thing I have been troubled in my mind about it all the year, and the end is that I cannot do it any more”

“Why can’t you do it as well as others?”

“I don’t know, except that there are many things other people care for which I don’t, and that’s partly why I think I ought to do this For one thing, my body does not require much of me I cannot enjoy delicacies, good things are wasted upon me Well, I ought to turn that defect to advantage, and by being able to do without what other people require I can spend what such things cost upon anybody else”

Now, Yeobright, having inherited some of these very instincts from the woman before him, could not fail to awaken a reciprocity in her through her feelings, if not by arguments, disguise it as she might for his good She spoke with less assurance “And yet you might have been a wealthy man if you had only persevered Manager to that large diamond establishment—what better can a man wish for? What a post of trust and respect! I suppose you will be like your father, like him, you are getting weary of doing well”

“No,” said her son, “I am not weary of that, though I am weary of what you mean by it Mother, what is doing well?”

Mrs Yeobright was far too thoughtful a woman to be content with ready definitions, and, like the “What is wisdom?” of Plato’s Socrates, and the “What is truth?” of Pontius Pilate, Yeobright’s burning question received no answer

The silence was broken by the clash of the garden gate, a tap at the door, and its opening Christian Cantle appeared in the room in his Sunday clothes

It was the custom on Egdon to begin the preface to a story before absolutely entering the house, so as to be well in for the body of the narrative by the time visitor and visited stood face to face Christian had been saying to them while the door was leaving its latch, “To think that I, who go from home but once in a while, and hardly then, should have been there this morning!”

“Tis news, you have brought us, then, Christian?” said Mrs Yeobright

“Ay, sure, about a witch, and ye must overlook my time o’ day, for, says I, ‘I must go and tell ’em, though they won’t have half done dinner’ I assure ye it made me shake like a driven leaf Do ye think any harm will come o’?”

“Well—what?”

“This morning at church we was all standing up, and the pa’son said, ‘Let us pray’ ‘Well,’ thinks I, ‘one may as well kneel as stand’, so down I went, and, more than that, all the rest were as willing to oblige the man as I We hadn’t been hard at it for more than a minute when a most terrible screech sounded

through church, as if somebody had just gied up their heart's blood. All the folk jumped up, and then we found that Susan Nunsuch had pricked Miss Vye with a long stocking needle, as she had threatened to do as soon as ever she could get the young lady to church, where she don't come very often. She've waited for this chance for weeks, so as to draw her blood and put an end to the bewitching of Susan's children that has been carried on so long. Sue followed her into church, sat next to her, and as soon as she could find a chance in went the stocking-needle into my lady's arm."

"Good heaven, how horrid!" said Mrs Yeobright.

"Sue pricked her that deep that the maid fainted away, and as I was afeard there might be some tumult among us, I got behind the bass-viol and didn't see no more. But they carried her out into the air, 'tis said, but when they looked round for Sue she was gone. What a scream that girl gied, poor thing! There was the pa'son in his surplice holding up his hand and saying, 'Sit down, my good people, sit down!' But the deuce a bit would they sit down. O, and what d'ye think I found out, Mrs Yeobright? The pa'son wears a suit of clothes under his surplice!—I could see his black sleeve when he held up his arm."

"'Tis a cruel thing," said Yeobright.

"Yes," said his mother.

"The nation ought to look into it," said Christian. "Here's Humphrey coming, I think."

In came Humphrey. "Well, have ye heard the news? But I see you have. 'Tis a very strange thing that whenever one of Egdon folk goes to church some rum job or other is sure to go on. The last time one of us was there was when neighbor Fairway went in the fall, and that was the day you forbade the banns, Mrs Yeobright."

"Has this cruelly treated girl been able to walk home?" said Clym.

"They say she got better, and went home very well. And now I've told it I must be moving homeward myself."

"And I," said Humphrey. "Truly now we shall see if there's anything in what folks say about her."

When they were gone into the heath again Yeobright said quietly to his mother, "Do you think I have turned teacher too soon?"

"It is right that there should be schoolmasters, and missionaries, and all such men," she replied. "But it is right, too, that I should try to lift you out of this life into something richer, and that you should not come back again, and be as if I had not tried at all."

Later in the day Sam, the turf-cutter, entered. "I've come a-borrowing, Mrs Yeobright. I suppose you have heard what's been happening to the beauty on the hill?"

"Yes, Sam. half a dozen have been telling us."

"Beauty?" said Clym.

"Yes, tolerably well-favored," Sam replied. "Lord! all the country owns that 'tis one of the strangest things in the world that such a woman should have come to live up there."

"Dark or fair?"

"Now, though I've seen her twenty times, that's a thing I cannot call to mind"

"Darker than Tamsin," murmured Mrs Yeobright

"A woman who seems to care for nothing at all, as you may say"

"She is melancholy, then?" inquired Clym

"She mopes about by herself, and don't mix in with the people"

"Is she a young lady inclined for adventures?"

"Not to my knowledge"

"Doesn't join in with the lads in their games, to get some sort of excitement in this lonely place?"

"No"

"Mumming, for instance?"

"No Her notions be different I should rather say her thoughts were far away from here, with lords and ladies she'll never know, and mansions she'll never see again"

Observing that Clym appeared singularly interested, Mrs Yeobright said rather uneasily to Sam, "You see more in her than most of us do Miss Vye is to my mind too idle to be charming I have never heard that she is of any use to herself or to other people Good girls don't get treated as witches even on Egdon"

"Nonsense—that proves nothing either way," said Yeobright

"Well, of course I don't understand such niceties," said Sam, withdrawing from a possibly unpleasant argument, "and what she is we must wait for time to tell us The business that I have really called about is this, to borrow the longest and strongest rope you have The captain's bucket has dropped into the well, and they are in want of water, and as all the chaps are at home today we think we can get it out for him We have three cart-ropes already, but they won't reach to the bottom"

Mrs Yeobright told him that he might have whatever ropes he could find in the outhouse, and Sam went out to search When he passed by the door Clym joined him, and accompanied him to the gate

"Is this young witch-lady going to stay long at Mistover?" he asked

"I should say so"

"What a cruel shame to ill-use her! She must have suffered greatly—more in mind than in body"

"'Twas a graceless trick—such a handsome girl, too You ought to see her, Mr Yeobright, being a young man come from far, and with a little more to show for your years than most of us"

"Do you think she would like to teach children?" said Clym

Sam shook his head "Quite a different sort of body from that, I reckon"

"O, it was merely something which occurred to me It would of course be necessary to see her and talk it over—not an easy thing, by the way, for my family and hers are not very friendly"

"I'll tell you how you may see her, Mr Yeobright," said Sam "We are going to grapple for the bucket at six o'clock tonight at her house, and you could lend a hand There's five or six coming, but the well is deep, and another might

be useful, if you don't mind appearing in that shape. She's sure to be walking round."

"I'll think of it," said Yeobright, and they parted.

He thought of it a good deal, but nothing more was said about Eustacia inside the house at that time. Whether this romantic martyr to superstition and the melancholy mummer he had conversed with under the full moon were one and the same person remained as yet a problem.

III THE FIRST ACT IN TIMEWORN DRAMA

THE afternoon was fine, and Yeobright walked on the heath for an hour with his mother. When they reached the lofty ridge which divided the valley of Blooms End from the adjoining valley they stood still and looked round. The Quiet Woman Inn was visible on the low margin of the heath in one direction, and afar on the other hand rose Mistover Knap.

"You mean to call on Thomasin?" he inquired.

"Yes. But you need not come this time," said his mother.

"In that case I'll branch off here, mother. I am going to Mistover."

Mrs. Yeobright turned to him inquiringly.

"I am going to help them get the bucket out of the captain's well," he continued. "As it is so very deep I may be useful. And I should like to see this Miss Vye—not so much for her good looks as for another reason."

"Must you go?" his mother asked.

"I thought to."

And they parted. "There is no help for it," murmured Clym's mother gloomily as he withdrew. "They are sure to see each other. I wish Sam would carry his news to other houses than mine."

Clym's retreating figure got smaller and smaller as it rose and fell over the hillocks on his way. "He is tender-hearted," said Mrs. Yeobright to herself while she watched him, "otherwise it would matter little. How he's going on!"

He was, indeed, walking with a will over the furze, as straight as a line, as if his life depended upon it. His mother drew a long breath, and turned to go back by the way she had come. The evening films began to make nebulous pictures of the valleys, but the high lands still were raked by the declining rays of the winter sun, which glanced on Clym as he walked forward, eyed by every rabbit and field-fare around, a long shadow advancing in front of him.

On drawing near to the furze-covered bank and ditch which fortified the captain's dwelling he could hear voices within, signifying that operations had been already begun. At the side-entrance gate he stopped and looked over.

Half a dozen able-bodied men were standing in a line from the well-mouth, holding a rope which passed over the well-roller into the depths below. Fairway, with a piece of smaller rope round his body, made fast to one of the standards, to guard against accidents, was leaning over the opening, his right hand clasping the vertical rope that descended into the well.

"Now, silence, folks," said Fairway.

The talking ceased, and Fairway gave a circular motion to the rope, as if he

were stirring batter At the end of a minute a dull splashing reverberated from the bottom of the well, the helical twist he had imparted to the rope had reached the grapnel below

"Haul!" said Fairway, and the men who held the rope began to gather it over the wheel

"I think we've got sommat," said one of the haulers in

"Then pull steady," said Fairway

They gathered up more and more, till a regular dripping into the well could be heard below It grew smarter with the increasing height of the bucket, and presently a hundred and fifty feet of rope had been pulled in

Fairway then lit a lantern, tied it to another cord, and began lowering it into the well beside the first Clym came forward and looked down Strange humid leaves, which knew nothing of the seasons of the year, and quaint natured moss were revealed on the well side as the lantern descended, till its rays fell upon a confused mass of rope and bucket dangling in the dank, dark air

"We've only gotten by the edge of the hoop—steady, for God's sake!" said Fairway

They pulled with the greatest gentleness, till the wet bucket appeared about two yards below them, like a dead friend come to earth again Three or four hands were stretched out, then jerk went the rope, whizz went the wheel, the two foremost haulers fell backward, the beating of a falling body was heard, receding down the sides of the well, and a thunderous uproar arose at the bottom The bucket was gone again

"Damn the bucket!" said Fairway

"Lower again," said Sam

"I'm as stiff as a ram's horn stooping so long," said Fairway, standing up and stretching himself till his joints creaked

"Rest a few minutes, Timothy," said Yeobright "I'll take your place"

The grapnel was again lowered Its smart impact upon the distant water reached their ears like a kiss, whereupon Yeobright knelt down, and leaning over the well began dragging the grapnel round and round as Fairway had done

"Tie a rope round him—it is dangerous!" cried a soft and anxious voice somewhere above them

Everybody turned The speaker was a woman gazing down upon the group from an upper window, whose panes blazed in the ruddy glare from the west Her lips were parted and she appeared for the moment to forget where she was

The rope was accordingly tied round his waist, and the work proceeded At the next haul the weight was not heavy, and it was discovered that they had only secured a coil of the rope detached from the bucket The tangled mass was thrown into the background, Humphrey took Yeobright's place, and the grapnel was lowered again

Yeobright retired to the heap of recovered rope in a meditative mood Of the identity between the lady's voice and that of the melancholy mummer he had not a moment's doubt "How thoughtful of her!" he said to himself

Eustacia, who had reddened when she perceived the effect of her exclaima-

tion upon the group below, was no longer to be seen at the window, though Yeobright scanned it wistfully. While he stood there the men at the well succeeded in getting up the bucket without a mishap. One of them then went to inquire for the captain, to learn what orders he wished to give for mending the well tackle. The captain proved to be away from home, and Eustacia appeared at the door and came out. She had lapsed into an easy and dignified calm, far removed from the intensity of life in her words of solicitude for Clym's safety.

"Will it be possible to draw water here tonight?" she inquired.

"No, miss, the bottom of the bucket is clean knocked out. And as we can do no more now we'll leave off, and come again tomorrow morning."

"No water," she murmured, turning away.

"I can send you up some from Blooms End," said Clym, coming forward and raising his hat as the men retired.

Yeobright and Eustacia looked at each other for one instant, as if each had in mind those few moments during which a certain moonlit scene was common to both. With the glance the calm fixity of her features sublimed itself to an expression of refinement and warmth: it was like garish noon rising to the dignity of sunset in a couple of seconds.

"Thank you, it will hardly be necessary," she replied.

"But if you have no water?"

"Well, it is what I call no water," she said, blushing, and lifting her long-lashed eyelids as if to lift them were a work requiring consideration. "But my grandfather calls it water enough. That is what I mean."

She moved away a few yards, and Clym followed. When she reached the corner of the enclosure, where the steps were formed for mounting the boundary bank, she sprang up with a lightness which seemed strange after her listless movement towards the well. It incidentally showed that her apparent languor did not arise from lack of force.

Clym ascended behind her, and noticed a circular burnt patch at the top of the bank. "Ashes?" he said.

"Yes," said Eustacia. "We had a little bonfire here last fifth of November, and those are the marks of it."

On that spot had stood the fire she had kindled to attract Wildeve.

"That's the only kind of water we have," she continued, tossing a stone into the pool, which lay on the outside of the bank like the white of an eye without its pupil. The stone fell with a flounce, but no Wildeve appeared on the other side, as on a previous occasion there. "My grandfather says he lived for more than twenty years at sea on water twice as bad as that," she went on, "and considers it quite good enough for us here on an emergency."

"Well, as a matter of fact there are no impurities in the water of these pools at this time of the year. It has only just rained into them."

She shook her head. "I am managing to exist in a wilderness, but I cannot drink from a pond," she said.

Clym looked towards the well, which was now deserted, the men having gone home. "It is a long way to send for spring-water," he said, after a silence.

"But since you don't like this in the pond, I'll try to get you some myself" He went back to the well "Yes, I think I could do it by tying on this pail"

"But, since I would not trouble the men to get it, I cannot in conscience let you"

"I don't mind the trouble at all"

He made fast the pail to the long coil of rope, put it over the wheel, and allowed it to descend by letting the rope slip through his hands Before it had gone far, however, he checked it

"I must make fast the end first, or we may lose the whole," he said to Eustacia, who had drawn near "Could you hold this a moment, while I do it—or shall I call your servant?"

"I can hold it," said Eustacia, and he placed the rope in her hands, going then to search for the end

"I suppose I may let it slip down?" she inquired

"I would advise you not to let it go far," said Clym "It will get much heavier, you will find"

However, Eustacia had begun to pay out While he was tying she cried, "I cannot stop it!"

Clym ran to her side, and found he could only check the rope by twisting the loose part round the upright post, when it stopped with a jerk "Has it hurt you?"

"Yes," she replied

"Very much?"

"No, I think not" She opened her hands One of them was bleeding, the rope had dragged off the skin Eustacia wrapped it in her handkerchief

"You should have let go," said Yeobright "Why didn't you?"

"You said I was to hold on This is the second time I have been wounded today"

"Ah, yes, I have heard of it I blush for my native Egdon Was it a serious injury you received in church, Miss Vye?"

There was such an abundance of sympathy in Clym's tone that Eustacia slowly drew up her sleeve and disclosed her round white arm A bright red spot appeared on its smooth surface, like a ruby on Parian marble

"There it is," she said, putting her finger against the spot

"It was dastardly of the woman," said Clym "Will not Captain Vye get her punished?"

"He is gone from home on that very business I did not know that I had such a magic reputation"

"And you fainted?" said Clym, looking at the scarlet little puncture as if he would like to kiss it and make it well

"Yes, it frightened me I had not been to church for a long time And now I shall not go again for ever so long—perhaps never I cannot face their eyes after this Don't you think it dreadfully humiliating? I wished I was dead for hours, but I don't mind now"

"I have come to clean away these cobwebs," said Yeobright "Would you like to help me—by high class teaching? We might benefit them much"

"I don't quite feel anxious to I have not much love for my fellow-creatures Sometimes I quite hate them "

"Still I think that if you were to hear my scheme you might take an interest in it There is no use in hating people—if you hate anything, you should hate what produced them "

"Do you mean Nature? I hate her already But I shall be glad to hear your scheme at any time "

The situation had now worked itself out, and the next natural thing was for them to part Clym knew this well enough, and Eustacia made a move of conclusion, yet he looked at her as if he had one word more to say Perhaps if he had not lived in Paris it would never have been uttered

"We have met before," he said, regarding her with rather more interest than was necessary

"I do not own it," said Eustacia, with a repressed, still look

"But I may think what I like "

"Yes "

"You are lonely here "

"I cannot endure the heath, except in its purple season The heath is a cruel taskmaster to me "

"Can you say so?" he asked "To my mind it is most exhilarating, and strengthening, and soothing I would rather live on these hills than anywhere else in the world "

"It is well enough for artists, but I never would learn to draw "

"And there is a very curious Druidical stone just out there" He threw a pebble in the direction signified "Do you often go to see it?"

"I was not even aware that there existed any such curious Druidical stone I am aware that there are Boulevards in Paris "

Yeobright looked thoughtfully on the ground "That means much," he said "It does indeed," said Eustacia

"I remember when I had the same longing for town bustle Five years of a great city would be a perfect cure for that "

"Heaven send me such a cure! Now, Mr Yeobright, I will go indoors and plaster my wounded hand "

They separated, and Eustacia vanished in the increasing shade She seemed full of many things Her past was a blank, her life had begun The effect upon Clym of this meeting he did not fully discover till some time after During his walk home his most intelligible sensation was that his scheme had somehow become glorified A beautiful woman had been intertwined with it

On reaching the house he went up to the room which was to be made his study, and occupied himself during the evening in unpacking his books from the boxes and arranging them on shelves From another box he drew a lamp and a can of oil He trimmed the lamp, arranged his table, and said, "Now, I am ready to begin "

He rose early the next morning, read two hours before breakfast by the light of his lamp—read all the morning, all the afternoon Just when the sun was going down his eyes felt weary, and he leant back in his chair

His room overlooked the front of the premises and the valley of the heath beyond. The lowest beams of the winter sun threw the shadow of the house over the palings, across the grass margin of the heath, and far up the vale, where the chimney outlines and those of the surrounding tree-tops stretched forth in long dark prongs. Having been seated at work all day, he decided to take a turn upon the hills before it got dark and, going out forthwith, he struck across the heath towards Mistover.

It was an hour and a half later when he again appeared at the garden gate. The shutters of the house were closed, and Christian Cantle, who had been wheeling manure about the garden all day, had gone home. On entering he found that his mother, after waiting a long time for him, had finished her meal.

"Where have you been, Clym?" she immediately said. "Why didn't you tell me that you were going away at this time?"

"I have been on the heath."

"You'll meet Eustacia Vye if you go up there."

Clym paused a minute. "Yes, I met her this evening," he said, as though it were spoken under the sheer necessity of preserving honesty.

"I wondered if you had."

"It was no appointment."

"No, such meetings never are."

"But you are not angry, mother?"

"I can hardly say that I am not angry? No. But when I consider the usual nature of the drag which causes men of promise to disappoint the world I feel uneasy."

"You deserve credit for the feeling, mother. But I can assure you that you need not be disturbed by it on my account."

"When I think of you and your new crotchets," said Mrs. Yeobright, with some emphasis, "I naturally don't feel so comfortable as I did a twelvemonth ago. It is incredible to me that a man accustomed to the attractive women of Paris and elsewhere should be so easily worked upon by a girl in a heath. You could just as well have walked another way."

"I had been studying all day."

"Well, yes," she added more hopefully, "I have been thinking that you might get on as a schoolmaster, and rise that way, since you really are determined to hate the course you were pursuing."

Yeobright was unwilling to disturb this idea, though his scheme was far enough removed from one wherein the education of youth should be made a mere channel of social ascent. He had no desires of that sort. He had reached the stage in a young man's life when the grimness of the general human situation first becomes clear, and the realization of this causes ambition to halt awhile. In France it is not uncustomary to commit suicide at this stage, in England we do much better, or much worse, as the case may be.

The love between the young man and his mother was strangely invisible now. Of love it may be said, the less earthly the less demonstrative. In its absolutely indestructible form it reaches a profundity in which all exhibition of itself is painful. It was so with these. Had conversations between them been overheard, people would have said, "How cold they are to each other!"

His theory and his wishes about devoting his future to teaching had made an impression on Mrs Yeobright. Indeed, how could it be otherwise when he was a part of her—when their discourses were as if carried on between the right and the left hands of the same body? He had despaired of reaching her by argument, and it was almost as a discovery to him that he could reach her by a magnetism which was as superior to words as words are to yells.

Strangely enough he began to feel now that it would not be so hard to persuade her who was his best friend that comparative poverty was essentially the higher course for him, as to reconcile to his feelings the act of persuading her. From every provident point of view his mother was so undoubtedly right, that he was not without a sickness of heart in finding he could shake her.

She had a singular insight into life, considering that she had never mixed with it. There are instances of persons who, without clear ideas of the things they criticize, have yet had clear ideas of the relations of those things. Blacklock, a poet blind from his birth, could describe visual objects with accuracy, Professor Sanderson, who was also blind, gave excellent lectures on color, and taught others the theory of ideas which they had and he had not. In the social sphere these gifted ones are mostly women, they can watch a world which they never saw, and estimate forces of which they have only heard. We call it intuition.

What was the great world to Mrs Yeobright? A multitude whose tendencies could be perceived, though not its essences. Communities were seen by her as from a distance, she saw them as we see the throngs which cover the canvases of Sallaert, Van Alsloot, and others of that school—vast masses of beings, jostling, zigzagging, and processioning in definite directions, but whose features are indistinguishable by the very comprehensiveness of the view.

One could see that, as far as it had gone, her life was very complete on its reflective side. The philosophy of her nature, and its limitation by circumstances, was almost written in her movements. They had a majestic foundation, though they were far from being majestic, and they had a groundwork of assurance, but they were not assured. As her once elastic walk had become deadened by time, so had her natural pride of life been hindered in its blooming by her necessities.

The next slight touch in the shaping of Clym's destiny occurred a few days after. A barrow was opened on the heath, and Yeobright attended the operation, remaining away from his study during several hours. In the afternoon Christian returned from a journey in the same direction, and Mrs Yeobright questioned him.

"They have dug a hole, and they have found things like flower-pots upside down, Mis'ess Yeobright, and inside these be real charnel bones. They have carried 'em off to men's houses, but I shouldn't like to sleep where they will bide. Dead folks have been known to come and claim their own. Mr Yeobright had got one pot of the bones, and was going to bring 'em home—real skellington bones—but 'twas ordered otherwise. You'll be relieved to hear that he gave away his, pot and all, on second thoughts, and a blessed thing for ye, Mis'ess Yeobright, considering the wind o' nights."

"Gave it away?"

"Yes To Miss Vye She has a cannibal taste for such churchyard furniture seemingly "

"Miss Vye was there too?"

"Ay, 'a b'lieve she was "

When Clym came home, which was shortly after, his mother said, in a curious tone, "The urn you had meant for me you gave away "

Yeobright made no reply, the current of her feeling was too pronounced to admit it

The early weeks of the year passed on Yeobright certainly studied at home, but he also walked much abroad, and the direction of his walk was always towards some point of a line between Mistover and Rainbarrow

The month of March arrived, and the heath showed its first faint signs of awakening from winter trance The awakening was almost feline in its stealthiness The pool outside the bank by Eustacia's dwelling, which seemed as dead and desolate as ever to an observer who moved and made noises in his observation, would gradually disclose a state of great animation when silently watched awhile A timid animal world had come to life for the season Little tadpoles and efts began to bubble up through the water, and to race along beneath it, toads made noises like very young ducks, and advanced to the margin in twos and threes, overhead, bumble-bees flew hither and thither in the thickening light, their drone coming and going like the sound of a gong

On an evening such as this Yeobright descended into the Blooms End valley from beside that very pool, where he had been standing with another person quite silently and quite long enough to hear all this puny stir of resurrection in nature, yet he had not heard it His walk was rapid as he came down, and he went with a springy tread Before entering upon his mother's premises he stopped and breathed The light which shone forth on him from the window revealed that his face was flushed and his eye bright What it did not show was something which lingered upon his lips like a seal set there The abiding presence of this impress was so real that he hardly dared to enter the house, for it seemed as if his mother might say, "What red spot is that glowing upon your mouth so vividly?"

But he entered soon after The tea was ready, and he sat down opposite his mother She did not speak many words, and as for him, something had been just done and some words had been just said on the hill which prevented him from beginning a desultory chat His mother's taciturnity was not without ominousness, but he appeared not to care He knew why she said so little, but he could not remove the cause of her bearing toward him These half-silent sittings were far from uncommon with them now At last Yeobright made a beginning of what was intended to strike at the whole root of the matter

"Five days have we sat like this at meals with scarcely a word What's the use of it, mother?"

"None," said she, in a heart-swollen tone "But there is only too good a reason "

"Not when you know all I have been wanting to speak about this, and I am glad the subject is begun The reason, of course, is Eustacia Vye Well, I confess I have seen her lately, and have seen her a good many times"

"Yes, yes, and I know what that amounts to. It troubles me, Clym. You are wasting your life here, and it is solely on account of her. If it had not been for that woman you would never have entertained this teaching scheme at all."

Clym looked hard at his mother. "You know that is not it," he said.

"Yes, I know you had decided to attempt it before you saw her, but that would have ended in intentions. It was very well to talk of, but ridiculous to put in practice. I fully expected that in the course of a month or two you would have seen the folly of such self-sacrifice, and would have been by this time back again to Paris in some business or other. I can understand objections to the diamond trade—I really was thinking that it might be inadequate to the life of a man like you even though it might have made you a millionaire. But now I see how mistaken you are about this girl. I doubt if you could be correct about other things."

"How am I mistaken in her?"

"She is lazy and dissatisfied. But that is not all of it. Supposing her to be as good a woman as any you can find, which she certainly is not, why do you wish to connect yourself with anybody at present?"

"Well, there are practical reasons," Clym began, and then almost broke off under an overpowering sense of the weight of argument which could be brought against his statement. "If I take a school an educated woman would be invaluable as a help to me."

"What! you really mean to marry her?"

"It would be premature to state that plainly. But consider what obvious advantages there would be in doing it. She—"

"Don't suppose she has any money. She hasn't a farthing."

"She is excellently educated, and would make a good matron in a boarding-school. I candidly own that I have modified my views a little, in deference to you, and it should satisfy you. I no longer adhere to my intention of giving with my own mouth rudimentary education to the lowest class. I can do better. I can establish a good private school for farmers' sons, and without stopping the school I can manage to pass examinations. By this means, and by the assistance of a wife like her—"

"O Clym!"

"I shall ultimately, I hope, be at the head of one of the best schools in the county."

Yeobright had enunciated the word "her" with a fervor which, in conversation with a mother, was absurdly indiscreet. Hardly a maternal heart within the four seas could, in such circumstances, have helped being irritated at that ill-timed betrayal of feeling for a new woman.

"You are blinded, Clym," she said warmly. "It was a bad day for you when you first set eyes on her. And your scheme is merely a castle in the air built on purpose to justify this folly which has seized you, and to salve your conscience on the irrational situation you are in."

"Mother, that's not true," he firmly answered.

"Can you maintain that I sit and tell untruths, when all I wish to do is to save you from sorrow? For shame, Clym! But it is all through that woman—a hussy!"

Clym reddened like fire and rose. He placed his hand upon his mother's shoulder and said, in a tone which hung strangely between entreaty and command, "I won't hear it. I may be led to answer you in a way which we shall both regret."

His mother parted her lips to begin some other vehement truth, but on looking at him she saw that in his face which led her to leave the words unsaid. Yeobright walked once or twice across the room, and then suddenly went out of the house. It was eleven o'clock when he came in, though he had not been further than the precincts of the garden. His mother was gone to bed. A light was left burning on the table, and supper was spread. Without partaking of any food he secured the doors and went upstairs.

IV AN HOUR OF BLISS AND MANY HOURS OF SADNESS

THE NEXT day was gloomy enough at Blooms-End. Yeobright remained in his study, sitting over the open books, but the work of those hours was miserably scant. Determined that there should be nothing in his conduct toward his mother resembling sullenness, he had occasionally spoken to her on passing matters, and would take no notice of the brevity of her replies. With the same resolve to keep up a show of conversation he said, about seven o'clock in the evening, "There's an eclipse of the moon tonight. I am going out to see it." And, putting on his overcoat, he left her.

The low moon was not as yet visible from the front of the house, and Yeobright climbed out of the valley until he stood in the full flood of her light. But even now he walked on, and his steps were in the direction of Rainbarrow.

In half an hour he stood at the top. The sky was clear from verge to verge, and the moon flung her rays over the whole heath, but without sensibly lighting it, except where paths and water-courses had laid bare the white flints and glistening quartz sand, which made streaks upon the general shade. After standing awhile he stooped and felt the heather. It was dry, and he flung himself down upon the Barrow, his face towards the moon, which depicted a small image of herself in each of his eyes.

He had often come up here without stating his purpose to his mother, but this was the first time that he had been ostensibly frank as to his purpose while really concealing it. It was a moral situation which, three months earlier, he could have hardly credited of himself. In returning to labor in this sequestered spot he had anticipated an escape from the chafing of social necessities, yet behold they were here also. More than ever he longed to be in some world where personal ambition was not the only recognized form of progress—such, perhaps, as might have been the case at some time or other in the silvery globe then shining upon him. His eye traveled over the length and breadth of that distant country—over the Bay of Rainbows, the somber Sea of Crises, the Ocean of Storms, the Lake of Dreams, the vast Walled Plains, and the wondrous Ring Mountains—till he almost felt himself to be voyaging bodily through its wild scenes, standing on its hollow hills, traversing its deserts,

descending its vales and old sea bottoms, or mounting to the edges of its craters

While he watched the far removed landscape a tawny stain grew into being on the lower verge the eclipse had begun This marked a preconcerted moment, for the remote celestial phenomenon had been pressed into sublunary service as a lover's signal Yeobright's mind flew back to earth at the sight, he arose, shook himself, and listened Minute after minute passed by, perhaps ten minutes passed, and the shadow on the moon perceptibly widened He heard a rustling on his left hand, a cloaked figure with an upturned face appeared at the base of the Barrow, and Clym descended In a moment the figure was in his arms, and his lips upon hers

"My Eustacia!"

"Clym, dearest!"

Such a situation had less than three months brought forth

They remained long without a single utterance, for no language could reach the level of their condition words were as the rusty implements of a by gone barbarous epoch, and only to be occasionally tolerated

"I began to wonder why you did not come," said Yeobright, when she had withdrawn a little from his embrace

"You said ten minutes after the first mark of shade on the edge of the moon, and that's what it is now"

"Well, let us only think that here we are"

Then holding each other's hand, they were again silent, and the shadow on the moon's disc grew a little larger

"Has it seemed long since you last saw me?" she asked

"It has seemed sad"

"And not long? That's because you occupy yourself, and so blind yourself to my absence To me, who can do nothing, it has been like living under stagnant water"

"I would rather bear tediousness, dear, than have time made short by the means that mine has been shortened" •

"In what way is that? You have been thinking you wished you did not love me"

"How can a man wish that, and yet love on? No, Eustacia"

"Men can, women cannot"

"Well, whatever I may have thought, one thing is certain—I do love you—past all compass and description I love you to oppressiveness—I, who have never before felt more than a pleasant passing fancy for any woman I have ever seen Let me look right into your moonlit face, and dwell on every line and curve in it! Only a few hair-breadths make the difference between this face and faces I have seen many times before I knew you, yet what a difference—the difference between everything and nothing at all One touch on that mouth again! there, and there, and there Your eyes seem heavy, Eustacia"

"No, it is my general way of looking I think it arises from my feeling sometimes an agonizing pity for myself that I ever was born"

"You don't feel it now?"

"No Yet I know that we shall not love like this always Nothing can insure

the continuance of love It will evaporate like a spirit, and so I feel full of fears ”

“You need not ”

“Ah, you don’t know You have seen more than I, and have been into cities and among people that I have only heard of, and have lived more years than I, but yet I am older at this than you I loved another man once, and now I love you ”

“In God’s mercy don’t talk so, Eustacia!”

“But I do not think I shall be the one who wearies first It will, I fear, end in this way your mother will find out that you meet me, and she will influence you against me!”

“That can never be She knows of these meetings already ”

“And she speaks against me?”

“I will not say ”

“There, go away! Obey her I shall ruin you It is foolish of you to meet me like this Kiss me, and go away for ever For ever—do you hear?—for ever!”

“Not I ”

“It is your only chance Many a man’s love has been a curse to him ”

“You are desperate, full of fancies, and willful, and you misunderstand I have an additional reason for seeing you tonight besides love of you For though, unlike you, I feel our affection may be eternal, I feel with you in this, that our present mode of existence cannot last ”

“O! ’tis your mother Yes, that’s it! I knew it ”

“Never mind what it is Believe this, I cannot let myself lose you I must have you always with me This very evening I do not like to let you go There is only one cure for this anxiety, dearest—you must be my wife ”

She started then endeavored to say calmly, “Cynics say that cures the anxiety by curing the love ”

“But you must answer me Shall I claim you some day—I don’t mean at once?”

“I must think,” Eustacia murmured “At present speak of Paris to me Is there any place like it on earth?”

“It is very beautiful But will you be mine?”

“I will be nobody else’s in the world—does that satisfy you?”

“Yes, for the present ”

“Now tell me of the Tuileries, and the Louvre,” she continued evasively

“I hate talking of Paris! Well, I remember one sunny room in the Louvre which would make a fitting place for you to live in—the Galerie d’Apollon Its windows are mainly east, and in the early morning, when the sun is bright, the whole apartment is in a perfect blaze of splendor The rays bristle and dart from the encrustations of gilding to the magnificent inlaid coffers, from the coffers to the gold and silver plate, from the plate to the jewels and precious stones, from these to the enamels, till there is a perfect network of light which quite dazzles the eyes But now, about our marriage—”

“And Versailles—the King’s Gallery is some such gorgeous room, is it not?”

“Yes But what’s the use of talking of gorgeous rooms? By the way, the Little Trianon would suit us beautifully to live in, and you might walk in

the gardens in the moonlight and think you were in some English shrubbery, it is laid out in English fashion "

"I should hate to think that!"

"Then you could keep to the lawn in front of the Grand Palace All about there you would doubtless feel in a world of historical romance "

He went on, since it was all new to her, and described Fontainebleau, St Cloud, the Bois, and many other familiar haunts of the Parisians, till she said "When used you to go to these places?"

"On Sundays "

"Ah, yes I dislike English Sundays How I should chime in with their manners over there! Dear Clym, you'll go back again?"

Clym shook his head, and looked at the eclipse

"If you'll go back again I'll—be something," she said tenderly, putting her head near his breast "If you'll agree I'll give my promise, without making you wait a minute longer "

"How extraordinary that you and my mother should be of one mind about this!" said Yeobright "I have vowed not to go back, Eustacia It is not the place I dislike, it is the occupation "

"But you can go in some other capacity "

"No Besides, it would interfere with my scheme Don't press that, Eustacia Will you marry me?"

"I cannot tell "

"Now—never mind Paris, it is no better than other spots Promise, sweet!"

"You will never adhere to your education plan, I am quite sure, and then it will be all right for me, and so I promise to be yours for ever and ever "

Clym brought her face towards his by a gentle pressure of the hand, and kissed her

"Ah! but you don't know what you have got in me," she said "Sometimes I think there is not that in Eustacia Vye which will make a good homespun wife Well, let it go—see how our time is slipping, slipping, slipping!" She pointed towards the half-eclipsed moon

"You are too mournful "

"No Only I dread to think of anything beyond the present What is, we know We are together now, and it is unknown how long we shall be so the unknown always fills my mind with terrible possibilities, even when I may reasonably expect it to be cheerful Clym, the eclipsed moonlight shines upon your face with a strange foreign color, and shows its shape as if it were cut out in gold That means that you should be doing better things than this "

"You are ambitious, Eustacia—no, not exactly ambitious, luxurious I ought to be of the same vein, to make you happy, I suppose And yet, far from that, I could live and die in a hermitage here, with proper work to do "

There was that in his tone which implied distrust of his position as a solicitous lover, a doubt if he were acting fairly towards one whose tastes touched his own only at rare and infrequent points She saw his meaning, and whispered, in a low, full accent of eager assurance, "Don't mistake me, Clym though I should like Paris, I love you for yourself alone To be your wife and live in Paris would be heaven to me, but I would rather live with you in a

hermitage here than not be yours at all It is gain to me either way and very great gain There's my too candid confession"

"Spoken like a woman And now I must soon leave you I'll walk with you towards your house"

"But must you go home yet?" she asked "Yes, the sand has nearly slipped away, I see, and the eclipse is creeping on more and more Don't go yet! Stop till the hour has run itself out, then I will not press you any more You will go home and sleep well, I keep sighing in my sleep! Do you ever dream of me?"

"I cannot recollect a clear dream of you"

"I see your face in every scene of my dreams, and hear your voice in every sound I wish I did not It is too much what I feel They say such love never lasts But it must! And yet once, I remember, I saw an officer of the Hussars ride down the street at Budmouth, and though he was a total stranger and never spoke to me, I loved him till I thought I should really die of love—but I didn't die, and at last I left off caring for him How terrible it would be if a time should come when I could not love you, my Clym!"

"Please don't say such reckless things When we see such a time at hand we will say, 'I have outlived my faith and purpose,' and die There, the hour has expired now let us walk on"

Hand in hand they went along the path towards Mistover When they were near the house he said, "It is too late for me to see your grandfather tonight Do you think he will object to it?"

"I will speak to him I am so accustomed to be my own mistress that it did not occur to me that we should have to ask him"

Then they lingeringly separated, and Clym descended towards Blooms-End And as he walked further and further from the charmed atmosphere of his Olympian girl his face grew sad with a new sort of sadness A perception of the dilemma in which his love had placed him came back in full force In spite of Eustacia's apparent willingness to wait through the period of an unpromising engagement, till he should be established in his new pursuit, he could not but perceive at moments that she loved him rather as a visitant from a gay world to which she rightly belonged than as a man with a purpose opposed to that recent past of his which so interested her Often at their meetings a word or a sigh escaped her It meant that, though she made no conditions as to his return to the French capital, this was what she secretly longed for in the event of marriage, and it robbed him of many an otherwise pleasant hour Along with that came the widening breach between himself and his mother Whenever any little occurrence had brought into more prominence than usual the disappointment that he was causing her it had sent him on lone and moody walks, or he was kept awake a great part of the night by the turmoil of spirit which such a recognition created If Mrs Yeobright could only have been led to see what a sound and worthy purpose this purpose of his was and how little it was being affected by his devotion to Eustacia, how differently would she regard him!

Thus as his sight grew accustomed to the first blinding halo kindled about him by love and beauty, Yeobright began to perceive what a strait he was in

Sometimes he wished that he had never known Eustacia, immediately to retract the wish as brutal. Three antagonistic growths had to be kept alive: his mother's trust in him, his plan for becoming a teacher, and Eustacia's happiness. His fervid nature could not afford to relinquish one of these, though two of the three were as many as he could hope to preserve. Though his love was as chaste as that of Petrarch for his Laura, it had made fetters of what previously was only a difficulty. A position which was not too simple when he stood wholehearted had become indescribably complicated by the addition of Eustacia. Just when his mother was beginning to tolerate one scheme he had introduced another still bitterer than the first, and the combination was more than she could bear.

V SHARP WORDS ARE SPOKEN AND A CRISIS ENSUES

WHEN Yeobright was not with Eustacia he was sitting slavishly over his books, when he was not reading he was meeting her. These meetings were carried on with the greatest secrecy.

One afternoon his mother came home from a morning visit to Thomasin. He could see from a disturbance in the lines of her face that something had happened.

"I have been told an incomprehensible thing," she said mournfully. "The captain has let out at the Woman that you and Eustacia Vye are engaged to be married."

"We are," said Yeobright. "But it may not be yet for a very long time."

"I should hardly think it would be yet for a very long time! You will take her to Paris, I suppose?" She spoke with weary hopelessness.

"I am not going back to Paris."

"What will you do with a wife, then?"

"Keep a school in Budmouth, as I have told you."

"That's incredible! The place is overrun with schoolmasters. You have no special qualifications. What possible chance is there for such as you?"

"There is no chance of getting rich. But with my system of education, which is as new as it is true, I shall do a great deal of good to my fellow-creatures."

"Dreams, dreams! If there had been any system left to be invented they would have found it out at the universities long before this time."

"Never, mother. They cannot find it out, because their teachers don't come in contact with the class which demands such a system—that is, those who have had no preliminary training. My plan is one for instilling high knowledge into empty minds without first cramming them with what has to be uncrammed again before true study begins."

"I might have believed you if you had kept yourself free from entanglements, but this woman—if she had been a good girl it would have been bad enough, but being—"

"She is a good girl."

"So you think. A foreign bandmaster's daughter! What has her life been? Her surname even is not her true one."

"She is Captain Vye's grand daughter, and her father merely took her mother's name And she is a lady by instinct "

"They call him 'captain,' but anybody is captain "

"He was in the Royal Navy!"

"No doubt he has been to sea in some tub or other Why doesn't he look after her? No lady would rove about the heath at all hours of the day and night as she does But that's not all of it There was something queer between her and Thomasin's husband at one time—I am as sure of it as that I stand here "

"Eustacia has told me He did pay her a little attention a year ago, but there's no harm in that I like her all the better "

"Clym," said his mother with firmness, "I have no proofs against her, unfortunately But if she makes you a good wife, there has never been a bad one "

"Believe me, you are almost exasperating," said Yeobright vehemently "And this very day I had intended to arrange a meeting between you But you give me no peace, you try to thwart my wishes in everything "

"I hate the thought of any son of mine marrying badly! I wish I had never lived to see this, it is too much for me—it is more than I thought!" She turned to the window Her breath was coming quickly, and her lips were pale, parted, and trembling

"Mother," said Clym, "whatever you do, you will always be dear to me—that you know But one thing I have a right to say, which is, that at my age I am old enough to know what is best for me "

Mrs Yeobright remained for some time silent and shaken, as if she could say no more Then she replied, "Best? Is it best for you to injure your prospects for such a voluptuous, idle woman as that? Don't you see that by the very fact of your choosing her you prove that you do not know what is best for you? You give up your whole thought—you set your whole soul—to please a woman "

"I do And that woman is you "

"How can you treat me so flippantly!" said his mother, turning again to him with a tearful look "You are unnatural, Clym, and I did not expect it "

"Very likely," said he cheerlessly "You did not know the measure you were going to mete me, and therefore did not know the measure that would be returned to you again "

"You answer me, you think only of her You stick to her in all things "

"That proves her to be worthy I have never yet supported what is bad And I do not care only for her I care for you and for myself, and for anything that is good When a woman once dislikes another she is merciless!"

"O Clym! please don't go setting down as my fault what is your obstinate wrong-headedness If you wished to connect yourself with an unworthy person why did you come home here to do it? Why didn't you do it in Paris?—it is more the fashion there You have come only to distress me, a lonely woman, and shorten my days! I wish that you would bestow your presence where you bestow your love!"

Clym said huskily, "You are my mother I will say no more—beyond this,

that I beg your pardon for having thought this my home I will no longer inflict myself upon you, I'll go " And he went out with tears in his eyes

It was a sunny afternoon at the beginning of summer, and the moist hollows of the heath had passed from their brown to their green stage Yeobright walked to the edge of the basin which extended down from Mistover and Rain barrow By this time he was calm, and he looked over the landscape In the minor valleys, between the hillocks which diversified the contour of the vale, the fresh young ferns were luxuriantly growing up, ultimately to reach a height of five or six feet He descended a little way, flung himself down in a spot where a path emerged from one of the small hollows, and waited Hither it was that he had promised Eustacia to bring his mother this afternoon, that they might meet and be friends His attempt had utterly failed

He was in a nest of vivid green The ferny vegetation round him, though so abundant, was quite uniform it was a grove of machine-made foliage, a world of green triangles with saw-edges, and not a single flower The air was warm with a vaporous warmth, and the stillness was unbroken Lizards, grass hoppers, and ants were the only living things to be beheld The scene seemed to belong to the ancient world of the carboniferous period, when the forms of plants were few, and of the fern kind, when there was neither bud nor blossom, nothing but a monotonous extent of leafage, amid which no bird sang

When he had reclined for some considerable time, gloomily pondering, he discerned above the ferns a drawn bonnet of white silk approaching from the left, and Yeobright knew directly that it covered the head of her he loved His heart awoke from its apathy to a warm excitement and, jumping to his feet, he said aloud, "I knew she was sure to come,"

She vanished in a hollow for a few moments, and then her whole form unfolded itself from the brake

"Only you here?" she exclaimed, with a disappointed air, whose hollowness was proved by her rising redness and her half-guilty low laugh "Where is Mrs Yeobright?"

"She has not come," he replied in a subdued tone

"I wish I had known that you would be here alone," she said seriously, "and that we were going to have such an idle, pleasant time as this Pleasure not known beforehand is half wasted, to anticipate it is to double it I have not thought once today of having you all to myself this afternoon, and the actual moment of a thing is so soon gone"

"It is indeed"

"Poor Clym!" she continued, looking tenderly into his face "You are sad Something has happened at your home Never mind what is—let us only look at what seems"

"But, darling, what shall we do?" said he

"Still go on as we do now—just live on from meeting to meeting, never minding about another day You, I know, are always thinking of that—I can see you are But you must not—will you, dear Clym?"

"You are just like all women They are ever content to build their lives on any incidental position that offers itself, whilst men would fain make a globe to suit them Listen to this, Eustacia There is a subject I have determined to

put off no longer Your sentiment on the wisdom of *Carpe diem* does not impress me today Our present mode of life must shortly be brought to an end "

"It is your mother!"

"It is I love you none the less in telling you, it is only right you should know "

"I have feared my bliss," she said, with the merest motion of her lips "It has been too intense and consuming "

"There is hope yet There are forty years of work in me yet, and why should you despair? I am only at an awkward turning I wish people wouldn't be so ready to think that there is no progress without uniformity "

"Ah—your mind runs off to the philosophical side of it Well, these sad and hopeless obstacles are welcome in one sense, for they enable us to look with indifference upon the cruel satires that Fate loves to indulge in I have heard of people, who, upon coming suddenly into happiness, have died from anxiety lest they should not live to enjoy it I felt myself in that whimsical state of uneasiness lately, but I shall be spared it now Let us walk on "

Clym took the hand which was already bared for him—it was a favorite way with them to walk bare hand in bare hand—and led her through the ferns They formed a very comely picture of love at full flush, as they walked along the valley that late afternoon, the sun sloping down on their right, and throwing their thin spectral shadows, tall as poplar trees, far out across the furze and fern Eustacia went with her head thrown back fancifully, a certain glad and voluptuous air of triumph pervading her eyes at having won by her own unaided self a man who was her perfect complement in attainments, appearance, and age On the young man's part, the paleness of face which he had brought with him from Paris, and the incipient marks of time and thought, were less perceptible than when he returned, the healthful and energetic sturdiness which was his by nature having partially recovered its original proportions They wandered onward till they reached the nether margin of the heath, where it became marshy, and merged in moorland

"I must part from you here, Clym," said Eustacia

They stood still and prepared to bid each other farewell Everything before them was on a perfect level The sun, resting on the horizon line, streamed across the ground from between copper-colored and lilac clouds, stretched out in flats beneath a sky of pale soft green All dark objects on the earth that lay towards the sun were overspread by a purple haze, against which groups of wailing gnats shone out, rising upwards and dancing about like sparks of fire

"O! this leaving you is too hard to bear!" exclaimed Eustacia in a sudden whisper of anguish "Your mother will influence you too much, I shall not be judged fairly, it will get afloat that I am not a good girl, and the witch story will be added to make me blacker!"

"They cannot Nobody dares to speak disrespectfully of you or of me "

"O how I wish I was sure of never losing you—that you could not be able to desert me anyhow!"

Clym stood silent a moment His feelings were high, the moment was passionate, and he cut the knot

"You shall be sure of me, darling," he said, folding her in his arms "We will be married at once"

"O Clym!"

"Do you agree to it?"

"If—if we can"

"We certainly can, both being of full age And I have not followed my occupation all these years without having accumulated money, and if you will agree to live in a tiny cottage somewhere on the heath, until I take a house in Budmouth for the school, we can do it at a very little expense"

"How long shall we have to live in the tiny cottage, Clym?"

"About six months At the end of that time I shall have finished my reading—yes, we will do it, and this heartaching will be over We shall, of course, live in absolute seclusion, and our married life will only begin to outward view when we take the house in Budmouth, where I have already addressed a letter on the matter Would your grandfather allow you?"

"I think he would—on the understanding that it should not last longer than six months"

"I will guarantee that, if no misfortune happens"

"If no misfortune happens," she repeated slowly

"Which is not likely Dearest, fix the exact day"

And then they consulted on the question, and the day was chosen It was to be a fortnight from that time

This was the end of their talk, and Eustacia left him Clym watched her as she retired towards the sun The luminous rays wrapped her up with her increasing distance, and the rustle of her dress over the sprouting sedge and grass died away As he watched, the dead flat of the scenery overpowered him, though he was fully alive to the beauty of that untarnished early summer green which was worn for the nonce by the poorest blade There was something in its oppressive horizontality which too much reminded him of the arena of life, it gave him a sense of bare equality with, and no superiority to, a single living thing under the sun

Eustacia was now no longer the goddess but the woman to him, a being to fight for, support, help, be maligned for Now that he had reached a cooler moment he would have preferred a less hasty marriage, but the card was laid, and he determined to abide by the game Whether Eustacia was to add one other to the list of those who love too hotly to love long and well, the forthcoming event was certainly a ready way of proving

VI YEOBRIGHT GOES, AND THE BREACH IS COMPLETE

ALL THAT evening smart sounds denoting an active packing up came from Yeobright's room to the ears of his mother downstairs

Next morning he departed from the house and again proceeded across the heath A long day's march was before him, his object being to secure a dwelling to which he might take Eustacia when she became his wife Such a house, small, secluded, and with its windows boarded up, he had casually ob

served a month earlier, near a village about five miles off, and thither he directed his steps today

The weather was far different from that of the evening before. The yellow and vapory sunset which had wrapped up Eustacia from his parting gaze had presaged change. It was one of those not infrequent days of an English June which are as wet and boisterous as November. The cold clouds hastened on in a body, as if painted on a moving slide. Vapors from other continents arrived upon the wind, which curled and parted round him as he walked on.

At length Clym reached the margin of a fir and beech plantation that had been inclosed from heathland in the year of his birth. Here the trees, laden heavily with their new and humid leaves, were now suffering more damage than during the highest winds of winter, when the boughs are specially disencumbered to do battle with the storm. The wet young beeches were undergoing amputations, bruises, crippings, and harsh lacerations, from which the wasting sap would bleed for many a day to come, and would leave scars visible till the day of their burning. Each stem was wrenched at the root, where it moved like a bone in its socket, and at every onset of the gale convulsive sounds came from the branches, as if pain were felt. In a neighboring brake a finch was trying to sing, but the wind blew under his feathers till they stood on end, twisted round his little tail, and made him give up his song.

Yet a few yards to Yeobright's left, on the open heath, how ineffectively gnashed the storm! Those gusts which tore the trees merely waved the furze and heather in a light caress. Egdon was made for such times as these.

Yeobright reached the empty house about mid-day. It was almost as lonely as that of Eustacia's grandfather, but the fact that it stood near a heath was disguised by a belt of firs which almost inclosed the premises. He journeyed on about a mile further to the village in which the owner lived, and, returning with him to the house, arrangements were completed, and the man undertook that one room at least should be ready for occupation the next day. Clym's intention was to live there alone until Eustacia should join him on their wedding-day.

Then he turned to pursue his way homeward through the drizzle that had so greatly transformed the scene. The ferns among which he had lain in comfort yesterday, were dripping moisture from every frond, wetting his legs through as he brushed past, and the fur of the rabbits leaping around him was clotted into dark locks by the same watery surrounding.

He reached home damp and weary enough after his ten-mile walk. It had hardly been a propitious beginning, but he had chosen his course, and would show no swerving. The evening and the following morning were spent in concluding arrangements for his departure. To stay at home a minute longer than necessary after having once come to his determination would be, he felt, only to give new pain to his mother by some word, look, or deed.

He had hired a conveyance and sent off his goods by two o'clock that day. The next step was to get some furniture, which, after serving for temporary use in the cottage, would be available for the house at Budmouth when increased by goods of a better description. A mart extensive enough for the purpose ex-

isted at Anglebury, some miles beyond the spot chosen for his residence, and there he resolved to pass the coming night

It now only remained to wish his mother good-bye. She was sitting by the window as usual when he came downstairs.

"Mother, I am going to leave you," he said, holding out his hand.

"I thought you were, by your packing," replied Mrs. Yeobright in a voice from which every particle of emotion was painfully excluded.

"And you will part friends with me?"

"Certainly, Clym."

"I am going to be married on the twenty-fifth."

"I thought you were going to be married."

"And then—and then you must come and see us. You will understand me better after that, and our situation will not be so wretched as it is now."

"I do not think it likely I shall come to see you."

"Then it will not be my fault or Eustacia's, mother. Good-bye!"

He kissed her cheek, and departed in great misery, which was several hours in lessening itself to a controllable level. The position had been such that nothing more could be said without, in the first place, breaking down a barrier, and that was not to be done.

No sooner had Yeobright gone from his mother's house than her face changed its rigid aspect for one of blank despair. After a while she wept, and her tears brought some relief. During the rest of the day she did nothing but walk up and down the garden path in a state bordering on stupefaction. Night came, and with it but little rest. The next day, with an instinct to do something which should reduce prostration to mournfulness, she went to her son's room, and with her own hands arranged it in order, for an imaginary time when he should return again. She gave some attention to her flowers, but it was perfunctorily bestowed, for they no longer charmed her.

It was a great relief when, early in the afternoon, Thomasin paid her an unexpected visit. This was not the first meeting between the relatives since Thomasin's marriage, and past blunders having been in a rough way rectified, they could always greet each other with pleasure and ease.

The oblique band of sunlight which followed her through the door became the young wife well. It illuminated her as her presence illuminated the heath. In her movements, in her gaze, she reminded the beholder of the feathered creatures who lived around her home. All similes and allegories concerning her began and ended with birds. There was as much variety in her motions as in their flight. When she was musing she was a kestrel which hangs in the air by an invisible motion of its wings. When she was in a high wind her light body was blown against trees and banks like a heron's. When she was frightened she darted noiselessly like a kingfisher. When she was serene she skimmed like a swallow, and that is how she was moving now.

"You are looking very blithe, upon my word, Tamsie," said Mrs. Yeobright, with a sad smile. "How is Damon?"

"He is very well."

"Is he kind to you, Thomasin?" And Mrs. Yeobright observed her narrowly.

"Pretty fairly."

"Is that honestly said?"

"Yes, aunt I would tell you if he were unkind" She added, blushing, and with hesitation, "He—I don't know if I ought to complain to you about this, but I am not quite sure what to do I want some money, you know, aunt—some to buy little things for myself—and he doesn't give me any I don't like to ask him, and yet, perhaps, he doesn't give it me because he doesn't know Ought I to mention it to him, aunt?"

"Of course you ought Have you never said a word on the matter?"

"You see, I had some of my own," said Thomasin evasively, "and I have not wanted any of his until lately I did just say something about it last week, but he seems—not to remember"

"He must be made to remember You are aware that I have a little box full of spade-guineas, which your uncle put into my hands to divide between yourself and Clym whenever I chose Perhaps the time has come when it should be done They can be turned into sovereigns at any moment"

"I think I should like to have my share—that is, if you don't mind"

"You shall, if necessary But it is only proper that you should first tell your husband distinctly that you are without any, and see what he will do"

"Very well, I will Aunt, I have heard about Clym I know you are in trouble about him, and that's why I have come"

Mrs Yeobright turned away, and her features worked in her attempt to conceal her feelings Then she ceased to make any attempt, and said, weeping, "O Thomasin, do you think he hates me? How can he bear to grieve me so, when I have lived only for him through all these years?"

"Hate you—no," said Thomasin soothingly "It is only that he loves her too well Look at it quietly—do It is not so very bad of him Do you know, I thought it not the worst match he could have made Miss Vye's family is a good one on her mother's side, and her father was a romantic wanderer—a sort of Greek Ulysses"

"It is no use, Thomasin, it is no use Your intention is good, but I will not trouble you to argue I have gone through the whole that can be said on either side times, and many times Clym and I have not parted in anger, we have parted in a worse way It is not a passionate quarrel that would have broken my heart, it is the steady opposition and persistence in going wrong that he has shown O Thomasin, he was so good as a little boy—so tender and kind!"

"He was, I know"

"I did not think one whom I called mine would grow up to treat me like this He spoke to me as if I opposed him to injure him As though I could wish him ill!"

"There are worse women in the world than Eustacia Vye"

"There are too many better, that's the agony of it It was she, Thomasin, and she only, who led your husband to act as he did I would swear it!"

"No," said Thomasin eagerly "It was before he knew me that he thought of her, and it was nothing but a mere flirtation"

"Very well, we will let it be so There is little use in unraveling that now Sons must be blind if they will Why is it that a woman can see from a dis

tance what a man cannot see close? Clym must do as he will—he is nothing more to me. And this is maternity—to give one's best years and best love to insure the fate of being despised!"

"You are too unyielding. Think how many mothers there are whose sons have brought them to public shame by real crimes before you feel so deeply a case like this."

"Thomasin, don't lecture me—I can't have it. It is the excess above what we expect that makes the force of the blow, and that may not be greater in their case than in mine. They may have foreseen the worst. I am wrongly made, Thomasin," she added, with a mournful smile. "Some widows can guard against the wounds their children give them by turning their hearts to another husband and beginning life again. But I always was a poor, weak, one-idea'd creature—I had not the compass of heart nor the enterprise for that. Just as forlorn and stupefied as I was when my husband's spirit flew away. I have sat ever since—never attempting to mend matters at all. I was comparatively a young woman then, and I might have had another family by this time, and have been comforted by them for the failure of this one son."

"It is more noble in you that you did not."

"The more noble, the less wise."

"Forget it, and be soothed, dear aunt. And I shall not leave you alone for long. I shall come and see you every day."

And for one week Thomasin literally fulfilled her word. She endeavored to make light of the wedding, and brought news of the preparations, and that she was invited to be present. The next week she was rather unwell, and did not appear. Nothing had as yet been done about the guineas, for Thomasin feared to address her husband again on the subject, and Mrs. Yeobright had insisted upon this.

One day just before this time, Wildeve was standing at the door of the Quiet Woman. In addition to the upward path through the heath to Rainbarrow and Mistover, there was a road which branched from the highway a short distance below the inn, and ascended to Mistover by a circuitous and easy incline. This was the only route on this side for vehicles to the captain's retreat. A light cart from the nearest town descended the road, and the lad who was driving pulled up in front of the inn for something to drink.

"You come from Mistover?" said Wildeve.

"Yes. They are taking in good things up there. Going to be a wedding." And the driver buried his face in his mug.

Wildeve had not received an inkling of the fact before, and a sudden expression of pain overspread his face. He turned for a moment into the passage to hide it. Then he came back again.

"Do you mean Miss Vye?" he said. "How is it—that she can be married so soon?"

"By the will of God and a ready young man, I suppose."

"You don't mean Mr. Yeobright?"

"Yes. He has been creeping about with her all the spring."

"I suppose—she was immensely taken with him?"

"She is crazy about him, so their general servant of all work tells me And that lad Charley that looks after the horse is all in a daze about it The stunpoll has got fond-like of her"

"Is she lively—is she glad? Going to be married so soon—well!"

"It isn't so very soon"

"No, not so very soon"

Wildeve went indoors to the empty room, a curious heartache within him He rested his elbow upon the mantelpiece and his face upon his hand When Thomasin entered the room he did not tell her of what he had heard The old longing for Eustacia had reappeared in his soul and it was mainly because he had discovered that it was another man's intention to possess her

To be yearning for the difficult, to be weary of that offered, to care for the remote, to dislike the near, it was Wildeve's nature always This is the true mark of the man of sentiment Though Wildeve's fevered feeling had not been elaborated to real poetical compass, it was of the standard sort He might have been called the Rousseau of Egdon

VII THE MORNING AND THE EVENING OF A DAY

THE WEDDING morning came Nobody would have imagined from appearances that Blooms-End had any interest in Mistover that day A solemn stillness prevailed around the house of Clym's mother and there was no more animation indoors Mrs Yeobright, who had declined to attend the ceremony, sat by the breakfast-table in the old room which communicated immediately with the porch, her eyes listlessly directed towards the open door It was the room in which, six months earlier, the merry Christmas party had met, to which Eustacia came secretly and as a stranger The only living thing that entered now was a sparrow, and seeing no movements to cause alarm, he hopped boldly round the room, endeavored to go out by the window, and fluttered among the pot-flowers This roused the lonely sitter, who got up, released the bird, and went to the door She was expecting Thomasin, who had written the night before to state that the time had come when she would wish to have the money, and that she would if possible call this day

Yet Thomasin occupied Mrs Yeobright's thoughts but slightly as she looked up the valley of the heath, alive with butterflies, and with grasshoppers whose husky noises on every side formed a whispered chorus A domestic drama, for which the preparations were now being made a mile or two off, was but little less vividly present to her eyes than if enacted before her She tried to dismiss the vision, and walked about the garden-plot, but her eyes ever and anon sought out the direction of the parish church to which Mistover belonged, and her excited fancy clove the hills which divided the building from her eyes The morning wore away Eleven o'clock struck could it be that the wedding was then in progress? It must be so She went on imagining the scene at the church to which he had by this time taken his bride She pictured the little group of children by the gate as the pony-carriage drove up, in which, as Thomasin had learnt, they were going to perform the short journey Then she saw them

enter and proceed to the chancel and kneel, and the service seemed to go on. She covered her face with her hands "O, it is a mistake!" she groaned "And he will rue it some day, and think of me!"

While she remained thus, overcome by her forebodings, the old clock indoors whizzed forth twelve strokes. Soon after, faint sounds floated to her ear from afar over the hills. The breeze came from that quarter, and it had brought with it the notes of distant bells, gaily starting off in a peal one, two, three, four, five. The ringers at East Egdon were announcing the nuptials of Eustacia and her son.

"Then it is over," she murmured "Well, well! and life too will be over soon. And why should I go on scalding my face like this? Cry about one thing in life, cry about all, one thread runs through the whole piece. And yet we say, 'a time to laugh!'"

Towards evening Wildeve came. Since Thomasin's marriage Mrs. Yeobright had shown towards him that grim friendliness which at last arises in all such cases of undesired affinity. The vision of what ought to have been is thrown aside in sheer weariness, and browbeaten human endeavor listlessly makes the best of the fact that is. Wildeve, to do him justice, had behaved very courteously to his wife's aunt, and it was with no surprise that she saw him enter now.

"Thomasin has not been able to come, as she promised to do," he replied to her inquiry, which had been anxious, for she knew that her niece was badly in want of money. "The captain came down last night and personally pressed her to join them today. So, not to be unpleasant, she determined to go. They fetched her in the pony-chaise, and are going to bring her back."

"Then it is done," said Mrs. Yeobright "Have they gone to their new home?"

"I don't know. I have had no news from Mistover since Thomasin left to go."

"You did not go with her?" said she, as if there might be good reasons why.

"I could not," said Wildeve, reddening slightly "We could not both leave the house, it was rather a busy morning, on account of Anglebury Great Market. I believe you have something to give to Thomasin? If you like, I will take it."

Mrs. Yeobright hesitated, and wondered if Wildeve knew what the something was. "Did she tell you of this?" she inquired.

"Not particularly. She casually dropped a remark about having arranged to fetch some article or other."

"It is hardly necessary to send it. She can have it whenever she chooses to come."

"That won't be yet. In the present state of her health she must not go on walking so much as she has done." He added, with a faint twang of sarcasm, "What wonderful thing is it that I cannot be trusted to take?"

"Nothing worth troubling you with."

"One would think you doubted my honesty," he said, with a laugh, though his color rose in a quick resentfulness frequent with him.

"You need think no such thing," said she dryly "It is simply that I, in common with the rest of the world, feel that there are certain things which had better be done by certain people than by others."

"As you like, as you like," said Wildeve laconically "It is not worth arguing

about Well, I think I must turn homeward again, as the inn must not be left long in charge of the lad and the maid only”

He went his way, his farewell being scarcely so courteous as his greeting But Mrs Yeobright knew him thoroughly by this time, and took little notice of his manner, good or bad

When Wildeve was gone Mrs Yeobright stood and considered what would be the best course to adopt with regard to the guineas, which she had not liked to entrust to Wildeve It was hardly credible that Thomasin had told him to ask for them, when the necessity for them had arisen from the difficulty of obtaining money at his hands At the same time Thomasin really wanted them, and might be unable to come to Blooms-End for another week at least To take or send the money to her at the inn would be impolitic, since Wildeve would pretty surely be present, or would discover the transaction, and if, as her aunt suspected, he treated her less kindly than she deserved to be treated, he might then get the whole sum out of her gentle hands But on this particular evening Thomasin was at Mistover, and anything might be conveyed to her there without the knowledge of her husband Upon the whole the opportunity was worth taking advantage of

Her son, too, was there, and was now married There could be no more proper moment to render him his share of the money than the present And the chance that would be afforded her, by sending him this gift, of showing how far she was from bearing him ill-will, cheered the sad mother's heart

She went upstairs and took from a locked drawer a little box, out of which she poured a hoard of broad unworn guineas that had lain there many a year There were a hundred in all, and she divided them into two heaps, fifty in each Tying up these in small canvas bags, she went down to the garden and called to Christian Cantle, who was loitering about in hope of a supper which was not really owed him Mrs Yeobright gave him the money-bags, charged him to go to Mistover, and on no account to deliver them into any one's hands save her son's and Thomasin's On further thought she deemed it advisable to tell Christian precisely what the two bags contained, that he might be fully impressed with their importance Christian pocketed the money bags, promised the greatest carefulness, and set out on his way

“You need not hurry,” said Mrs Yeobright “It will be better not to get there till after dusk, and then nobody will notice you Come back here to supper, if it is not too late”

It was nearly nine o'clock when he began to ascend the vale towards Mistover, but the long days of summer being at their climax, the first obscurity of evening had only just begun to tan the landscape At this point of his journey Christian heard voices, and found that they proceeded from a company of men and women who were traversing a hollow ahead of him, the tops only of their heads being visible

He paused and thought of the money he carried It was almost too early even for Christian seriously to fear robbery, nevertheless he took a precaution which ever since his boyhood he had adopted whenever he carried more than two or three shillings upon his person—a precaution somewhat like that of the owner of the Pitt Diamond when filled with similar misgivings He took off

his boots, untied the guineas, and emptied the contents of one little bag into the right boot, and of the other into the left, spreading them as flatly as possible over the bottom of each, which was really a spacious coffer by no means limited to the size of the foot. Pulling them on again and lacing them to the very top, he proceeded on his way, more easy in his head than under his soles.

His path converged towards that of the noisy company, and on coming nearer he found to his relief that they were several Egdon people whom he knew very well, while with them walked Fairway, of Blooms-End.

"What! Christian going too?" said Fairway as soon as he recognized the new-comer. "You've got no young woman nor wife to your name to gie a gown-piece to, I'm sure."

"What d'ye mean?" said Christian.

"Why, the raffle. The one we go to every year. Going to the raffle as well as ourselves?"

"Never knew a word o't. Is it like cudgel-playing or other sportful forms of bloodshed? I don't want to go, thank you, Mister Fairway, and no offense."

"Christian don't know the fun o't, and 'twould be a fine sight for him," said a buxom woman. "There's no danger at all, Christian. Every man puts in a shilling apiece, and one wins a gown-piece for his wife or sweetheart if he's got one."

"Well, as that's not my fortune there's no meaning in it to me. But I should like to see the fun, if there's nothing of the black art in it, and if a man may look on without cost or getting into any dangerous wrangle."

"There will be no uproar at all," said Timothy. "Sure, Christian, if you'd like to come we'll see there's no harm done."

"And no bad'y gaeities, I suppose? You see, neighbors, if so, it would be setting father a bad example, as he is so light moral'd. But a gown-piece for a shilling, and no black art—'tis worth looking in to see, and it wouldn't hinder me half an hour. Yes, I'll come, if you'll step a little way towards Mistover with me afterwards, supposing night should have closed in, and nobody else is going that way."

One or two promised, and Christian, diverging from his direct path, turned round to the right with his companions towards the Quiet Woman.

When they entered the large common room of the inn they found assembled there about ten men from among the neighboring population, and the group was increased by the new contingent to double that number. Most of them were sitting round the room in seats divided by wooden elbows like those of crude cathedral stalls which were carved with the initials of many an illustrious drunkard of former times who had passed his days and his nights between them, and now lay as an alcoholic cinder in the nearest churchyard. Among the cups on the long table before the sitters lay an open parcel of light drapery—the gown-piece, as it was called—which was to be raffled for. Wildevé was standing with his back to the fireplace, smoking a cigar, and the promoter of the raffle, a packman from a distant town, was expatiating upon the value of the fabric as material for a summer dress.

"Now, gentlemen," he continued, as the new-comers drew up to the table, "there's five have entered, and we want four more to make up the number. I

think, by the faces of those gentlemen who have just come in, that they are shrewd enough to take advantage of this rare opportunity of beautifying their ladies at a very trifling expense”

Fairway, Sam, and another placed their shillings on the table, and the man turned to Christian

“No, sir,” said Christian, drawing back, with a quick gaze of misgiving “I am only a poor chap come to look on, an’ it please ye, sir I don’t so much as know how you do it If so be I was sure of getting it I would put down the shilling, but I couldn’t otherwise”

“I think you might almost be sure,” said the peddler “In fact, now I look into your face, even if I can’t say you are sure to win, I can say that I never saw anything look more like winning in my life”

“You’ll anyhow have the same chance as the rest of us,” said Sam

“And the extra luck of being the last comer,” said another

“And I was born wi’ a caul, and perhaps can be no more ruined than drowned,” Christian added, beginning to give way

Ultimately Christian laid down his shilling, the raffle began, and the dice went round When it came to Christian’s turn he took the box with a trembling hand, shook it fearfully, and threw a pair-royal Three of the others had thrown common low pairs, and all the rest mere points

“The gentleman looked like winning, as I said,” observed the chapman, blandly “Take it, sir, the article is yours”

“Haw-haw-haw!” said Fairway “I’m damned if this isn’t the quarest start that ever I knowed!”

“Mine?” asked Christian, with a vacant stare from his target eyes “I—I haven’t got neither maid, wife, nor widder belonging to me at all, and I’m afeard it will make me laughed at to ha’e it, Master Traveler What with being curious to join in I never thought of that! What shall I do wi’ a woman’s clothes in my bedroom, and not lose my decency?”

“Keep ’em, to be sure,” said Fairway, “if it is only for luck Perhaps ’twill tempt some woman that thy poor carcase had no power over when standing empty-handed”

“Keep it, certainly,” said Wildeve, who had idly watched the scene from a distance

The table was then cleared of the articles, and the men began to drink

“Well, to be sure!” said Christian, half to himself “To think I should have been born so lucky as this, and not have found it out until now! What curious creatures these dice be—powerful rulers of us all, and yet at my command! I am sure I never need be afeard of anything after this” He handled the dice fondly one by one “Why, sir,” he said in a confidential whisper to Wildeve, who was near his left hand, “if I could only use this power that’s in me of multiplying money I might do some good to a near relation of yours, seeing what I’ve got about me of hers—eh?” He tapped one of his money-laden boots upon the floor

“What do you mean?” said Wildeve

“That’s a secret Well, I must be going now” He looked anxiously towards Fairway.

"Where are you going?" Wildevé asked

"To Mistorver Knap I have to see Mrs Thomasin there—that's all"

"I am going there, too, to fetch Mrs Wildevé We can walk together"

Wildevé became lost in thought, and a look of inward illumination came into his eyes It was money for his wife that Mrs Yeobright could not trust him with "Yet she could trust this fellow," he said to himself "Why doesn't that which belongs to the wife belong to the husband too?"

He called to the pot-boy to bring him his hat, and said, "Now, Christian, I am ready"

"Mr Wildevé," said Christian timidly, as he turned to leave the room, "would you mind lending me them wonderful little things that carry my luck inside 'em, that I might practice a bit by myself, you know?" He looked wistfully at the dice and box lying on the mantelpiece

"Certainly," said Wildevé carelessly "They were only cut out by some lad with his knife, and are worth nothing" And Christian went back and privately pocketed them

Wildevé opened the door and looked out The night was warm and cloudy "By Gad! 'tis dark," he continued "But I suppose we shall find our way"

"If we should lose the path it might be awkward," said Christian "A lantern is the only shield that will make it safe for us"

"Let's have a lantern by all means" The stable lantern was fetched and lighted Christian took up his gown piece, and the two set out to ascend the hill

Within the room the men fell into chat till their attention was for a moment drawn to the chimney-corner This was large, and, in addition to its proper recess, contained within its jambs, like many on Egdon, a receding seat, so that a person might sit there absolutely unobserved, provided there was no fire to light him up, as was the case now and throughout the summer From the niche a single object protruded into the light from the candles on the table It was a clay pipe and its color was reddish The men had been attracted to this object by a voice behind the pipe asking for a light

"Upon my life, it fairly startled me when the man spoke!" said Fairway, handing a candle "Oh—'tis the reddleman! You've kept a quiet tongue, young man"

"Yes, I had nothing to say," observed Venn In a few minutes he arose and wished the company good night

Meanwhile Wildevé and Christian had plunged into the heath

It was a stagnant, warm, and misty night, full of all the heavy perfumes of new vegetation not yet dried by hot sun, and among these particularly the scent of the fern The lantern, dangling from Christian's hand, brushed the feathery fronds in passing by, disturbing moths and other winged insects, which flew out and alighted upon its horny panes

"So you have money to carry to Mrs Wildevé?" said Christian's companion, after a silence "Don't you think it very odd that it shouldn't be given to me?"

"As man and wife be one flesh, 'twould have been all the same, I should think," said Christian "But my strict documents was, to give the money into Mrs Wildevé's hand and 'tis well to do things right"

"No doubt," said Wildeve. Any person who had known the circumstances might have perceived that Wildeve was mortified by the discovery that the matter in transit was money, and not, as he had supposed when at Blooms End, some fancy nicknack which only interested the two women themselves. Mrs. Yeobright's refusal implied that his honor was not considered to be of sufficiently good quality to make him a safe bearer of his wife's property.

"How very warm it is tonight, Christian!" he said, panting, when they were nearly under Rainbarrow. "Let us sit down for a few minutes, for Heaven's sake."

Wildeve flung himself down on the soft ferns, and Christian, placing the lantern and parcel on the ground, perched himself in a cramped position hard by, his knees almost touching his chin. He presently thrust one hand into his coat-pocket and began shaking it about.

"What are you rattling in there?" said Wildeve.

"Only the dice, sir," said Christian, quickly withdrawing his hand. "What magical machines these little things be, Mr. Wildeve! 'Tis a game I should never get tired of. Would you mind my taking 'em out and looking at 'em for a minute, to see how they are made? I didn't like to look close before the other men for fear they should think it bad manners in me." Christian took them out and examined them in the hollow of his hand by the lantern light. "That these little things should carry such luck, and such charm, and such a spell, and such power in 'em, passes all I ever heard or zeed," he went on, with a fascinated gaze at the dice, which, as is frequently the case in country places, were made of wood, the points being burnt upon each face with the end of a wire.

"They are a great deal in a small compass, you think?"

"Yes. Do ye suppose they really be the devil's playthings, Mr. Wildeve? If so, 'tis no good sign that I be such a lucky man."

"You ought to win some money, now that you've got them. Any woman would marry you then. Now is your time, Christian, and I would recommend you not to let it slip. Some men are born to luck, some are not. I belong to the latter class."

"Did you ever know anybody who was born to it besides myself?"

"O yes. I once heard of an Italian, who sat down at a gaming-table, with only a louis (that's a foreign sovereign) in his pocket. He played on for twenty-four hours, and won ten thousand pounds, stripping the bank he had played against. Then there was another man who had lost a thousand pounds, and went to the broker's next day to sell stock, that he might pay the debt. The man to whom he owed the money went with him in a hackney-coach, and to pass the time they tossed who should pay the fare. The ruined man won, and the other was tempted to continue the game, and they played all the way. When the coachman stopped he was told to drive home again, the whole thousand pounds had been won back by the man who was going to sell."

"Ha—ha—splendid!" exclaimed Christian. "Go on—go on!"

"Then there was a man of London, who was only a waiter at White's club-house. He began playing first half-crown stakes, and then higher and higher, till he became very rich, got an appointment in India, and rose to be Governor

of Madras His daughter married a member of parliament, and the Bishop of Carlisle stood godfather to one of the children "

"Wonderful! wonderful!"

"And once there was a young man in America who gambled till he had lost his last dollar He staked his watch and chain, and lost as before staked his umbrella, lost again staked his hat, lost again staked his coat and stood in his shirt-sleeves, lost again Began taking off his breeches, and then a looker on gave him a trifle for his pluck With this he won Won back his coat, won back his hat, won back his umbrella, his watch, his money, and went out of the door a rich man "

"O, 'tis too good—it takes away my breath! Mr Wildeve, I think I will try another shilling with you, as I am one of that sort, no danger can come o't, and you can afford to lose "

"Very well," said Wildeve, rising Searching about with the lantern, he found a large flat stone, which he placed between himself and Christian, and sat down again The lantern was opened to give more light, and its rays directed upon the stone Christian put down a shilling, Wildeve another, and each threw Christian won They played for two Christian won again

"Let us try four," said Wildeve They played for four This time the stakes were won by Wildeve

"Ah, those little accidents will, of course, sometimes happen to the luckiest man," he observed

"And now I have no more money!" exclaimed Christian excitedly "And yet, if I could go on, I should get it back again, and more I wish this was mine " He struck his boot upon the ground, so that the guineas chinked within

"What! you have not put Mrs Wildeve's money there?"

"Yes 'Tis for safety Is it any harm to raffle with a married lady's money when, if I win, I shall only keep my winnings, and give her her own all the same, and if t'other man wins, her money will go to the lawful owner?"

"None at all "

Wildeve had been brooding ever since they started on the mean estimation in which he was held by his wife's friends, and it cut his heart severely As the minutes passed he had gradually drifted into a revengeful intention without knowing the precise moment of forming it This was to teach Mrs Yeobright a lesson, as he considered it to be, in other words, to show her, if he could, that her niece's husband was the proper guardian of her niece's money

"Well, here goes!" said Christian, beginning to unlace one boot "I shall dream of it nights and nights, I suppose, but I shall always swear my flesh don't crawl when I think o't!"

He thrust his hand into the boot and withdrew one of poor Thomasin's precious guineas, piping hot Wildeve had already placed a sovereign on the stone The game was then resumed Wildeve won first, and Christian ventured another, winning himself this time The game fluctuated, but the average was in Wildeve's favor Both men became so absorbed in the game that they took no heed of anything but the pigmy objects immediately beneath their eyes, the flat stone, the open lantern, the dice, and the few illuminated fern-leaves which lay under the light, were the whole world to them

At length Christian lost rapidly, and presently, to his horror, the whole fifty guineas belonging to Thomasin had been handed over to his adversary

"I don't care—I don't care!" he moaned, and desperately set about untying his left boot to get at the other fifty "The devil will toss me into the flames on his three-pronged fork for this night's work, I know! But perhaps I shall win yet, and then I'll get a wife to sit up with me o' nights, and I won't be afraid, I won't! Here's another for'ee, my man!" He slapped another guinea down upon the stone, and the dice-box was rattled again

Time passed on Wildeve began to be as excited as Christian himself When commencing the game his intention had been nothing further than a bitter practical joke on Mrs Yeobright To win the money, fairly or otherwise, and to hand it contemptuously to Thomasin in her aunt's presence, had been the dim outline of his purpose But men are drawn from their intentions even in the course of carrying them out, and it was extremely doubtful, by the time the twentieth guinea had been reached, whether Wildeve was conscious of any other intention than that of winning for his own personal benefit Moreover, he was now no longer gambling for his wife's money, but for Yeobright's, though of this fact Christian, in his apprehensiveness, did not inform him till afterwards

It was nearly eleven o'clock when, with almost a shriek, Christian placed Yeobright's last bright guinea upon the stone In thirty seconds it had gone the way of its companions

Christian turned and flung himself on the ferns in a convulsion of remorse "O, what shall I do with my wretched self?" he groaned "What shall I do? Will any good Heaven hae mercy upon my wicked soul?"

"Do? Live on just the same"

"I won't live on just the same! I'll die! I say you are a—a—"

"A man sharper than my neighbor"

"Yes, a man sharper than my neighbor, a regular sharper!"

"Poor chips-in-porridge, you are very unmannerly"

"I don't know about that! And I say you be unmannerly! You've got money that isn't your own Half the guineas are poor Mrs Clym's"

"How's that?"

"Because I had to gie fifty of 'em to him Mrs Yeobright said so"

"Oh? Well, 'twould have been more graceful of her to have given them to his wife Eustacia But they are in my hands now"

Christian pulled on his boots, and with heavy breathings, which could be heard to some distance, dragged his limbs together, arose, and tottered away out of sight Wildeve set about shutting the lantern to return to the house, for he deemed it too late to go to M stover to meet his wife, who was to be driven home in the captain's four-wheel While he was closing the little horn door a figure rose from behind a neighboring bush and came forward into the lantern light It was the reddleman approaching

VIII A NEW FORCE DISTURBS THE CURRENT

WILDEVE stared. Venn looked coolly towards Wildeve, and, without a word being spoken, he deliberately sat himself down where Christian had been seated, thrust his hand into his pocket, drew out a sovereign, and laid it on the stone.

"You have been watching us from behind that bush?" said Wildeve.

The reddleman nodded. "Down with your stake," he said. "Or haven't you pluck enough to go on?"

Now, gambling is a species of amusement which is much more easily begun with full pockets than left off with the same, and though Wildeve in a cooler temper might have prudently declined this invitation, the excitement of his recent success carried him completely away. He placed one of the guineas on the slab beside the reddleman's sovereign. "Mine is a guinea," he said.

"A guinea that's not your own," said Venn sarcastically.

"It is my own," answered Wildeve haughtily. "It is my wife's, and what is hers is mine."

"Very well, let's make a beginning." He shook the box, and threw eight, ten, and nine, the three casts amounted to twenty-seven.

This encouraged Wildeve. He took the box, and his three casts amounted to forty-five.

Down went another of the reddleman's sovereigns against his first one which Wildeve laid. This time Wildeve threw fifty-one points, but no pair. The reddleman looked grim, threw a raffle of aces, and pocketed the stakes.

"Here you are again," said Wildeve contemptuously. "Double the stakes." He laid two of Thomasin's guineas, and the reddleman his two pounds. Venn won again. New stakes were laid on the stone, and the gamblers proceeded as before.

Wildeve was a nervous and excitable man, and the game was beginning to tell upon his temper. He writhed, fumed, shifted his seat, and the beating of his heart was almost audible. Venn sat with lips impassively closed and eyes reduced to a pair of unimportant twinkles, he scarcely appeared to breathe. He might have been an Arab, or an automaton, he would have been like a red-sandstone statue but for the motion of his arm with the dice-box.

The game fluctuated, now in favor of one, now in favor of the other, without any great advantage on the side of either. Nearly twenty minutes were passed thus. The light of the candle had by this time attracted heath-flies, moths, and other winged creatures of night, which floated round the lantern, flew into the flame, or beat about the faces of the two players.

But neither of the men paid much attention to these things, their eyes being concentrated upon the little flat stone, which to them was an arena vast and important as a battle-field. By this time a change had come over the game, the reddleman won continually. At length sixty guineas—Thomasin's fifty, and ten of Clym's—had passed into his hands. Wildeve was reckless, frantic, exasperated.

"Won back his coat," said Venn slyly.

Another throw, and the money went the same way

"Won back his hat," continued Venn

"Oh, oh!" said Wildeve

"Won back his watch, won back his money, and went out of the door a rich man," added Venn, sentence by sentence, as stake after stake passed over to him

"Five more!" shouted Wildeve, dashing down the money "And three casts be hanged—one shall decide"

The red automaton opposite lapsed into silence, nodded, and followed his example Wildeve rattled the box, and threw a pair of sixes and five points He clapped his hands, "I have done it this time—hurrah!"

"There are two playing, and only one has thrown," said the reddleman, quietly bringing down the box The eyes of each were then so intently converged upon the stone that one could fancy their beams were visible, like rays in a fog

Venn lifted the box, and behold a triplet of sixes was disclosed

Wildeve was full of fury While the reddleman was grasping the stakes Wildeve seized the dice and hurled them, box and all, into the darkness, uttering a fearful imprecation Then he arose and began stamping up and down like a madman

"It is all over, then?" said Venn

"No, no!" cried Wildeve "I mean to have another chance yet I must!"

"But, my good man, what have you done with the dice?"

"I threw them away—it was a momentary irritation What a fool I am! Here—come and help me to look for them—we must find them again"

Wildeve snatched up the lantern and began anxiously prowling among the furze and fern

"You are not likely to find them there," said Venn, following "What did you do such a crazy thing as that for? Here's the box The dice can't be far off"

Wildeve turned the light eagerly upon the spot where Venn had found the box, and mauled the herbage right and left In the course of a few minutes one of the dice was found They searched on for some time, but no other was to be seen

"Never mind," said Wildeve, "let's play with one"

"Agreed," said Venn

Down they sat again, and recommenced with single guinea stakes, and the play went on smartly But Fortune had unmistakably fallen in love with the reddleman tonight He won steadily, till he was the owner of fourteen more of the gold pieces Seventy nine of the hundred guineas were his, Wildeve possessing only twenty-one The aspect of the two opponents was now singular Apart from motions, a complete diorama of the fluctuations of the game went on in their eyes A diminutive candle-flame was mirrored in each pupil, and it would have been possible to distinguish therein between the moods of hope and the moods of abandonment, even as regards the reddleman, though his facial muscles betrayed nothing at all Wildeve played on with the recklessness of despair

"What's that?" he suddenly exclaimed, hearing a rustle, and they both looked up

They were surrounded by dusky forms about four feet high, standing a few paces beyond the rays of the lantern. A moment's inspection revealed that the encircling figures were heath croppers, their heads being all towards the players, at whom they gazed intently

"Hoosh!" said Wildeve, and the whole forty or fifty animals at once turned and galloped away. Play was again resumed

Ten minutes passed away. Then a large death's-head moth advanced from the obscure outer air, wheeled twice round the lantern, flew straight at the candle, and extinguished it by the force of the blow. Wildeve had just thrown, but had not lifted the box to see what he had cast, and now it was impossible

"What the infernal!" he shrieked. "Now, what shall we do? Perhaps I have thrown six—have you any matches?"

"None," said Venn

"Christian had some—I wonder where he is. Christian!"

But there was no reply to Wildeve's shout, save a mournful whining from the herons which were nesting lower down the vale. Both men looked blankly round without rising. As their eyes grew accustomed to the darkness they perceived faint greenish points of light among the grass and fern. These lights dotted the hillside like stars of a low magnitude

"Ah—glowworms," said Wildeve. "Wait a minute. We can continue the game."

Venn sat still, and his companion went hither and thither till he had gathered thirteen glowworms—as many as he could find in a space of four or five minutes—upon a foxglove leaf which he pulled for the purpose. The reddleman vented a low humorous laugh when he saw his adversary return with these. "Determined to go on, then?" he said dryly

"I always am!" said Wildeve angrily. And shaking the glowworms from the leaf he ranged them with a trembling hand in a circle on the stone, leaving a space in the middle for the descent of the dice-box, over which the thirteen tiny lamps threw a pale phosphoric shine. The game was again renewed. It happened to be that season of the year at which glowworms put forth their greatest brilliancy, and the light they yielded was more than ample for the purpose, since it is possible on such nights to read the handwriting of a letter by the light of two or three

The incongruity between the men's deeds and their environment was great. Amid the soft juicy vegetation of the hollow in which they sat, the motionless and the uninhabited solitude, intruded the chunk of guineas, the rattle of dice, the exclamations of the reckless players

Wildeve had lifted the box as soon as the lights were obtained, and the solitary die proclaimed that the game was still against him

"I won't play any more, you've been tampering with the dice," he shouted

"How—when they were your own?" said the reddleman

"We'll change the game, the lowest point shall win the stake—it may cut off my ill-luck. Do you refuse?"

"No—go on," said Venn

"O, there they are again—damn them!" cried Wildeve, looking up. The heath-croppers had returned noiselessly, and were looking on with erect heads just as before, their timid eyes fixed upon the scene, as if they were wondering what mankind and candlelight could have to do in these haunts at this untoward hour.

"What a plague those creatures are—staring so!" he said, and flung a stone, which scattered them, when the game was continued as before.

Wildeve had now ten guineas left, and each laid five. Wildeve threw three points, Venn two, and raked in the coins. The other seized the die, and clenched his teeth upon it in sheer rage, as if he would bite it in pieces. "Never give in—here are my last five!" he cried, throwing them down. "Hang the glowworms—they are going out. Why don't you burn, you little fools? Stir them up with a thorn."

He probed the glowworms with a bit of stick, and rolled them over, till the bright side of their tails was upwards.

"There's light enough. Throw on," said Venn.

Wildeve brought down the box within the shining circle and looked eagerly. He had thrown ace. "Well done!—I said it would turn, and it has turned." Venn said nothing, but his hand shook slightly.

He threw ace also.

"O!" said Wildeve. "Curse me!"

The die smacked the stone a second time. It was ace again. Venn looked gloomy, threw, the die was seen to be lying in two pieces, the cleft sides uppermost.

"I've thrown nothing at all," he said.

"Serves me right—I split the die with my teeth. Here—take your money. Blank is less than one."

"I don't wish it."

"Take it, I say—you've won it!" And Wildeve threw the stakes against the reddleman's chest. Venn gathered them up, arose, and withdrew from the hollow, Wildeve sitting stupefied.

When he had come to himself he also arose, and, with the extinguished lantern in his hand, went towards the high-road. On reaching it he stood still. The silence of night pervaded the whole heath except in one direction, and that was towards Mistover. There he could hear the noise of light wheels, and presently saw two carriage-lamps descending the hill. Wildeve screened himself under a bush and waited.

The vehicle came on and passed before him. It was a hired carriage, and behind the coachman were two persons whom he knew well. There sat Eustacia and Yeobright, the arm of the latter being around her waist. They turned the sharp corner at the bottom towards the temporary home which Clym had hired and furnished, about three miles to the eastward.

Wildeve forgot the loss of the money at the sight of his lost love, whose preciousness in his eyes was increasing in geometrical progression with each new incident that reminded him of their hopeless division. Brimming with the subtilized misery that he was capable of feeling, he followed the opposite way towards the inn.

About the same moment that Wildeve stepped into the highway Venn also had reached it at a point a hundred yards further on, and he, hearing the same wheels, likewise waited till the carriage should come up. When he saw who sat therein he seemed to be disappointed. Reflecting a minute or two, during which interval the carriage rolled on, he crossed the road, and took a short cut through the furze and heath to a point where the turnpike road bent round in ascending a hill. He was now again in front of the carriage, which presently came up at a walking pace. Venn stepped forward and showed himself.

Eustacia started when the lamp shone upon him, and Clym's arm was in voluntarily withdrawn from her waist. He said, "What, Diggory? You are having a lonely walk."

"Yes—I beg your pardon for stopping you," said Venn. "But I am waiting about for Mrs. Wildeve, I have something to give her from Mrs. Yeobright. Can you tell me if she's gone home from the party yet?"

"No. But she will be leaving soon. You may possibly meet her at the corner."

Venn made a farewell obeisance, and walked back to his former position, where the by-road from Misover joined the highway. Here he remained fixed for nearly half an hour, and then another pair of lights came down the hill. It was the old-fashioned wheeled nondescript belonging to the captain, and Thomasin sat in it alone, driven by Charley.

The reddleman came up as they slowly turned the corner. "I beg pardon for stopping you, Mrs. Wildeve," he said. "But I have something to give you privately from Mrs. Yeobright." He handed a small parcel, it consisted of the hundred guineas he had just won, roughly twisted up in a piece of paper.

Thomasin recovered from her surprise, and took the packet. "That's all, ma'am—I wish you good night," he said, and vanished from her view.

Thus Venn in his anxiety to rectify matters, had placed in Thomasin's hands, not only the fifty guineas which rightly belonged to her, but also the fifty intended for her cousin Clym. His mistake had been based upon Wildeve's words at the opening of the game, when he indignantly denied that the guinea was not his own. It had not been comprehended by the reddleman that at half-way through the performance the game was continued with the money of another person, and it was an error which afterwards helped to cause more misfortune than treble the loss in money value could have done.

The night was now somewhat advanced, and Venn plunged deeper into the heath, till he came to a ravine where his van was standing—a spot not more than two hundred yards from the site of the gambling bout. He entered this movable home of his, lit his lantern, and, before closing his door for the night, stood reflecting on the circumstances of the preceding hours. While he stood the dawn grew visible in the north-east quarter of the heavens, which, the clouds having cleared off, was bright with a soft sheen at this midsummer time, though it was only between one and two o'clock. Venn, thoroughly weary, then shut his door and flung himself down to sleep.

BOOK FOURTH THE CLOSED DOOR

I THE RENCONTRE BY THE POOL

THE JULY sun shone over Egdon and fired its crimson heather to scarlet. It was the one season of the year, and the one weather of the season, in which the heath was gorgeous. This flowering period represented the second or noontide division in the cycle of those superficial changes which alone were possible here, it followed the green or young-fern period, representing the morn, and preceded the brown period, when the heath bells and ferns would wear the russet tinges of evening, to be in turn displaced by the dark hue of the winter period, representing night.

Clym and Eustacia, in their little house at Alderworth, were living on with a monotony which was delightful to them. The heath and changes of weather were quite blotted out from their eyes for the present. They were inclosed in a sort of luminous mist, which hid from them surroundings of any inharmonious color, and gave to all things the character of light. When it rained they were charmed, because they could remain indoors together all day with such a show of reason, when it was fine they were charmed, because they could sit together on the hills. They were like those double stars which revolve round and round each other, and from a distance appear to be one. The absolute solitude in which they lived intensified their reciprocal thoughts, yet some might have said that it had the disadvantage of consuming their mutual affections at a fearfully prodigal rate. Yeobright did not fear for his own part, but recollection of Eustacia's old speech about the evanescence of love, now apparently forgotten by her, sometimes caused him to ask himself a question, and he recoiled at the thought that the quality of finiteness was not foreign to Eden.

When three or four weeks had been passed thus, Yeobright resumed his reading in earnest. To make up for lost time he studied indefatigably, for he wished to enter his new profession with the least possible delay.

Now, Eustacia's dream had always been that, once married to Clym, she would have the power of inducing him to return to Paris. He had carefully withheld all promise to do so, but would he be proof against her coaxing and argument? She had calculated to such a degree on the probability of success that she had represented Paris, and not Budmouth, to her grandfather as in all likelihood their future home. Her hopes were bound up in this dream. In the quiet days since their marriage, when Yeobright had been poring over her lips, her eyes, and the lines of her face, she had mused and mused on the subject, even while in the act of returning his gaze, and now the sight of the books, indicating a future which was antagonistic to her dream, struck her with a positively painful jar. She was hoping for the time when, as the mistress of some pretty establishment, however small, near a Parisian Boulevard, she would be passing her days on the skirts at least of the gay world, and catching

stray wafts from those town pleasures she was so well fitted to enjoy Yet Yeobright was as firm in the contrary intention as if the tendency of marriage were rather to develop the fantasies of young philanthropy than to sweep them away

Her anxiety reached a high pitch, but there was something in Clym's undeviating manner which made her hesitate before sounding him on the subject At this point in their experience, however, an incident helped her It occurred one evening about six weeks after their union, and arose entirely out of the unconscious misapplication by Venn of the fifty guineas intended for Yeobright

A day or two after the receipt of the money Thomasin had sent a note to her aunt to thank her She had been surprised at the largeness of the amount, but as no sum had ever been mentioned she set that down to her late uncle's generosity She had been strictly charged by her aunt to say nothing to her husband of this gift, and Wildeve, as was natural enough, had not brought himself to mention to his wife a single particular of the midnight scene in the heath Christian's terror, in like manner, had tied his tongue on the share he took in that proceeding, and hoping that by some means or other the money had gone to its proper destination, he simply asserted as much, without giving details

Therefore, when a week or two had passed away, Mrs Yeobright began to wonder why she never heard from her son of the receipt of the present, and to add gloom to her perplexity came the possibility that resentment might be the cause of his silence She could hardly believe as much, but why did he not write? She questioned Christian, and the confusion in his answers would at once have led her to believe that something was wrong, had not one half of his story been corroborated by Thomasin's note

Mrs Yeobright was in this state of uncertainty when she was informed one morning that her son's wife was visiting her grandfather at Mistover She determined to walk up the hill, see Eustacia, and ascertain from her daughter-in-law's lips whether the family guineas, which were to Mrs Yeobright what family jewels are to wealthier dowagers, had miscarried or not

When Christian learnt where she was going his concern reached its height At the moment of her departure he could prevaricate no longer, and, confessing to the gambling, told her the truth as far as he knew it—that the guineas had been won by Wildeve

"What, is he going to keep them?" Mrs Yeobright cried

"I hope and trust not!" moaned Christian "He's a good man, and perhaps will do right things He said you ought to have gied Mr Clym's share to Eustacia, and that's perhaps what he'll do himself"

To Mrs Yeobright, as soon as she could calmly reflect, there was much likelihood in this, for she could hardly believe that Wildeve would really appropriate money belonging to her son The intermediate course of giving it to Eustacia was the sort of thing to please Wildeve's fancy But it filled the mother with anger none the less That Wildeve should have got command of the guineas after all, and should rearrange the disposal of them, placing Clym's share in Clym's wife's hands, because she had been his own sweetheart, and

might be so still, was as irritating a pain as any that Mrs Yeobright had ever borne

She instantly dismissed the wretched Christian from her employ for his conduct in the affair, but, feeling quite helpless and unable to do without him, told him afterwards that he might stay a little longer if he chose. Then she hastened off to Eustacia, moved by a much less promising emotion towards her daughter-in-law than she had felt half an hour earlier, when planning her journey. At that time it was to inquire in a friendly spirit if there had been any accidental loss, now it was to ask plainly if Wildeve had privately given her money which had been intended as a sacred gift to Clym.

She started at two o'clock, and her meeting with Eustacia was hastened by the appearance of the young lady beside the pool and bank which bordered her grandfather's premises, where she stood surveying the scene, and perhaps thinking of the romantic enactments it had witnessed in past days. When Mrs Yeobright approached, Eustacia surveyed her with the calm stare of a stranger.

The mother-in-law was the first to speak. "I was coming to see you," she said.

"Indeed!" said Eustacia with surprise, for Mrs Yeobright, much to the girl's mortification, had refused to be present at the wedding. "I did not at all expect you."

"I was coming on business only," said the visitor, more coldly than at first. "Will you excuse my asking this—Have you received a gift from Thomasin's husband?"

"A gift?"

"I mean money!"

"What—I myself?"

"Well, I meant yourself, privately—though I was not going to put it in that way."

"Money from Mr Wildeve? No—never! Madam, what do you mean by that?" Eustacia fired up all too quickly, for her own consciousness of the old attachment between herself and Wildeve led her to jump to the conclusion that Mrs Yeobright also knew of it, and might have come to accuse her of receiving dishonorable presents from him now.

"I simply ask the question," said Mrs Yeobright. "I have been—"

"You ought to have better opinions of me—I feared you were against me from the first!" exclaimed Eustacia.

"No, I was simply for Clym," replied Mrs Yeobright, with too much emphasis in her earnestness. "It is the instinct of every one to look after their own."

"How can you imply that he required guarding against me?" cried Eustacia, passionate tears in her eyes. "I have not injured him by marrying him! What sin have I done that you should think so ill of me? You had no right to speak against me to him when I have never wronged you."

"I only did what was fair under the circumstances," said Mrs Yeobright more softly. "I would rather not have gone into this question at present, but you compel me. I am not ashamed to tell you the honest truth. I was firmly convinced that he ought not to marry you—therefore I tried to dissuade him."

by all means in my power But it is done now, and I have no idea of complaining any more I am ready to welcome you "

"Ah, yes, it is very well to see things in that business point of view," murmured Eustacia with a smothered fire of feeling "But why should you think there is anything between me and Mr Wildev? I have a spirit as well as you I am indignant, and so would any woman be It was a condescension in me to be Clym's wife, and not a maneuver, let me remind you, and therefore I will not be treated as a schemer whom it becomes necessary to bear with because she has crept into the family "

"Oh!" said Mrs Yeobright, vainly endeavoring to control her anger "I have never heard anything to show that my son's lineage is not as good as the Vyes'—perhaps better It is amusing to hear you talk of condescension "

"It was condescension, nevertheless," said Eustacia, vehemently "And if I had known then what I know now, that I should be living in this wild heath a month after my marriage, I—I should have thought twice before agreeing "

"It would be better not to say that, it might not sound truthful I am not aware that any deception was used on his part—I know there was not—whatever might have been the case on the other side "

"This is too exasperating!" answered the younger woman huskily, her face crimsoning, and her eyes darting light "How can you dare to speak to me like that? I insist upon repeating to you that had I known that my life would from my marriage up to this time have been as it is, I should have said No I don't complain I have never uttered a sound of such a thing to him, but it is true I hope therefore that in the future you will be silent on my eagerness If you injure me now you injure yourself "

"Injure you? Do you think I am an evil-disposed person?"

"You injured me before my marriage, and you have now suspected me of secretly favoring another man for money!"

"I could not help what I thought But I have never spoken of you outside my house "

"You spoke of me within it, to Clym, and you could not do worse "

"I did my duty "

"And I'll do mine "

"A part of which will possibly be to set him against his mother It is always so But why should I not bear it as others have borne it before me?"

"I understand you," said Eustacia, breathless with emotion "You think me capable of every bad thing Who can be worse than a wife who encourages a lover, and poisons her husband's mind against his relative? Yet that is now the character given to me Will you not come and drag him out of my hands?"

Mrs Yeobright gave back heat for heat

"Don't rage at me, madam! It ill becomes your beauty, and I am not worth the injury you may do it on my account, I assure you I am only a poor old woman who has lost a son "

"If you had treated me honorably you would have had him still," Eustacia said, while scalding tears trickled from her eyes "You have brought yourself to folly, you have caused a division which can never be healed!"

"I have done nothing This audacity from a young woman is more than I can bear"

"It was asked for, you have suspected me, and you have made me speak of my husband in a way I would not have done You will let him know that I have spoken thus, and it will cause misery between us Will you go away from me? You are no friend!"

"I will go when I have spoken a word If any one says I have come here to question you without good grounds for it, that person speaks untruly If any one says that I attempted to stop your marriage by any but honest means, that person, too, does not speak the truth I have fallen on an evil time, God has been unjust to me in letting you insult me! Probably my son's happiness does not lie on this side of the grave, for he is a foolish man who neglects the advice of his parent You, Eustacia, stand on the edge of a precipice without knowing it Only show my son one-half the temper you have shown me today—and you may before long—and you will find that though he is as gentle as a child with you now, he can be as hard as steel!"

The excited mother then withdrew, and Eustacia, panting, stood looking into the pool

II HE IS SET UPON BY ADVERSITIES, BUT HE SINGS A SONG

THE RESULT of that unpropitious interview was that Eustacia, instead of passing the afternoon with her grandfather, hastily returned home to Clym, where she arrived three hours earlier than she had been expected

She came indoors with her face flushed, and her eyes still showing traces of her recent excitement Yeobright looked up astonished, he had never seen her in any way approaching to that state before She passed him by, and would have gone upstairs unnoticed, but Clym was so concerned that he immediately followed her

"What is the matter, Eustacia?" he said She was standing on the hearthrug in the bedroom, looking upon the floor, her hands clasped in front of her, her bonnet yet unremoved For a moment she did not answer, and then she replied in a low voice—

"I have seen your mother, and I will never see her again!"

A weight fell like a stone upon Clym That same morning, when Eustacia had arranged to go and see her grandfather, Clym had expressed a wish that she would drive down to Blooms-End and inquire for her mother-in-law, or adopt any other means she might think fit to bring about a reconciliation She had set out gaily, and he had hoped for much

"Why is this?" he asked

"I cannot tell—I cannot remember I met your mother And I will never meet her again"

"Why?"

"What do I know about Mr Wildeve now? I won't have wicked opinions passed on me by anybody Oh, it was too humiliating to be asked if I had

received any money from him or encouraged him, or something of the sort—I don't exactly know what!"

"How could she have asked you that?"

"She did."

"Then there must have been some meaning in it. What did my mother say besides?"

"I don't know what she said, except in so far as this, that we both said words which can never be forgiven!"

"O, there must be some misapprehension. Whose fault was it that her meaning was not made clear?"

"I would rather not say. It may have been the fault of the circumstances, which were awkward at the very least. O Clym—I cannot help expressing it—this is an unpleasant position that you have placed me in. But you must improve it—yes, say you will—for I hate it all now! Yes, take me to Paris, and go on with your old occupation, Clym! I don't mind how humbly we live there at first, if it can only be Paris and not Egdon Heath."

"But I have quite given up that idea," said Yeobright, with surprise. "Surely I never led you to expect such a thing?"

"I own it. Yet there are thoughts which cannot be kept out of mind, and that one was mine. Must I not have a voice in the matter, now I am your wife and the share of your doom?"

"Well, there are things which are placed beyond the pale of discussion, and I thought this was specially so, and by mutual agreement."

"Clym, I am unhappy at what I hear," she said in a low voice, and her eyes drooped, and she turned away.

This indication of an unexpected mine of hope in Eustacia's bosom disconcerted her husband. It was the first time that he had confronted the fact of the indirectness of a woman's movement towards her desire. But his intention was unshaken, though he loved Eustacia well. All the effect that her remark had upon him was a resolve to chain himself more closely than ever to his books, so as to be the sooner enabled to appeal to substantial results from another course in arguing against her whim.

Next day the mystery of the guineas was explained. Thomasin paid them a hurried visit, and Clym's share was delivered up to him by her own hands. Eustacia was not present at the time.

"Then this is what my mother meant," exclaimed Clym. "Thomasin, do you know that they have had a bitter quarrel?"

There was a little more reticence now than formerly in Thomasin's manner towards her cousin. It is the effect of marriage to engender in several directions some of the reserve it annihilates in one. "Your mother told me," she said quietly. "She came back to my house."

"The worst thing I dreaded has come to pass. Was mother much disturbed when she came to you, Thomasin?"

"Yes."

"Very much, indeed?"

"Yes."

Clym leant his elbow upon the post of the garden gate, and covered his eyes with his hand

"Don't trouble about it, Clym They may get to be friends "

He shook his head "Not two people with inflammable natures like theirs Well, what must be will be "

"One thing is cheerful in it—the guineas are not lost "

"I would rather have lost them twice over than have had this happen "

Amid these jarring events Yeobright felt one thing to be indispensable—that he should speedily make some show of progress in his scholastic plans With this view he read far into the small hours during many nights

One morning, after a severer strain than usual, he awoke with a strange sensation in his eyes The sun was shining directly upon the window blind, and at his first glance thitherward a sharp pain obliged him to close his eyelids quickly At every new attempt to look about him the same morbid sensibility to light was manifested, and excoriating tears ran down his cheeks He was obliged to tie a bandage over his brow while dressing, and during the day it could not be abandoned Eustacia was thoroughly alarmed On finding that the case was no better the next morning they decided to send to Anglebury for a surgeon

Towards evening he arrived, and pronounced the disease to be acute inflammation induced by Clym's night studies, continued in spite of a cold previously caught, which had weakened his eyes for the time

Fretting with impatience at this interruption to a task he was so anxious to hasten, Clym was transformed into an invalid He was shut up in a room from which all light was excluded, and his condition would have been one of absolute misery had not Eustacia read to him by the glimmer of a shaded lamp He hoped that the worst would soon be over, but at the surgeon's third visit he learnt to his dismay that although he might venture out of doors with shaded eyes in the course of a month, all thought of pursuing his work, or of reading print of any description, would have to be given up for a long time to come

One week and another week wore on, and nothing seemed to lighten the gloom of the young couple Dreadful imaginings occurred to Eustacia, but she carefully refrained from uttering them to her husband Suppose he should become blind, or, at all events, never recover sufficient strength of sight to engage in an occupation which would be congenial to her feelings, and conduce to her removal from this lonely dwelling among the hills? That dream of beautiful Paris was not likely to cohere into substance in the presence of this misfortune As day after day passed by and he got no better, her mind ran more and more in this mournful groove, and she would go away from him into the garden and weep despairing tears

Yeobright thought he would send for his mother, and then he thought he would not Knowledge of his state could only make her the more unhappy, and the seclusion of their life was such that she would hardly be likely to learn the news except through a special messenger Endeavoring to take the trouble as philosophically as possible, he waited on till the third week had arrived,

when he went into the open air for the first time since the attack. The surgeon visited him again at this stage, and Clym urged him to express a distinct opinion. The young man learnt with added surprise that the date at which he might expect to resume his labors was as uncertain as ever, his eyes being in that peculiar state which, though affording him sight enough for walking about, would not admit of their being strained upon any definite object without incurring the risk of reproducing ophthalmia in its acute form.

Clym was very grave at the intelligence, but not despairing. A quiet firmness, and even cheerfulness, took possession of him. He was not to be blind, that was enough. To be doomed to behold the world through smoked glass for an indefinite period was bad enough, and fatal to any kind of advance, but Yeobright was an absolute stoic in the face of mishaps which only affected his social standing, and, apart from Eustacia, the humblest walk of life would satisfy him if it could be made to work in with some form of his culture scheme. To keep a cottage night-school was one such form, and his affliction did not master his spirit as it might otherwise have done.

He walked through the warm sun westward into those tracts of Egdon with which he was best acquainted, being those lying nearer to his old home. He saw before him in one of the valleys the gleaming of whetted iron, and advancing, dimly perceived that the shine came from the tool of a man who was cutting furze. The worker recognized Clym, and Yeobright learnt from the voice that the speaker was Humphrey.

Humphrey expressed his sorrow at Clym's condition, and added, "Now, if yours was low class work like mine, you could go on with it just the same."

"Yes, I could," said Yeobright musingly. "How much do you get for cutting these faggots?"

"Half a-crown a hundred, and in these long days I can live very well on the wages."

During the whole of Yeobright's walk home to Alderworth he was lost in reflections which were not of an unpleasant kind. On his coming up to the house Eustacia spoke to him from the open window, and he went across to her.

"Darling," he said, "I am much happier. And if my mother were reconciled to me and to you I should, I think, be happy quite."

"I fear that will never be," she said, looking afar with her beautiful stormy eyes. "How can you say 'I am happier,' and nothing changed?"

"It arises from my having at last discovered something I can do, and get a living at, in this time of misfortune."

"Yes?"

"I am going to be a furze and turf cutter."

"No, Clym!" she said, the slight hopefulness previously apparent in her face going off again, and leaving her worse than before.

"Surely I shall. Is it not very unwise in us to go on spending the little money we've got when I can keep down expenditure by an honest occupation? The outdoor exercise will do me good, and who knows but that in a few months I shall be able to go on with my reading again?"

"But my grandfather offers to assist us, if we require assistance."

"We don't require it. If I go furze-cutting we shall be fairly well off."

"In comparison with slaves, and the Israelites in Egypt, and such people!" A bitter tear rolled down Eustacia's face, which he did not see. There had been nonchalance in his tone, showing her that he felt no absolute grief at a consummation which to her was a positive horror.

The very next day Yeobright went to Humphrey's cottage, and borrowed of him leggings, gloves, a whet stone, and a hook, to use till he should be able to purchase some for himself. Then he sallied forth with his new fellow laborer and old acquaintance, and selecting a spot where the furze grew thickest he struck the first blow in his adopted calling. His sight, like the wings in "Rasselas," though useless to him for his grand purpose, sufficed for this strait, and he found that when a little practice should have hardened his palms against blistering he would be able to work with ease.

Day after day he rose with the sun, buckled on his leggings, and went off to the rendezvous with Humphrey. His custom was to work from four o'clock in the morning till noon, then, when the heat of the day was at its highest, to go home and sleep for an hour or two, afterwards coming out again and working till dusk at nine.

This man from Paris was now so disguised by his leather accouterments, and by the goggles he was obliged to wear over his eyes, that his closest friend might have passed by without recognizing him. He was a brown spot in the midst of an expanse of olive-green gorse, and nothing more. Though frequently depressed in spirit when not actually at work, owing to thoughts of Eustacia's position and his mother's estrangement, when in the full swing of labor he was cheerfully disposed and calm.

His daily life was of a curious microscopic sort, his whole world being limited to a circuit of a few feet from his person. His familiars were creeping and winged things, and they seemed to enroll him in their band. Bees hummed around his ears with an intimate air, and tugged at the heath and furze-flowers at his side in such numbers as to weigh them down to the sod. The strange amber-colored butterflies which Egdon produced, and which were never seen elsewhere, quivered in the breath of his lips, alighted upon his bowed back, and sported with the glittering point of his hook as he flourished it up and down. Tribes of emerald-green grasshoppers leaped over his feet, falling awkwardly on their backs, heads, or hips, like unskillful acrobats, as chance might rule, or engaged themselves in noisy flirtations under the fern-fronds with silent ones of homely hue. Huge flies, ignorant of ladders and wire netting, and quite in a savage state, buzzed about him without knowing that he was a man. In and out of the fern-brakes snakes glided in their most brilliant blue and yellow guise, it being the season immediately following the shedding of their old skins, when their colors are brightest. Litters of young rabbits came out from their forms to sun themselves upon hillocks, the hot beams blazing through the delicate tissue of each thin-fleshed ear, and firing it to a blood-red transparency in which the veins could be seen.

The monotony of his occupation soothed him, and was in itself a pleasure. A forced limitation of effort offered a justification of homely courses to an unambitious man, whose conscience would hardly have allowed him to remain in such obscurity while his powers were unimpeded. Hence Yeobright some-

times sang to himself, and when obliged to accompany Humphrey in search of brambles for faggot-bonds he would amuse his companion with sketches of Parisian life and character, and so while away the time

On one of these warm afternoons Eustacia walked out alone in the direction of Yeobright's place of work. He was busily chopping away at the furze, a long row of faggots which stretched downward from his position representing the labor of the day. He did not observe her approach, and she stood close to him, and heard his undercurrent of song. It shocked her. To see him there, a poor afflicted man, earning money by the sweat of his brow, had at first moved her to tears, but to hear him sing and not at all rebel against an occupation which, however satisfactory to himself, was degrading to her, as an educated lady-wife, wounded her through. Unconscious of her presence, he still went on singing

"Le point du jour
A nos bosquets rend toute leur parure,
Flore est plus belle a son retour,
L'oiseau reprend doux chant d'amour;
Tout celebre dans la nature
Le point du jour

"Le point du jour
Cause parfois, cause douleur extrême
Que l'espace des nuits est court
Pour le berger brûlant d'amour,
Forcé de quitter ce qu'il aime
Au point du jour"

It was bitterly plain to Eustacia that he did not care much about social failure, and the proud fair woman bowed her head and wept in sick despair at thought of the blasting effect upon her own life of that mood and condition in him. Then she came forward

"I would starve rather than do it!" she exclaimed vehemently. "And you can sing! I will go and live with my grandfather again!"

"Eustacia! I did not see you, though I noticed something moving," he said gently. He came forward, pulled off his huge leather glove, and took her hand. "Why do you speak in such a strange way? It is only a little old song which struck my fancy when I was in Paris, and now just applies to my life with you. Has your love for me all died, then, because my appearance is no longer that of a fine gentleman?"

"Dearest, you must not question me unpleasantly, or it may make me not love you"

"Do you believe it possible that I would run the risk of doing that?"

"Well, you follow out your own ideas, and won't give in to mine when I wish you to leave off this shameful labor. Is there anything you dislike in me that you act so contrarily to my wishes? I am your wife, and why will you not listen? Yes, I am your wife indeed!"

"I know what that tone means"

"What tone?"

"The tone in which you said, 'Your wife indeed' It meant, 'Your wife, worse luck'"

"It is hard in you to probe me with that remark. A woman may have reason, though she is not without heart, and if I felt 'worse luck,' it was no ignoble feeling—it was only too natural. There, you see that at any rate I do not attempt untruths. Do you remember how, before we were married, I warned you that I had not good wifely qualities?"

"You mock me to say that now. On that point at least the only noble course would be to hold your tongue, for you are still queen of me, Eustacia, though I may no longer be king of you."

"You are my husband. Does not that content you?"

"Not unless you are my wife without regret."

"I cannot answer you. I remember saying that I should be a serious matter on your hands."

"Yes, I saw that."

"Then you were too quick to see! No true lover would have seen any such things, you are too severe upon me, Clym—I don't like your speaking so at all."

"Well, I married you in spite of it, and don't regret doing so. How cold you seem this afternoon! and yet I used to think there never was a warmer heart than yours."

"Yes, I fear we are cooling—I see it as well as you," she sighed mournfully. "And how madly we loved two months ago! You were never tired of contemplating me, nor I of contemplating you. Who could have thought then that by this time my eyes would not seem so very bright to yours, nor your lips so very sweet to mine? Two months—is it possible? Yes, 'tis too true!"

"You sigh, dear, as if you were sorry for it, and that's a hopeful sign."

"No. I don't sigh for that. There are other things for me to sigh for, or any other woman in my place."

"That your chances in life are ruined by marrying in haste an unfortunate man?"

"Why will you force me, Clym, to say bitter things? I deserve pity as much as you. As much?—I think I deserve it more. For you can sing! It would be a strange hour which would catch me singing under such a cloud as this! Believe me, sweet, I could weep to a degree that would astonish and confound such an elastic mind as yours. Even had you felt careless about your own affliction, you might have refrained from singing out of sheer pity for mine. God! if I were a man in such a position I would curse rather than sing!"

Yeobright placed his hand upon her arm. "Now, don't you suppose, my inexperienced girl, that I cannot rebel, in high Promethean fashion, against the gods and fate as well as you. I have felt more steam and smoke of that sort than you have ever heard of. But the more I see of life the more do I perceive that there is nothing particularly great in its greatest walks, and therefore nothing particularly small in mine of furze-cutting. If I feel that the greatest blessings vouchsafed to us are not very valuable, how can I feel it to be any great hardship when they are taken away? So I sing to pass the time

Have you indeed lost all tenderness for me, that you begrudge me a few cheerful moments?"

"I have still some tenderness left for you"

"Your words have no longer their old flavor And so love dies with good fortune!"

"I cannot listen to this, Clym—it will end bitterly," she said in a broken voice "I will go home"

III SHE GOES OUT TO BATTLE AGAINST DEPRESSION

A FEW days later, before the month of August had expired, Eustacia and Yeobright sat together at their early dinner

Eustacia's manner had become of late almost apathetic There was a forlorn look about her beautiful eyes which, whether she deserved it or not, would have excited pity in the breast of any one who had known her during the full flush of her love for Clym The feelings of husband and wife varied, in some measure, inversely with their positions Clym, the afflicted man, was cheerful, and he even tried to comfort her, who had never felt a moment of physical suffering in her whole life

"Come, brighten up, dearest, we shall be all right again Some day perhaps I shall see as well as ever And I solemnly promise that I'll leave off cutting furze as soon as I have the power to do anything better You cannot seriously wish me to stay idling at home all day?"

"But it is so dreadful—a furze-cutter! and you a man who have lived about the world, and speak French and German, and who are fit for what is so much better than this."

"I suppose when you first saw me and heard about me I was wrapped in a sort of golden halo to your eyes—a man who knew glorious things, and had mixed in brilliant scenes—in short, an adorable, delightful, distracting hero?"

"Yes," she said, sobbing

"And now I am a poor fellow in brown leather"

"Don't taunt me But enough of this I will not be depressed any more I am going from home this afternoon, unless you greatly object There is to be a village picnic—a gypsying, they call it—at East Egdon, and I shall go"

"To dance?"

"Why not? You can sing"

"Well, well, as you will Must I come to fetch you?"

"If you return soon enough from your work But do not inconvenience yourself about it I know the way home, and the heath has no terror for me"

"And can you cling to gaiety so eagerly as to walk all the way to a village festival in search of it?"

"Now, you don't like my going alone! Clym, you are not jealous?"

"No But I would come with you if it could give you any pleasure, though, as things stand, perhaps you have too much of me already Still, I somehow wish that you did not want to go Yes, perhaps I am jealous, and who could

be jealous with more reason than I, a half blind man, over such a woman as you?"

"Don't think like it Let me go, and don't take all my spirits away!"

"I would rather lose all my own, my sweet wife Go and do whatever you like Who can forbid your indulgence in any whim? You have all my heart yet, I believe, and because you bear with me, who am in truth a drag upon you, I owe you thanks Yes, go alone and shine As for me, I will stick to my doom At that kind of meeting people would shun me My hook and gloves are like the St Lazarus rattle of the leper, warning the world to get out of the way of a sight that would sadden them" He kissed her, put on his leggings, and went out

When he was gone she rested her head upon her hands and said to herself, "Two wasted lives—his and mine And I am come to this! Will it drive me out of my mind?"

She cast about for any possible course which offered the least improvement on the existing state of things, and could find none She imagined how all those Budmouth ones who should learn what had become of her would say, "Look at the girl for whom nobody was good enough!" To Eustacia the situation seemed such a mockery of her hopes that death appeared the only door of relief if the satire of Heaven should go much further

Suddenly she aroused herself and exclaimed, "But I'll shake it off Yes, I will shake it off! No one shall know my suffering I'll be bitterly merry, and ironically gay, and I'll laugh in derision! And I'll begin by going to this dance on the green"

She ascended to her bedroom and dressed herself with scrupulous care To an onlooker her beauty would have made her feelings almost seem reasonable The gloomy corner into which accident as much as indiscretion had brought this woman might have led even a moderate partisan to feel that she had cogent reasons for asking the Supreme Power by what right a being of such exquisite finish had been placed in circumstances calculated to make of her charms a curse rather than a blessing

It was five in the afternoon when she came out from the house ready for her walk There was material enough in the picture for twenty new conquests The rebellious sadness that was rather too apparent when she sat indoors without a bonnet was cloaked and softened by her outdoor attire, which always had a sort of nebulousness about it, devoid of harsh edges anywhere, so that her face looked from its environment as from a cloud, with no noticeable lines of demarcation between flesh and clothes The heat of the day had scarcely declined as yet, and she went along the sunny hills at a leisurely pace, there being ample time for her idle expedition Tall ferns buried her in their leafage whenever her path lay through them, which now formed miniature forests, though not one stem of them would remain to bud the next year

The site chosen for the village festivity was one of the lawn like oases which were occasionally, yet not often, met with on the plateaux of the heath district The brakes of furze and fern terminated abruptly round the margin, and the grass was unbroken A green cattle-track skirted the spot, without, however, emerging from the screen of fern, and this path Eustacia followed, in order to

reconnoiter the group before joining it. The lusty notes of the East Egdon band had directed her unerringly, and she now beheld the musicians themselves, sitting in a blue wagon with red wheels scrubbed as bright as new, and arched with sticks, to which boughs and flowers were tied. In front of this was the grand central dance of fifteen or twenty couples, flanked by minor dances of inferior individuals whose gyrations were not always in strict keeping with the tune.

The young men wore blue and white rosettes, and with a flush on their faces footed it to the girls, who, with the excitement and the exercise, blushed deeper than the pink of their numerous ribbons. Fair ones with long curls, fair ones with short curls, fair ones with love-locks, fair ones with braids, flew round and round, and a beholder might well have wondered how such a prepossessing set of young women of like size, age, and disposition, could have been collected together where there were only one or two villages to choose from. In the background was one happy man dancing by himself, with closed eyes, totally oblivious of all the rest. A fire was burning under a pollard thorn a few paces off, over which three kettles hung in a row. Hard by was a table where elderly dames prepared tea, but Eustacia looked among them in vain for the cattle-dealer's wife who had suggested that she should come, and had promised to obtain a courteous welcome for her.

This unexpected absence of the only local resident whom Eustacia knew considerably damaged her scheme for an afternoon of reckless gaiety. Joining in became a matter of difficulty, notwithstanding that, were she to advance, cheerful dames would come forward with cups of tea and make much of her as a stranger of superior grace and knowledge to themselves. Having watched the company through the figures of two dances, she decided to walk a little further, to a cottage where she might get some refreshment, and then return homeward in the shady time of evening.

This she did, and by the time that she retraced her steps towards the scene of the gypsying, which it was necessary to re-pass on her way to Alderworth, the sun was going down. The air was now so still that she could hear the band afar off, and it seemed to be playing with more spirit, if that were possible, than when she had come away. On reaching the hill the sun had quite disappeared, but this made little difference either to Eustacia or to the revelers, for a round yellow moon was rising behind her, though its rays had not yet outmastered those from the west. The dance was going on just the same, but strangers had arrived and formed a ring around the figure, so that Eustacia could stand among these without a chance of being recognized.

A whole village-full of sensuous emotion, scattered abroad all the year long, surged here in a focus for an hour. The forty hearts of those waving couples were beating as they had not done since, twelve months before, they had come together in similar jollity. For the time Paganism was revived in their hearts, the pride of life was all in all, and they adored none other than themselves.

How many of those impassioned but temporary embraces were destined to become perpetual was possibly the wonder of some of those who indulged in them, as well as of Eustacia who looked on. She began to envy those pirouettes, to hunger for the hope and happiness which the fascination of the dance seemed

to engender within them. Desperately fond of dancing herself, one of Eustacia's expectations of Paris had been the opportunity it might afford her of indulgence in this favorite pastime. Unhappily, that expectation was now extinct within her for ever.

Whilst she abstractedly watched them spinning and fluctuating in the increasing moonlight she suddenly heard her name whispered by a voice over her shoulder. Turning in surprise, she beheld at her elbow one whose presence instantly caused her to flush to the temples.

It was Wildeve. Till this moment he had not met her eye since the morning of his marriage, when she had been loitering in the church, and had startled him by lifting her veil and coming forward to sign the register as witness. Yet why the sight of him should have instigated that sudden rush of blood she could not tell.

Before she could speak he whispered, "Do you like dancing as much as ever?"

"I think I do," she replied in a low voice.

"Will you dance with me?"

"It would be a great change for me, but will it not seem strange?"

"What strangeness can there be in relations dancing together?"

"Ah—yes, relations. Perhaps none."

"Still, if you don't like to be seen, pull down your veil, though there is not much risk of being known by this light. Lots of strangers are here."

She did as he suggested, and the act was a tacit acknowledgment that she accepted his offer.

Wildeve gave her his arm and took her down on the outside of the ring to the bottom of the dance, which they entered. In two minutes more they were involved in the figure and began working their way upwards to the top. Till they had advanced half-way thither Eustacia wished more than once that she had not yielded to his request, from the middle to the top she felt that, since she had come out to seek pleasure, she was only doing a natural thing to obtain it. Fairly launched into the ceaseless glides and whirls which their new position as top couple opened up to them, Eustacia's pulses began to move too quickly for longer rumination of any kind.

Through the length of five and twenty couples they threaded their giddy way, and a new vitality entered her form. The pale ray of evening lent a fascination to the experience. There is a certain degree and tone of light which tends to disturb the equilibrium of the senses, and to promote dangerously the tenderer moods, added to movement, it drives the emotions to rankness, the reason becoming sleepy and unperceiving in inverse proportion, and this light fell now upon these two from the disc of the moon. All the dancing girls felt the symptoms, but Eustacia most of all. The grass under their feet became trodden away, and the hard, beaten surface of the sod, when viewed aslant towards the moonlight, shone like a polished table. The air became quite still, the flag above the wagon which held the musicians clung to the pole, and the players appeared only in outline against the sky, except when the circular mouths of the trombone, ophicleide, and French horn gleamed out like huge eyes from the shade of their figures. The pretty dresses of the maids lost their

subtler day colors and showed more or less of a misty white Eustacia floated round and round on Wildeve's arm, her face rapt and statuesque, her soul had passed away from and forgotten her features, which were left empty and quiescent, as they always are when feeling goes beyond their register

How near she was to Wildeve! it was terrible to think of She could feel his breathing, and he, of course, could feel hers How badly she had treated him! yet, here they were treading one measure The enchantment of the dance surprised her A clear line of difference divided like a tangible fence her experience within this maze of motion from her experience without it Her beginning to dance had been like a change of atmosphere, outside, she had been steeped in arctic frigidity by comparison with the tropical sensations here She had entered the dance from the troubled hours of her late life as one might enter a brilliant chamber after a night walk in a wood Wildeve by himself would have been merely an agitation, Wildeve added to the dance, and the moonlight, and the secrecy, began to be a delight Whether his personality supplied the greater part of this sweetly compounding feeling, or whether the dance and the scene weighed the more therein, was a nice point upon which Eustacia herself was entirely in a cloud

People began to say, "Who are they?" but no invidious inquiries were made Had Eustacia mingled with the other girls in their ordinary daily walks the case would have been different here she was not inconvenienced by excessive inspection, for all were wrought to their brightest grace by the occasion Like the planet Mercury surrounded by the luster of sunset, her permanent brilliancy passed without much notice in the temporary glory of the situation

As for Wildeve, his feelings are easy to guess Obstacles were a ripening sun to his love, and he was at this moment in a delirium of exquisite misery To clasp as his for five minutes what was another man's through all the rest of the year was a kind of thing he of all men could appreciate He had long since begun to sigh again for Eustacia, indeed, it may be asserted that signing the marriage register with Thomasin was the natural signal to his heart to return to its first quarters, and that the extra complication of Eustacia's marriage was the one addition required to make that return compulsory

Thus, for different reasons, what was to the rest an exhilarating movement was to these two a riding upon the whirlwind The dance had come like an irresistible attack upon whatever sense of social order there was in their minds, to drive them back into old paths which were now doubly irregular Through three dances in succession they spun their way, and then, fatigued with the incessant motion, Eustacia turned to quit the circle in which she had already remained too long Wildeve led her to a grassy mound a few yards distant, where she sat down, her partner standing beside her From the time that he addressed her at the beginning of the dance till now they had not exchanged a word

"The dance and the walking have tired you?" he said tenderly

"No, not greatly"

"It is strange that we should have met here of all places, after missing each other so long"

"We have missed because we tried to miss, I suppose"

"Yes But you began that proceeding—by breaking a promise "

"It is scarcely worth while to talk of that now We have formed other ties since then—you no less than I "

"I am sorry to hear that your husband is ill "

"He is not ill—only incapacitated "

"Yes that is what I mean I sincerely sympathize with you in your trouble Fate has treated you cruelly "

She was silent awhile "Have you heard that he has chosen to work as a furze-cutter?" she said in a low, mournful voice

"It has been mentioned to me," answered Wildeva hesitatingly "But I hardly believed it "

"It is true What do you think of me as a furze-cutter's wife?"

"I think the same as ever of you, Eustacia Nothing of that sort can degrade you you ennoble the occupation of your husband "

"I wish I could feel it "

"Is there any chance of Mr Yeobright getting better?"

"He thinks so I doubt it "

"I was quite surprised to hear that he had taken a cottage I thought, in common with other people, that he would have taken you off to a home in Paris immediately after you had married him 'What a gay, bright future she has before her!' I thought He will, I suppose, return here with you, if his sight gets strong again?"

Observing that she did not reply he regarded her more closely She was almost weeping Images of a future never to be enjoyed, the revived sense of her bitter disappointment, the picture of the neighbor's suspended ridicule which was raised by Wildeva's words, had been too much for proud Eustacia's equanimity

Wildeva could hardly control his own too forward feelings when he saw her silent perturbation But he affected not to notice this, and she soon recovered her calmness

"You did not intend to walk home by yourself?" he asked

"O yes," said Eustacia "What could hurt me on this heath, who have nothing?"

"The first half of my way home is the same as yours I shall be glad to keep you company as far as Throope Corner" Seeing that Eustacia sat on in hesitation he added, "Perhaps you think it unwise to be seen in the same road with me after the events of last summer?"

"Indeed I think no such thing," she said haughtily "I shall accept whose company I choose, for all that may be said by the miserable inhabitants of Egdon "

"Then let us walk on—if you are ready Our nearest way is towards that holly-bush with the dark shadow that you see down there "

Eustacia arose, and walked beside him in the direction signified, brushing her way over the damping heath and fern, and followed by the strains of the merry-makers, who still kept up the dance The moon had now waxed bright and silvery, but the heath was proof against such illumination, and there was to be observed the striking scene of a dark, rayless tract of country, under an atmosphere charged from its zenith to its extremities with whitest light To an

eye above them their two faces would have appeared amid the expanse like two pearls on a table of ebony

On this account the irregularities of the path were not visible, and Wildevé occasionally stumbled, whilst Eustacia found it necessary to perform some graceful feats of balancing whenever a small tuft of heather or root of furze protruded itself through the grass of the narrow track and entangled her feet. At these junctures in her progress a hand was invariably stretched forward to steady her, holding her firmly until smooth ground was again reached, when the hand was again withdrawn to a respectful distance.

They performed the journey for the most part in silence, and drew near to Throope Corner, a few hundred yards from which a short path branched away to Eustacia's house. By degrees they discerned coming towards them a pair of human figures, apparently of the male sex.

When they came a little nearer Eustacia broke the silence by saying, "One of those men is my husband. He promised to come to meet me."

"And the other is my greatest enemy," said Wildevé.

"It looks like Diggory Venn."

"That is the man."

"It is an awkward meeting," said she, "but such is my fortune. He knows too much about me, unless he could know more, and so prove to himself that what he now knows counts for nothing. Well, let it be: you must deliver me up to them."

"You will think twice before you direct me to do that. Here is a man who has not forgotten an item in our meetings at Runbarrow: he is in company with your husband. Which of them, seeing us together here, will believe that our meeting and dancing at the gypsy-party was by chance?"

"Very well," she whispered gloomily. "Leave me before they come up."

Wildevé bade her a tender farewell, and plunged across the fern and furze, Eustacia slowly walking on. In two or three minutes she met her husband and his companion.

"My journey ends here for tonight, reddleman," said Yeobright as soon as he perceived her. "I turn back with this lady. Good night."

"Good night, Mr. Yeobright," said Venn. "I hope to see you better soon."

The moonlight shone directly upon Venn's face as he spoke, and revealed all its lines to Eustacia. He was looking suspiciously at her. That Venn's keen eye had discerned what Yeobright's feeble vision had not—a man in the act of withdrawing from Eustacia's side—was within the limits of the probable.

If Eustacia had been able to follow the reddleman she would soon have found striking confirmation of her thought. No sooner had Clym given her his arm and led her off the scene than the reddleman turned back from the beaten track towards East Egdon, whither he had been strolling merely to accompany Clym in his walk, Diggory's van being again in the neighborhood. Stretching out his long legs he crossed the pathless portion of the heath somewhat in the direction which Wildevé had taken. Only a man accustomed to nocturnal rambles could at this hour have descended those shaggy slopes with Venn's velocity without falling headlong into a pit, or snapping off his leg by jamming his foot into some rabbit-burrow. But Venn went on without much inconvenience to

himself, and the course of his scamper was towards the Quiet Woman Inn. This place he reached in about half an hour, and he was well aware that no person who had been near Throope Corner when he started could have got down here before him.

The lonely inn was not yet closed, though scarcely an individual was there, the business done being chiefly with travelers who passed the inn on long journeys, and these had now gone on their way. Venn went to the public room, called for a mug of ale, and inquired of the maid in an indifferent tone if Mr Wildeve was at home.

Thomasin sat in an inner room and heard Venn's voice. When customers were present she seldom showed herself, owing to her inherent dislike for the business, but perceiving that no one else was there tonight she came out.

"He is not at home yet, Diggory," she said pleasantly. "But I expected him sooner. He has been to East Egdon to buy a horse."

"Did he wear a white wideawake?"

"Yes."

"Then I saw him at Throope Corner, leading one home," said Venn dryly. "A beauty, with a white face and a mane as black as night. He will soon be here, no doubt." Rising and looking for a moment at the pure, sweet face of Thomasin, over which a shadow of sadness had passed since the time when he had last seen her, he ventured to add, "Mr Wildeve seems to be often away at this time."

"O yes," cried Thomasin in what was intended to be a tone of gaiety. "Husbands will play the truant, you know. I wish you could tell me of some secret plan that would help me to keep him home at my will in the evenings."

"I will consider if I know of one," replied Venn in that same light tone which meant no lightness. And then he bowed in a manner of his own invention and moved to go. Thomasin offered him her hand, and without a sigh, though with food for many, the reddleman went out.

When Wildeve returned, a quarter of an hour later, Thomasin said simply, and in the abashed manner usual with her now, "Where is the horse, Damon?"

"O, I have not bought it, after all. The man asks too much."

"But somebody saw you at Throope Corner leading it home—a beauty, with a white face and a mane as black as night."

"Ah!" said Wildeve, fixing his eyes upon her, "who told you that?"

"Venn, the reddleman."

The expression of Wildeve's face became curiously condensed. "That is a mistake—it must have been some one else," he said slowly and testily, for he perceived that Venn's counter-moves had begun again.

IV ROUGH COERCION IS EMPLOYED

THOSE words of Thomasin, which seemed so little, but meant so much, remained in the ears of Diggory Venn "Help me to keep him home in the evenings"

On this occasion Venn had arrived on Egdon Heath only to cross to the other side he had no further connection with the interests of the Yeobright family, and he had a business of his own to attend to Yet he suddenly began to feel himself drifting into the old track of maneuvering on Thomasin's account

He sat in his van and considered From Thomasin's words and manner he had plainly gathered that Wildeve neglected her For whom could he neglect her if not for Eustacia? Yet it was scarcely credible that things had come to such a head as to indicate that Eustacia systematically encouraged him Venn resolved to reconnoiter somewhat carefully the lonely path which led across the hills from Wildeve's dwelling to Clym's house at Alderworth

At this time, as has been seen, Wildeve was quite innocent of any predetermined act of intrigue, and except at the dance on the green he had not once met Eustacia since her marriage But that the spirit of intrigue was in him had been shown by a recent romantic habit of his a habit of going out after dark and strolling towards Alderworth, there looking at the moon and stars, looking at Eustacia's house, and walking back at leisure

Accordingly, when watching on the night after the festival, the reddleman saw him ascend by the little path, lean over the front gate of Clym's garden, sigh, and turn to go back again It was plain that Wildeve's intrigue was rather ideal than real Venn retreated before him down the hill to a place where the path was merely a deep groove between the heather, here he mysteriously bent over the ground for a few minutes, and retired When Wildeve came on to that spot his ankle was caught by something, and he fell headlong

As soon as he had recovered the power of respiration he sat up and listened There was not a sound in the gloom beyond the spiritless stir of the summer wind Feeling about for the obstacle which had flung him down, he discovered that two tufts of heath had been tied together across the path, forming a loop, which to a traveler was certain overthrow Wildeve pulled off the string that bound them, and went on with tolerable quickness On reaching home he found the cord to be of a reddish color It was just what he had expected

Although his weaknesses were not specially those akin to physical fear, this species of coup-de-Jarnac from one he knew too well troubled the mind of Wildeve But his movements were unaltered thereby A night or two later he again went up the hill to Alderworth, taking the precaution of keeping out of the path The sense that he was watched, that craft was employed to circumvent his errant tastes, added piquancy to a journey so entirely sentimental, so long as the danger was of no fearful sort He imagined that Venn and Mrs Yeobright were in league and felt that there was a certain legitimacy in combating such a coalition

The heath appeared tonight to be totally deserted, and Wildeve, after look

ing over Eustacia's garden gate for some little time, with a cigar in his mouth, was tempted by the fascination that emotional smuggling had for his nature to advance towards the window, which was not quite closed, the blind being only partly drawn down. He could see into the room, and Eustacia was sitting there alone. Wildeva contemplated her for a minute, and then retreating into the heath beat the ferns lightly, whereupon moths flew out alarmed. Securing one, he returned to the window, and holding the moth to the chink, opened his hand. The moth made towards the candle upon Eustacia's table, hovered round it two or three times, and flew into the flame.

Eustacia started up. This had been a well-known signal in old times when Wildeva had used to come secretly wooing to Mistover. She at once knew that Wildeva was outside, but before she could consider what to do her husband came in from upstairs. Eustacia's face burnt crimson at the unexpected collision of incidents, and filled it with an animation that it too frequently lacked.

"You have a very high color, dearest," said Yeobright, when he came close enough to see it. "Your appearance would be no worse if it were always so."

"I am warm," said Eustacia. "I think I will go into the air for a few minutes."

"Shall I go with you?"

"O no, I am only going to the gate."

She arose, but before she had time to get out of the room a loud rapping began upon the front door.

"I'll go—I'll go," said Eustacia in an unusually quick tone for her, and she glanced eagerly towards the window whence the moth had flown, but nothing appeared there.

"You had better not at this time of the evening," he said. Clym stepped before her into the passage, and Eustacia waited, her somnolent manner covering her inner heat and agitation.

She listened, and Clym opened the door. No words were uttered outside, and presently he closed it and came back, saying, "Nobody was there. I wonder what that could have meant?"

He was left to wonder during the rest of the evening, for no explanation offered itself, and Eustacia said nothing, the additional fact that she knew of only adding more mystery to the performance.

Meanwhile a little drama had been acted outside which saved Eustacia from all possibility of compromising herself that evening at least. Whilst he had been preparing his moth-signal another person had come behind him up to the gate. This man, who carried a gun in his hand, looked on for a moment at the other's operation by the window, walked up to the house, knocked at the door, and then vanished round the corner and over the hedge.

"Damn him!" said Wildeva. "He has been watching me again."

As his signal had been rendered futile by this uproarious rapping, Wildeva withdrew, passed out at the gate, and walked quickly down the path without thinking of anything except getting away unnoticed. Half-way down the hill, the path ran near a knot of stunted hollies, which in the general darkness of the scene stood as the pupil in a black eye. When Wildeva reached this point

a report startled his ear, and a few spent gunshots fell among the leaves around him

There was no doubt that he himself was the cause of that gun's discharge, and he rushed into the clump of hollies, beating the bushes furiously with his stick, but nobody was there. This attack was a more serious matter than the last, and it was some time before Wildeve recovered his equanimity. A new and most unpleasant system of menace had begun, and the intent appeared to be to do him grievous bodily harm. Wildeve had looked upon Venn's first attempt as a species of horse-play, which the reddleman had indulged in for want of knowing better, but now the boundary line was passed which divides the annoying from the perilous.

Had Wildeve known how thoroughly in earnest Venn had become he might have been still more alarmed. The reddleman had been almost exasperated by the sight of Wildeve outside Clym's house, and he was prepared to go to any lengths short of absolutely shooting him, to terrify the young innkeeper out of his recalcitrant impulses. The doubtful legitimacy of such rough coercion did not disturb the mind of Venn. It troubles few such minds in such cases, and sometimes this is not to be regretted. From the impeachment of Strafford to Farmer Lynch's short way with the scamps of Virginia there have been many triumphs of justice which are mockeries of law.

About half a mile below Clym's secluded dwelling lay a hamlet where lived one of the two constables who preserved the peace in the parish of Alderworth, and Wildeve went straight to the constable's cottage. Almost the first thing that he saw on opening the door was the constable's truncheon hanging to a nail, as if to assure him that there were the means to his purpose. On inquiry, however, of the constable's wife he learnt that the constable was not at home. Wildeve said he would wait.

The minutes ticked on, and the constable did not arrive. Wildeve cooled down from his state of high indignation to a restless dissatisfaction with himself, the scene, the constable's wife, and the whole set of circumstances. He arose and left the house. Altogether, the experience of that evening had had a cooling, not to say a chilling, effect on misdirected tenderness, and Wildeve was in no mood to ascend again to Alderworth after nightfall in hope of a stray glance from Eustacia.

Thus far the reddleman had been tolerably successful in his rude contrivances for keeping down Wildeve's inclination to rove in the evening. He had nipped in the bud the possible meeting between Eustacia and her old lover this very night. But he had not anticipated that the tendency of his action would be to divert Wildeve's movement rather than to stop it. The gambling with the guineas had not conduced to make him a welcome guest to Clym, but to call upon his wife's relative was natural, and he was determined to see Eustacia. It was necessary to choose some less untoward hour than ten o'clock at night. "Since it is unsafe to go in the evening," he said, "I will go by day."

Meanwhile Venn had left the heath and gone to call upon Mrs. Yeobright, with whom he had been on friendly terms since she had learnt what a providential counter-move he had made towards the restitution of the family guineas. She wondered at the lateness of his call, but had no objection to see him.

He gave her a full account of Clym's affliction, and of the state in which he was living, then, referring to Thomasin, touched gently upon the apparent sadness of her days "Now, ma'am, depend upon it," he said, "you couldn't do a better thing for either of 'em than to make yourself at home in their houses, even if there should be a little rebuff at first"

"Both she and my son disobeyed me in marrying, therefore I have no interest in their households Their troubles are of their own making" Mrs Yeobright tried to speak severely, but the account of her son's state had moved her more than she cared to show

"Your visits would make Wildeve walk straighter than he is inclined to do, and might prevent unhappiness up the hill"

"What do you mean?"

"I saw something tonight up there which I didn't like at all I wish your son's house and Mr Wildeve's were a hundred miles apart instead of two or three"

"Then there was an understanding between him and Clym's wife when he made a fool of Thomasin!"

"We'll hope there's no understanding now"

"And our hope will probably be very vain O Clym! O Thomasin!"

"There's no harm done yet In fact, I've persuaded Wildeve to mind his own business"

"How?"

"O, not by talking—by a plan of mine called the silent system"

"I hope you'll succeed"

"I shall if you help me by calling and making friends with your son You'll have a chance then of using your eyes"

"Well, since it has come to this," said Mrs Yeobright sadly, "I will own to you, reddleman, that I thought of going I should be much happier if we were reconciled The marriage is unalterable, my life may be cut short, and I should wish to die in peace He is my only son, and since sons are made of such stuff I am not sorry I have no other As for Thomasin, I never expected much from her, and she has not disappointed me But I forgave her long ago, and I forgive him now I'll go"

At this very time of the reddleman's conversation with Mrs Yeobright at Blooms-End another conversation on the same subject was languidly proceeding at Alderworth

All the day Clym had borne himself as if his mind were too full of its own matter to allow him to care about outward things, and his words now showed what had occupied his thoughts It was just after the mysterious knocking that he began the theme "Since I have been away today, Eustacia, I have considered that something must be done to heal up this ghastly breach between my dear mother and myself It troubles me"

"What do you propose to do?" said Eustacia abstractedly, for she could not clear away from her the excitement caused by Wildeve's recent maneuver for an interview

"You seem to take a very mild interest in what I propose, little or much," said Clym, with tolerable warmth

"You mistake me," she answered, reviving at his reproach "I am only thinking "

"What of?"

"Partly of that moth whose skeleton is getting burnt up in the wick of the candle," she said slowly "But you know I always take an interest in what you say "

"Very well, dear Then I think I must go and call upon her " He went on with tender feeling "It is a thing I am not at all too proud to do, and only a fear that I might irritate her has kept me away so long But I must do something It is wrong in me to allow this sort of thing to go on "

"What have you to blame yourself about?"

"She is getting old, and her life is lonely, and I am her only son "

"She has Thomasin "

"Thomasin is not her daughter, and if she were that would not excuse me But this is beside the point I have made up my mind to go to her, and all I wish to ask you is whether you will do your best to help me—that is, forget the past, and if she shows her willingness to be reconciled, meet her half-way by welcoming her to our house, or by accepting a welcome to hers?"

At first Eustacia closed her lips as if she would rather do anything on the whole globe than what he suggested But the lines of her mouth softened with thought, though not so far as they might have softened, and she said, "I will put nothing in your way, but after what has passed it is asking too much that I go and make advances "

"You never distinctly told me what did pass between you "

"I could not do it then, nor can I now Sometimes more bitterness is sown in five minutes than can be got rid of in a whole life, and that may be the case here " She paused a few moments, and added, "If you had never returned to your native place, Clym, what a blessing it would have been for you! It has altered the destinies of—"

"Three people "

"Five," Eustacia thought, but she kept that in

V THE JOURNEY ACROSS THE HEATH

THURSDAY, the thirty-first of August, was one of a series of days during which snug houses were stifling, and when cool draughts were treats, when cracks appeared in clayey gardens, and were called "earthquakes" by apprehensive children, when loose spokes were discovered in the wheels of carts and carriages, and when stinging insects haunted the air, the earth, and every drop of water that was to be found

In Mrs Yeobright's garden large-leaved plants of a tender kind flagged by ten o'clock in the morning, rhubarb bent downward at eleven, and even stiff cabbages were limp by noon.

It was about eleven o'clock on this day that Mrs Yeobright started across the heath towards her son's house, to do her best in getting reconciled with him and Eustacia, in conformity with her words to the reddleman She had hoped

to be well advanced in her walk before the heat of the day was at its highest, but after setting out she found that this was not to be done. The sun had branded the whole heath with his mark, even the purple heath-flowers having put on a brownness under the dry blazes of the few preceding days. Every valley was filled with air like that of a kiln, and the clean quartz sand of the winter watercourses, which formed summer paths, had undergone a species of incineration since the drought had set in.

In cool, fresh weather Mrs Yeobright would have found no inconvenience in walking to Alderworth, but the present torrid attack made the journey a heavy undertaking for a woman past middle age, and at the end of the third mile she wished that she had hired Fairway to drive her a portion at least of the distance. But from the point at which she had arrived it was as easy to reach Clym's house as to get home again. So she went on, the air around her pulsating silently, and oppressing the earth with lassitude. She looked at the sky overhead, and saw that the sapphirine hue of the zenith in spring and early summer had been replaced by a metallic violet.

Occasionally she came to a spot where independent worlds of ephemerals were passing their time in mad carousal, some in the air, some on the hot ground and vegetation, some in the tepid and stringy water of a nearly dried pool. All the shallower ponds had decreased to a vaporous mud amid which the maggoty shapes of innumerable obscene creatures could be indistinctly seen, heaving and wallowing with enjoyment. Being a woman not disinclined to philosophize she sometimes sat down under her umbrella to rest and to watch their happiness, for a certain hopefulness as to the result of her visit gave ease to her mind, and between important thoughts left it free to dwell on any infinitesimal matter which caught her eyes.

Mrs Yeobright had never before been to her son's house, and its exact position was unknown to her. She tried one ascending path and another, and found that they led her astray. Retracing her steps she came again to an open level, where she perceived at a distance a man at work. She went towards him and inquired the way.

The laborer pointed out the direction and added, "Do you see that furze-cutter, ma'am, going up that footpath yond?"

Mrs Yeobright strained her eyes, and at last said that she did perceive him.

"Well, if you follow him you can make no mistake. He's going to the same place, ma'am."

She followed the figure indicated. He appeared of a russet hue, not more distinguishable from the scene around him than the green caterpillar from the leaf it feeds on. His progress when actually walking was more rapid than Mrs Yeobright's, but she was enabled to keep at an equable distance from him by his habit of stopping whenever he came to a brake of brambles, where he paused awhile. On coming in her turn to each of these spots she found half a dozen long limp brambles which he had cut from the bush during his halt and laid out straight beside the path. They were evidently intended for furze-faggot bonds which he meant to collect on his return.

The silent being who thus occupied himself seemed to be of no more account in life than an insect. He appeared as a mere parasite of the heath, fretting its

surface in his daily labor as a moth frets a garment, entirely engrossed with its products, having no knowledge of anything in the world but fern, furze, heath, lichens, and moss

The furze-cutter was so absorbed in the business of his journey that he never turned his head, and his leather-legged and gauntleted form at length became to her as nothing more than a moving handpost to show her the way Suddenly she was attracted to his individuality by observing peculiarities in his walk It was a gait she had seen somewhere before, and the gait revealed the man to her, as the gait of Ahimaaz in the distant plain made him known to the watchman of the king "His walk is exactly as my husband's used to be," she said, and then the thought burst upon her that the furze-cutter was her son

She was scarcely able to familiarize herself with this strange reality She had been told that Clym was in the habit of cutting furze, but she had supposed that he occupied himself with the labor only at odd times, by way of useful pastime, yet she now beheld him as a furze-cutter and nothing more—wearing the regulation dress of the craft, and thinking the regulation thoughts, to judge by his motions Planning a dozen hasty schemes for at once preserving him and Eustacia from this mode of life, she throbbingly followed the way, and saw him enter his own door

At one side of Clym's house was a knoll, and on the top of the knoll a clump of fir trees so highly thrust up into the sky that their foliage from a distance appeared as a black spot in the air above the crown of the hill On reaching this place Mrs Yeobright felt distressingly agitated, weary, and unwell She ascended, and sat down under their shade to recover herself, and to consider how best to break the ground with Eustacia, so as not to irritate a woman underneath whose apparent indolence lurked passions even stronger and more active than her own

The trees beneath which she sat were singularly battered, rude, and wild, and for a few minutes Mrs Yeobright dismissed thoughts of her own storm-broken and exhausted state to contemplate theirs Not a bough in the nine trees which composed the group but was splintered, lopped, and distorted by the fierce weather that there held them at its mercy whenever it prevailed Some were blasted and split as if by lightning, black stains as from fire marking their sides, while the ground at their feet was strewn with dead fir-needles and heaps of cones blown down in the gales of past years The place was called the Devil's Bellows, and it was only necessary to come there on a March or November night to discover the forcible reasons for that name On the present heated afternoon, when no perceptible wind was blowing, the trees kept up a perpetual moan which one could hardly believe to be caused by the air

Here she sat for twenty minutes or more ere she could summon resolution to go down to the door, her courage being lowered to zero by her physical lassitude To any other person than a mother it might have seemed a little humiliating that she, the elder of the two women, should be the first to make advances But Mrs Yeobright had well considered all that, and she only thought how best to make her visit appear to Eustacia not abject but wise

From her elevated position the exhausted woman could perceive the back roof of the house below, and the garden and the whole enclosure of the little

domicile And now, at the moment of rising, she saw a second man approaching the gate His manner was peculiar, hesitating, and not that of a person come on business or by invitation He surveyed the house with interest, and then walked round and scanned the outer boundary of the garden, as one might have done had it been the birthplace of Shakespeare, the prison of Mary Stuart, or the Château of Hougomont After passing round and again reaching the gate he went in Mrs Yeobright was vexed at this, having reckoned on finding her son and his wife by themselves, but a moment's thought showed her that the presence of an acquaintance would take off the awkwardness of her first appearance in the house, by confining the talk to general matters until she had begun to feel comfortable with them She came down the hill to the gate, and looked into the hot garden

There lay the cat asleep on the bare gravel of the path, as if beds, rugs, and carpets were unendurable The leaves of the hollyhocks hung like half closed umbrellas, the sap almost simmered in the stems, and foliage with a smooth surface glared like metallic mirrors A small apple tree, of the sort called Ratheripe, grew just inside the gate, the only one which thrived in the garden, by reason of the lightness of the soil, and among the fallen apples on the ground beneath were wasps rolling drunk with the juice, or creeping about the little caves in each fruit which they had eaten out before stupefied by its sweetness By the door lay Clym's furze hook and the last handful of faggot-bonds she had seen him gather, they had plainly been thrown down there as he entered the house

VI A CONJUNCTURE, AND ITS RESULT UPON THE PEDESTRIAN

WILDEVE, as has been stated, was determined to visit Eustacia boldly, by day, and on the easy terms of a relation, since the reddleman had spied out and spoilt his walks to her by night The spell that she had thrown over him in the moonlight dance made it impossible for a man having no strong puritan force within him to keep away altogether He merely calculated on meeting her and her husband in an ordinary manner, chatting a little while, and leaving again Every outward sign was to be conventional, but the one great fact would be there to satisfy him he would see her He did not even desire Clym's absence, since it was just possible that Eustacia might resent any situation which could compromise her dignity as a wife, whatever the state of her heart towards him Women were often so

He went accordingly, and it happened that the time of his arrival coincided with that of Mrs Yeobright's pause on the hill near the house When he had looked round the premises in the manner she had noticed he went and knocked at the door There was a few minutes' interval, and then the key turned in the lock, the door opened, and Eustacia herself confronted him

Nobody could have imagined from her bearing now that here stood the woman who had joined with him in the impassioned dance of the week before, unless indeed he could have penetrated below the surface and gauged the real depth of that still stream

"I hope you reached home safely?" said Wildeve

"O yes," she carelessly returned

"And were you not tired the next day? I feared you might be"

"I was rather You need not speak low—nobody will overhear us My small servant is gone on an errand to the village"

"Then Clym is not at home?"

"Yes, he is"

"O! I thought that perhaps you had locked the door because you were alone and were afraid of tramps"

"No—here is my husband"

They had been standing in the entry Closing the front door and turning the key, as before, she threw open the door of the adjoining room and asked him to walk in Wildeve entered, the room appearing to be empty, but as soon as he had advanced a few steps he started On the hearthrug lay Clym asleep Beside him were the leggings, thick boots, leather gloves, and sleeve-waistcoat in which he worked

"You may go in, you will not disturb him," she said, following behind "My reason for fastening the door is that he may not be intruded upon by any chance comer while lying here, if I should be in the garden or upstairs"

"Why is he sleeping there?" said Wildeve in low tones

"He is very weary He went out at half-past four this morning, and has been working ever since He cuts furze because it is the only thing he can do that does not put any strain upon his poor eyes" The contrast between the sleeper's appearance and Wildeve's at this moment was painfully apparent to Eustacia, Wildeve being elegantly dressed in a new summer suit and light hat, and she continued "Ah! you don't know how differently he appeared when I first met him, though it is such a little while ago His hands were as white and soft as mine, and look at them now, how rough and brown they are! His complexion is by nature fair, and that rusty look he has now, all of a color with his leather clothes, is caused by the burning of the sun"

"Why does he go out at all?" Wildeve whispered

"Because he hates to be idle, though what he earns doesn't add much to our exchequer However, he says that when people are living upon their capital they must keep down current expenses by turning a penny where they can"

"The fates have not been kind to you, Eustacia Yeobright"

"I have nothing to thank them for"

"Nor has he—except for their one great gift to him"

"What's that?"

Wildeve looked her in the eyes

Eustacia blushed for the first time that day "Well, I am a questionable gift," she said quietly "I thought you meant the gift of content—which he has, and I have not"

"I can understand content in such a case—though how the outward situation can attract him puzzles me"

"That's because you don't know him He's an enthusiast about ideas, and careless about outward things He often reminds me of the Apostle Paul"

"I am glad to hear that he's so grand in character as that"

"Yes, but the worst of it is that though Paul was excellent as a man in the Bible he would hardly have done in real life"

Their voices had instinctively dropped lower, though at first they had taken no particular care to avoid awakening Clym "Well, if that means that your marriage is a misfortune to you, you know who is to blame," said Wildeve

"The marriage is no misfortune," she said, showing more emotion than had as yet appeared in her "It is simply the accident which has happened since that has been the cause of my ruin I have certainly got thistles for figs in a worldly sense, but how could I tell what time would bring forth?"

"Sometimes, Eustacia, I think it is a judgment upon you You rightly belonged to me, you know, and I had no idea of losing you"

"No, it was not my fault Two could not belong to you, and remember that, before I was aware, you turned aside to another woman It was cruel levity in you to do that I never dreamt of playing such a game on my side till you began it on yours"

"I meant nothing by it," replied Wildeve "It was a mere interlude Men are given to the trick of having a passing fancy for somebody else in the midst of a permanent love, which reasserts itself afterwards just as before On account of your rebellious manner to me I was tempted to go further than I should have done, and when you still would keep playing the same tantalizing part I went further still, and married her" Turning and looking again at the unconscious form of Clym, he murmured, "I am afraid that you don't value your prize, Clym He ought to be happier than I in one thing at least He may know what it is to come down in the world, and to be afflicted with a great personal calamity, but he probably doesn't know what it is to lose the woman he loved"

He is not ungrateful for winning her," whispered Eustacia, "and in that respect he is a good man Many women would go far for such a husband But do I desire unreasonably much in wanting what is called life—music, poetry, passion, war, and all the beating and pulsing that is going on in the great arteries of the world? That was the shape of my youthful dream, but I did not get it Yet I thought I saw the way to it in my Clym"

"And you only married him on that account?"

"There you mistake me I married him because I loved him, but I won't say that I didn't love him partly because I thought I saw a promise of that life in him"

"You have dropped into your old mournful key"

"But I am not going to be depressed," she cried excitedly "I began a new system by going to that dance, and mean to stick to it Clym can sing merrily, why should not I?"

Wildeve looked thoughtfully at her "It is easier to say you will sing than to do it, though if I could I would encourage you in your attempt But as life means nothing to me, without one thing which is now impossible, you will forgive me for not being able to encourage you"

"Damon, what is the matter with you, that you speak like that?" she asked, raising her deep shady eyes to his

"That's a thing I shall never tell plainly, and perhaps if I try to tell you in riddles you will not care to guess them"

Eustacia remained silent for a minute, and she said, "We are in a strange relationship today You mince matters to an uncommon nicety You mean, Damon, that you still love me Well, that gives me sorrow, for I am not made so entirely happy by my marriage that I am willing to spin you for the information, as I ought to do But we have said too much about this Do you mean to wait until my husband is awake?"

"I thought to speak to him, but it is unnecessary Eustacia, if I offend you by not forgetting you, you are right to mention it, but do not talk of spurning"

She did not reply, and they stood looking musingly at Clym as he slept on in that profound sleep which is the result of physical labor carried on in circumstances that wake no nervous fear

"God, how I envy him that sweet sleep!" said Wildeve "I have not slept like that since I was a boy—years and years ago"

While they thus watched him a click at the gate was audible, and a knock came to the door Eustacia went to a window and looked out

Her countenance changed First she became crimson, and then the red subsided till it even partially left her lips

"Shall I go away?" said Wildeve, standing up

"I hardly know"

"Who is it?"

"Mrs Yeobright O, what she said to me that day! I cannot understand this visit—what does she mean? And she suspects that past time of ours"

"I am in your hands If you think she had better not see me here I'll go into the next room"

"Well, yes go"

Wildeve at once withdrew, but before he had been half a minute in the adjoining apartment Eustacia came after him

"No," she said, "we won't have any of this If she comes in she must see you—I have done no wrong But how can I open the door to her, when she dislikes me—wishes to see not me, but her son? I won't open the door!"

Mrs Yeobright knocked again more loudly

"Her knocking will, in all likelihood awaken him," continued Eustacia, "and then he will let her in himself Ah—listen"

They could hear Clym moving in the other room, as if disturbed by the knocking, and he uttered the word "Mother"

"Yes—he is awake—he will go to the door," she said, with a breath of relief "Come this way I have a bad name with her, and you must not be seen Thus I am obliged to act by stealth, not because I do ill, but because others are pleased to say so"

By this time she had taken him to the back door, which was open, disclosing a path leading down the garden "Now, one word, Damon," she remarked as he stepped forth "This is your first visit here, let it be your last We have been hot lovers in our time, but it won't do now Good-bye"

"Good-bye," said Wildeve "I have had all I came for, and I am satisfied"

"What was it?"

"A sight of you Upon my eternal honor I came for no more"

Wildeva kissed his hand to the beautiful girl he addressed, and passed into the garden, where she watched him down the path, over the stile at the end, and into the ferns outside, which brushed his hips as he went along, and became lost in their thickets. When he had quite gone she slowly turned, and directed her attention to the interior of the house.

But it was possible that her presence might not be desired by Clym and his mother at this moment of their first meeting, or that it would be superfluous. At all events, she was in no hurry to meet Mrs Yeobright. She resolved to wait till Clym came to look for her, and glided back into the garden. Here she idly occupied herself for a few minutes, till finding no notice was taken of her she again retraced her steps, advancing to the front entrance, where she listened for voices in the parlor. But hearing none she opened the door and went in. To her astonishment Clym lay precisely as Wildeva and herself had left him, his sleep apparently unbroken. He had been disturbed and made to dream and murmur by the knocking, but he had not awakened. Eustacia hastened to the door, and in spite of her reluctance to open it to a woman who had spoken of her so bitterly, she unfastened it and looked out. Nobody was to be seen. There, by the scraper, lay Clym's hook and the handful of faggot-bonds he had brought home, in front of her were the empty path, the garden gate standing slightly ajar, and, beyond, the great valley of purple heath thrilling silently in the sun. Mrs Yeobright was gone.

Clym's mother was at this time following a path which lay hidden from Eustacia by a shoulder of the hill. Her walk thither from the garden gate had been hasty and determined, as of a woman who was now no less anxious to escape from the scene than she had previously been to enter it. Her eyes were fixed on the ground, within her two sights were graven—that of Clym's hook and brambles at the door, and that of a woman's face at a window. Her lips trembled, becoming unnaturally thin, as she murmured, "'Tis too much—Clym, how can he bear to do it! He is at home, and yet he lets her shut the door against me!"

In her anxiety to get out of the direct view of the house she had diverged from the straightest path homeward, and while looking about to regain it she came upon a little boy gathering whortleberries in a hollow. The boy was Johnny Nunsuch, who had been Eustacia's stoker at the bonfire, and, with the tendency of a minute body to gravitate towards a greater, he began hovering round Mrs Yeobright as soon as she appeared, and trotted on beside her without perceptible consciousness of his act.

Mrs Yeobright spoke to him as one in a mesmeric sleep. "'Tis a long way home, my child, and we shall not get there till evening."

"I shall," said her small companion. "I am going to play marnels afore supper, and we go to supper at six o'clock, because father comes home. Does your father come home at six too?"

"No, he never comes, nor my son either, nor anybody."

"What have made you so down? Have you seen a ooser?"

"I have seen what's worse—a woman's face looking at me through a window pane"

"Is that a bad sight?"

"Yes It is always a bad sight to see a woman looking out at a weary way farer and not letting her in"

"Once when I went to Throope Great Pond to catch effets I seed myself looking up at myself, and I was frightened and jumped back like anything"

"If they had only shown signs of meeting my advances half-way how well it might have been done! But there is no chance Shut out! She must have set him against me Can there be beautiful bodies without hearts inside? I think so I would not have done it against a neighbor's cat on such a fiery day as this!"

"What is it you say?"

"Never again—never! Not even if they send for me!"

"You must be a very curious woman to talk like that"

"O no, not at all," she said, returning to the boy's prattle "Most people who grow up and have children talk as I do When you grow up your mother will talk as I do too"

"I hope she won't, because 'tis very bad to talk nonsense"

"Yes, child, it is nonsense, I suppose Are you not nearly spent with the heat?"

"Yes But not so much as you be"

"How do you know?"

"Your face is white and wet, and your head is hanging-down-like"

"Ah, I am exhausted from inside"

"Why do you, every time you take a step, go like this?" The child in speaking gave to his motion the jerk and limp of an invalid

"Because I have a burden which is more than I can bear"

The little boy remained silently pondering, and they tottered on side by side until more than a quarter of an hour had elapsed, when Mrs Yeobright, whose weakness plainly increased, said to him, "I must sit down here to rest"

When she had seated herself he looked long in her face and said, "How funny you draw your breath—like a lamb when you drive him till he's nearly done for Do you always draw your breath like that?"

"Not always" Her voice was now so low as to be scarcely above a whisper

"You will go to sleep there, I suppose, won't you? You have shut your eyes already"

"No I shall not sleep much till—another day, and then I hope to have a long, long one—very long Now can you tell me if Bottom Pond is dry this summer?"

"Bottom Pond is, but Moreford Pool isn't, because he is deep, and is never dry—'tis just over there"

"Is the water clear?"

"Yes, middling—except where the heath-croppers walk into it"

"Then, take this, and go as fast as you can, and dip me up the clearest you can find I am very faint"

She drew from the small willow reticule that she carried in her hand an

old-fashioned china teacup without a handle, it was one of half a dozen of the same sort lying in the reticule, which she had preserved ever since her childhood, and had brought with her today as a small present for Clym and Eustacia

The boy started on his errand, and soon came back with the water, such as it was Mrs Yeobright attempted to drink, but it was so warm as to give her nausea, and she threw it away Afterwards she still remained sitting, with her eyes closed

The boy waited, played near her, caught several of the little brown butterflies which abounded, and then said as he waited again, "I like going on better than biding still Will you soon start again?"

"I don't know"

"I wish I might go on by myself," he resumed, fearing, apparently, that he was to be pressed into some unpleasant service "Do you want me any more, please?"

Mrs Yeobright made no reply

"What shall I tell mother?" the boy continued

"Tell her you have seen a broken-hearted woman cast off by her son"

Before quite leaving her he threw upon her face a wistful glance, as if he had misgivings on the generosity of forsaking her thus He gazed into her face in a vague, wondering manner, like that of one examining some strange old manuscript, the key to whose characters is undiscoverable He was not so young as to be absolutely without a sense that sympathy was demanded, he was not old enough to be free from the terror felt in childhood at beholding misery in adult quarters hitherto deemed impregnable, and whether she were in a position to cause trouble or to suffer from it, whether she and her affliction were something to pity or something to fear, it was beyond him to decide He lowered his eyes and went on without another word Before he had gone half a mile he had forgotten all about her, except that she was a woman who had sat down to rest

Mrs Yeobright's exertions, physical and emotional, had well nigh prostrated her, but she continued to creep along in short stages with long breaks between The sun had now got far to the west of south and stood directly in her face, like some merciless incendiary, brand in hand, waiting to consume her With the departure of the boy all visible animation disappeared from the landscape, though the intermittent husky notes of the male grasshoppers from every tuft of furze were enough to show that amid the prostration of the larger animal species an unseen insect world was busy in all the fullness of life

At length she reached a slope about two thirds of the whole distance from Alderworth to her own home, where a little patch of shepherd's thyme intruded upon the path, and she sat down upon the perfumed mat it formed there In front of her a colony of ants had established a thoroughfare across the way, where they toiled a never-ending and heavy-laden throng To look down upon them was like observing a city street from the top of a tower She remembered that this bustle of ants had been in progress for years at the same spot—doubtless those of the old times were the ancestors of these which walked there now She leant back to obtain more thorough rest, and the

soft eastern portion of the sky was as great a relief to her eyes as the thyme was to her head. While she looked a heron arose on that side of the sky and flew on with his face towards the sun. He had come dripping wet from some pool in the valleys, and as he flew the edges and lining of his wings, his thighs, and his breast were so caught by the bright sunbeams that he appeared as if formed of burnished silver. Up in the zenith where he was seemed a free and happy place, away from all contact with the earthly ball to which she was pinioned, and she wished that she could arise uncrushed from its surface and fly as he flew then.

But, being a mother, it was inevitable that she should soon cease to ruminate upon her own condition. Had the track of her next thought been marked by a streak in the air, like the path of a meteor, it would have shown a direction contrary to the heron's, and have descended to the eastward upon the roof of Clym's house.

VII THE TRAGIC MEETING OF TWO OLD FRIENDS

HE IN the meantime had aroused himself from sleep, sat up, and looked around. Eustacia was sitting in a chair hard by him, and though she held a book in her hand she had not looked into it for some time.

"Well, indeed!" said Clym, brushing his eyes with his hands. "How soundly I have slept! I have had such a tremendous dream, too, one I shall never forget."

"I thought you had been dreaming," said she.

"Yes. It was about my mother. I dreamt that I took you to her house to make up differences, and when we got there we couldn't get in, though she kept on crying to us for help. However, dreams are dreams. What o'clock is it, Eustacia?"

"Half past two."

"So late, is it? I didn't mean to stay so long. By the time I have had some thing to eat it will be after three."

"Ann is not come back from the village, and I thought I would let you sleep on till she returned."

Clym went to the window and looked out. Presently he said, musingly, "Week after week passes, and yet mother does not come. I thought I should have heard something from her long before this."

Misgiving, regret, fear, resolution, ran their swift course of expression in Eustacia's dark eyes. She was face to face with a monstrous difficulty, and she resolved to get free of it by postponement.

"I must certainly go to Blooms-End soon," he continued, "and I think I had better go alone." He picked up his leggings and gloves, threw them down again, and added, "As dinner will be so late today I will not go back to the heath, but work in the garden till the evening, and then, when it will be cooler, I will walk to Blooms-End. I am quite sure that if I make a little advance mother will be willing to forget all. It will be rather late before I can get home, as I shall not be able to do the distance either way in less than an

hour and a half But you will not mind for one evening dear? What are you thinking of to make you look so abstracted?"

"I cannot tell you," she said heavily "I wish we didn't live here, Clym The world seems all wrong in this place"

"Well—if we make it so I wonder if Thomasin has been to Blooms-End lately I hope so But probably not, as she is, I believe, expecting to be confined in a month or so I wish I had thought of that before Poor mother must indeed be very lonely"

"I don't like you going tonight"

"Why not tonight?"

"Something may be said which will terribly injure me"

"My mother is not vindictive," said Clym, his color faintly rising

"But I wish you would not go," Eustacia repeated in a low tone "If you agree not to go tonight I promise to go myself to her house tomorrow, and make it up with her, and wait till you fetch me"

"Why do you want to do that at this particular time, when at every previous time that I have proposed it you have refused?"

"I cannot explain further than that I should like to see her alone before you go," she answered, with an impatient move of her head, and looking at him with an anxiety more frequently seen upon those of a sanguine temperament than upon such as herself

"Well, it is very odd that just when I had decided to go myself you should want to do what I proposed long ago If I wait for you to go tomorrow another day will be lost, and I know I shall be unable to rest another night without having been I want to get this settled, and will You must visit her afterwards it will be all the same"

"I could even go with you now?"

"You could scarcely walk there and back without a longer rest than I shall take No, not tonight, Eustacia"

"Let it be as you say, then," she replied in the quiet way of one who, though willing to ward off evil consequences by a mild effort, would let events fall out as they might sooner than wrestle hard to direct them

Clym then went into the garden, and a thoughtful languor stole over Eustacia for the remainder of the afternoon, which her husband attributed to the heat of the weather

In the evening he set out on the journey Although the heat of summer was yet intense the days had considerably shortened, and before he had advanced a mile on his way all the heath purples, browns, and greens had merged in a uniform dress without airiness or gradation, and broken only by touches of white where the little heaps of clean quartz sand showed the entrance to a rabbit-burrow, or where the white flints of a footpath lay like a thread over the slopes In almost every one of the isolated and stunted thorns which grew here and there a night-hawk revealed his presence by whirring like the clack of a mill as long as he could hold his breath, then stopping, flapping his wings, wheeling round the bush, alighting, and after a silent interval of listening beginning to whirr again At each brushing of Clym's feet white miller-moths flew into the air just high enough to catch upon their dusty wings the mel-

lowed light from the west, which now shone across the depressions and levels of the ground without falling thereon to light them up

Yeobright walked on amid this quiet scene with a hope that all would soon be well. At length he came to a spot where a soft perfume was wafted across his path, and he stood still for a moment to inhale the familiar scent. It was the place at which, four hours earlier, his mother had sat down exhausted on the knoll covered with shepherd's-thyme. While he stood a sound between a breathing and a moan suddenly reached his ears.

He looked to where the sound came from, but nothing appeared there save the verge of the hillock stretching against the sky in an unbroken line. He moved a few steps in that direction, and now he perceived a recumbent figure almost close at his feet.

Among the different possibilities as to the person's individuality there did not for a moment occur to Yeobright that it might be one of his own family. Sometimes furze-cutters had been known to sleep out of doors at these times, to save a long journey homeward and back again, but Clym remembered the moan and looked closer, and saw that the form was feminine, and a distress came over him like cold air from a cave. But he was not absolutely certain that the woman was his mother till he stooped and beheld her face, pallid, and with closed eyes.

His breath went, as it were, out of his body, and the cry of anguish which would have escaped him died upon his lips. During the momentary interval that elapsed before he became conscious that something must be done all sense of time and place left him, and it seemed as if he and his mother were as when he was a child with her many years ago on this heath at hours similar to the present. Then he awoke to activity, and bending yet lower he found that she still breathed, and that her breath though feeble was regular, except when disturbed by an occasional gasp.

"O, what is it! Mother, are you very ill—you are not dying?" he cried, pressing his lips to her face. "I am your Clym. How did you come here? What does it all mean?"

At that moment the chasm in their lives which his love for Eustacia had caused was not remembered by Yeobright, and to him the present joined continuously with that friendly past that had been their experience before the division.

She moved her lips, appeared to know him, but could not speak, and then Clym strove to consider how best to move her, as it would be necessary to get her away from the spot before the dews were intense. He was able-bodied, and his mother was thin. He clasped his arms round her, lifted her a little, and said, "Does that hurt you?"

She shook her head, and he lifted her up, then, at a slow pace, went onward with his load. The air was now completely cool, but whenever he passed over a sandy patch of ground uncarpeted with vegetation there was reflected from its surface into his face the heat which it had imbibed during the day. At the beginning of his undertaking he had thought but little of the distance which yet would have to be traversed before Blooms End could be reached, but though he had slept that afternoon he soon began to feel the weight of

his burden. Thus he proceeded, like Aeneas with his father, the bats circling round his head, nightjars flapping their wings within a yard of his face, and not a human being within call.

While he was yet nearly a mile from the house his mother exhibited signs of restlessness under the constraint of being borne along, as if his arms were irksome to her. He lowered her upon his knees and looked around. The point they had now reached, though far from any road, was not more than a mile from the Blooms-End cottages occupied by Fairway, Sam, Humphrey, and the Cantles. Moreover, fifty yards off stood a hut, built of clods and covered with thin turves, but now entirely disused. The simple outline of the lonely shed was visible, and thither he determined to direct his steps. As soon as he arrived he laid her down carefully by the entrance, and then ran and cut with his pocket-knife an armful of the driest fern. Spreading this within the shed, which was entirely open on one side, he placed his mother thereon. Then he ran with all his might towards the dwelling of Fairway.

Nearly a quarter of an hour had passed, disturbed only by the broken breathing of the sufferer, when moving figures began to animate the line between heath and sky. In a few moments Clym arrived with Fairway, Humphrey, and Susan Nunsuch, Olly Dowden, who had chanced to be at Fairway's, Christian and Grandfer Cante following helter skelter behind. They had brought a lantern and matches, water, a pillow, and a few other articles which had occurred to their minds in the hurry of the moment. Sam had been dispatched back again for brandy, and a boy brought Fairway's pony, upon which he rode off to the nearest medical man, with directions to call at Wildeve's on his way, and inform Thomasin that her aunt was unwell.

Sam and the brandy soon arrived, and it was administered by the light of the lantern, after which she became sufficiently conscious to signify by signs that something was wrong with her foot. Olly Dowden at length understood her meaning, and examined the foot indicated. It was swollen and red. Even as they watched the red began to assume a more livid color, in the midst of which appeared a scarlet speck, smaller than a pea, and it was found to consist of a drop of blood, which rose above the smooth flesh of her ankle in a hemisphere.

"I know what it is," cried Sam. "She has been stung by an adder!"

"Yes," said Clym instantly. "I remember when I was a child seeing just such a bite. O, my poor mother!"

"It was my father who was bit," said Sam. "And there's only one way to cure it. You must rub the place with the fat of other adders, and the only way to get that is by frying them. That's what they did for him."

"'Tis an old remedy," said Clym distractedly, "and I have doubts about it. But we can do nothing else till the doctor comes."

"'Tis a sure cure," said Olly Dowden, with emphasis. "I've used it when I used to go out nursing."

"Then we must pray for daylight, to catch them," said Clym gloomily.

"I will see what I can do," said Sam.

He took a green hazel which he had used as a walking-stick, split it at the end, inserted a small pebble, and with the lantern in his hand went out into

the heath Clym had by this time lit a small fire, and dispatched Susan Nunsuch for a frying pan. Before she had returned Sam came in with three adders, one briskly coiling and uncoiling in the cleft of the stick, and the other two hanging dead across it.

"I have only been able to get one alive and fresh as he ought to be," said Sam. "These limp ones are two I killed today at work, but as they don't die till the sun goes down they can't be very stale meat."

The live adder regarded the assembled group with a sinister look in its small black eye, and the beautiful brown and jet pattern on its back seemed to intensify with indignation. Mrs. Yeobright saw the creature, and the creature saw her, she quivered throughout, and averted her eyes.

"Look at that," murmured Chistian Cantle. "Neighbors, how do we know but that something of the old serpent in God's garden, that gied the apple to the young woman with no clothes, lives on in adders and snakes still? Look at his eye—for all the world like a villainous sort of black currant. 'Tis to be hoped he can't ill wish us! There's folks in heath who've been overlooked already. I will never kill another adder as long as I live."

"Well, 'tis right to be afraid of things, if folks can't help it," said Grandfer Cantle. "'Twould have saved me many a brave danger in my time."

"I fancy I heard something outside the shed," said Christian. "I wish troubles would come in the daytime, for then a man could show his courage, and hardly beg for mercy of the most broomstick old woman he should see, if he was a brave man, and able to run out of her sight!"

"Even such an ignorant fellow as I should know better than do that," said Sam.

"Well, there's calamities where we least expect it, whether or no. Neighbors, if Mrs. Yeobright were to die, d'ye think we should be took up and tried for the manslaughter of a woman?"

"No, they couldn't bring it in that," said Sam, "unless they could prove we had been poachers at some time of our lives. But she'll fetch round."

"Now, if I had been stung by ten adders I should hardly have lost a day's work for't," said Grandfer Cantle. "Such is my spirit when I am on my mettle. But perhaps 'tis natural in a man trained for war. Yes, I've gone through a good deal, but nothing ever came amiss to me after I joined the Locals in four." He shook his head and smiled at a mental picture of himself in uniform. "I was always first in the most gallantest scrapes in my younger days!"

"I suppose that was because they always used to put the biggest fool afore," said Fairway from the fire, beside which he knelt, blowing it with his breath.

"D'ye think so, Timothy?" said Grandfer Cantle, coming forward to Fairway's side, with sudden depression in his face. "Then a man may feel for years that he is good solid company, and be wrong about himself after all?"

"Never mind that question, Grandfer. Stir your stumps and get some more sticks. 'Tis very nonsense of an old man to prattle so when life and death's in mangling."

"Yes, yes," said Grandfer Cantle, with melancholy conviction. "Well, this is a bad night altogether for them that have done well in their time, and if

I were ever such a dab at the hautboy or tenor viol, I shouldn't have the heart to play tunes upon 'em now."

Susan now arrived with the frying-pan, when the live adder was killed and the heads of the three taken off. The remainders, being cut into lengths and split open, were tossed into the pan, which began hissing and crackling over the fire. Soon a rill of clear oil trickled from the carcasses, whereupon Clym dipped the corner of his handkerchief into the liquid and anointed the wound.

VIII EUSTACIA HEARS OF GOOD FORTUNE AND BEHOLDS EVIL

IN THE meantime Eustacia, left alone in her cottage at Alderworth, had become considerably depressed by the posture of affairs. The consequences which might result from Clym's discovery that his mother had been turned from his door that day were likely to be disagreeable, and this was a quality in events which she hated as much as the dreadful

To be left to pass the evening by herself was irksome to her at any time, and this evening it was more irksome than usual by reason of the excitement of the past hours. The two visits had stirred her into restlessness. She was not wrought to any great pitch of uneasiness by the probability of appearing in 'an ill light in the discussion between Clym and his mother, but she was wrought to vexation, and her slumbering activities were quickened to the extent of wishing that she had opened the door. She had certainly believed that Clym was awake, and the excuse would be an honest one as far as it went, but nothing could save her from censure in refusing to answer at the first knock. Yet, instead of blaming herself for the issue she laid the fault upon the shoulders of some indistinct, colossal Prince of the World, who had framed her situation and ruled her lot.

At this time of the year it was pleasanter to walk by night than by day, and when Clym had been absent about an hour she suddenly resolved to go out in the direction of Blooms-End, on the chance of meeting him on his return. When she reached the garden gate she heard wheels approaching, and looking round beheld her grandfather coming up in his car.

"I can't stay a minute, thank ye," he answered to her greeting. "I am driving to East Egdon, but I came round here just to tell you the news. Perhaps you have heard—about Mr. Wildeve's fortune?"

"No," said Eustacia blankly.

"Well, he has come into a fortune of eleven thousand pounds—uncle died in Canada, just after hearing that all his family, whom he was sending home, had gone to the bottom in the *Cassiopeia*, so Wildeve has come into every thing, without in the least expecting it."

Eustacia stood motionless awhile. "How long has he known of this?" she asked.

"Well, it was known to him this morning early, for I knew it at ten o'clock, when Charley came back. Now, he is what I call a lucky man. What a fool you were, Eustacia!"

"In what way?" she said, lifting her eyes in apparent calmness.

"Why, in not sticking to him when you had him "

"Had him, indeed!"

"I did not know there had ever been anything between you till lately, and, faith, I should have been hot and strong against it if I had known, but since it seems that there was some sniffing between ye, why the deuce didn't you stick to him?"

Eustacia made no reply, but she looked as if she could say as much upon that subject as he if she chose

"And how is your poor purblind husband?" continued the old man "Not a bad fellow either, as far as he goes "

"He is quite well "

"It is a good thing for his cousin what d'ye-call-her? By George, you ought to have been in that galley, my girl! Now I must drive on Do you want any assistance? What's mine is yours, you know "

"Thank you, grandfather, we are not in want at present," she said coldly "Clym cuts furze, but he does it mostly as a useful pastime, because he can do nothing else "

"He is paid for his pastime, isn't he? Three shillings a hundred, I heard "

"Clym has money," she said, coloring, "but he likes to earn a little "

"Very well, good night " And the captain drove on

When her grandfather was gone Eustacia went on her way mechanically; but her thoughts were no longer concerning her mother-in-law and Clym Wildeve, notwithstanding his complaints against his fate, had been seized upon by destiny and placed in the sunshine once more Eleven thousand pounds! From every Egdon point of view he was a rich man In Eustacia's eyes, too, it was an ample sum—one sufficient to supply those wants of hers which had been stigmatized by Clym in his more austere moods as vain and luxurious Though she was no lover of money she loved what money could bring, and the new accessories she imagined around him clothed Wildeve with a great deal of interest She recollected now how quietly well-dressed he had been that morning he had probably put on his newest suit, regardless of damage by briars and thorns And then she thought of his manner towards herself

"O I see it, I see it," she said "How much he wishes he had me now, that he might give me all I desire!"

In recalling the details of his glances and words—at the time scarcely regarded—it became plain to her how greatly they had been dictated by his knowledge of this new event "Had he been a man to bear a jilt ill-will he would have told me of his good fortune in crowing tones, instead of doing that he mentioned not a word, in deference to my misfortunes, and merely implied that he loved me still, as one superior to him "

Wildeve's silence that day on what had happened to him was just the kind of behavior calculated to make an impression on such a woman Those delicate touches of good taste were, in fact, one of the strong points in his demeanor towards the other sex The peculiarity of Wildeve was that, while at one time passionate, upbraiding, and resentful towards a woman, at another he would treat her with such unparalleled grace as to make previous neglect appear as no discourtesy, injury as no insult, interference as a delicate attention,

and the ruin of her honor as excess of chivalry This man, whose admiration today Eustacia had disregarded, whose good wishes she had scarcely taken the trouble to accept, whom she had shown out of the house by the back door, was the possessor of eleven thousand pounds—a man of fair professional education, and one who had served his articles with a civil engineer

So intent was Eustacia upon Wildeve's fortunes that she forgot how much closer to her own course were those of Clym, and instead of walking on to meet him at once she sat down upon a stone She was disturbed in her reverie by a voice behind, and turning her head beheld the old lover and fortunate inheritor of wealth immediately beside her

She remained sitting, though the fluctuation in her look might have told any man who knew her so well as Wildeve that she was thinking of him

"How did you come here?" she said in her clear, low tone "I thought you were at home"

"I went on to the village after leaving your garden, and now I have come back again that's all Which way are you walking, may I ask?"

She waved her hand in the direction of Blooms-End "I am going to meet my husband I think I may possibly have got into trouble whilst you were with me today"

"How could that be?"

"By not letting in Mrs Yeobright"

"I hope that visit of mine did you no harm"

"None It was not your fault," she said quietly

By this time she had arisen, and they involuntarily sauntered on together, without speaking, for two or three minutes, when Eustacia broke silence by saying, "I assume I must congratulate you"

"On what? O yes, on my eleven thousand pounds, you mean Well, since I didn't get something else, I must be content with getting that"

"You seem very indifferent about it Why didn't you tell me today when you came?" she said in the tone of a neglected person "I heard of it quite by accident"

"I did mean to tell you," said Wildeve "But I—well, I will speak frankly—I did not like to mention it when I saw, Eustacia, that your star was not high The sight of a man lying wearied out with hard work, as your husband lay, made me feel that to brag of my own fortune to you would be greatly out of place Yet, as you stood there beside him, I could not help feeling too that in many respects he was a richer man than I"

At this Eustacia said, with slumbering mischievousness, "What, would you exchange with him—your fortune for me?"

"I certainly would," said Wildeve

"As we are imagining what is impossible and absurd, suppose we change the subject?"

"Very well, and I will tell you of my plans for the future, if you care to hear them I shall permanently invest nine thousand pounds, keep one thousand as ready money, and with the remaining thousand travel for a year or so"

"Travel? What a bright idea! Where will you go to?"

"From here to Paris, where I shall pass the winter and spring Then I shall

go to Italy, Greece, Egypt, and Palestine, before the hot weather comes on. In the summer I shall go to America, and then, by a plan not yet settled, I shall go to Australia and round to India. By that time I shall have begun to have had enough of it. Then I shall probably come back to Paris again, and there I shall stay as long as I can afford to."

"Back to Paris again," she murmured in a voice that was nearly a sigh. She had never once told Wildeve of the Parisian desires which Clym's description had sown in her, yet here was he involuntarily in a position to gratify them. "You think a good deal of Paris?" she added.

"Yes. In my opinion it is the central beauty spot of the world."

"And in mine! And Thomasin will go with you?"

"Yes, if she cares to. She may prefer to stay at home."

"So you will be going about, and I shall be staying here!"

"I suppose you will. But we know whose fault that is."

"I am not blaming you," she said quickly.

"Oh, I thought you were. If ever you should be inclined to blame me, think of a certain evening by Rainbarrow, when you promised to meet me and did not. You sent me a letter, and my heart ached to read that as I hope yours never will. That was one point of divergence. I then did something in haste."

But she is a good woman, and I will say no more."

"I know that the blame was on my side that time," said Eustacia. "But it had not always been so. However, it is my misfortune to be too sudden in feeling. O Damon, don't reproach me any more—I can't bear that."

They went on silently for a distance of a mile and more, when Eustacia said suddenly, "Haven't you come out of your way, Mr. Wildeve?"

"My way is anywhere tonight. I will go with you as far as the hill on which we can see Blooms-End, as it is getting late for you to be alone."

"Don't trouble. I am not obliged to be out at all. I think I would rather you did not accompany me further. This sort of thing would have an odd look if known."

"Very well, I will leave you." He took her hand unexpectedly, and kissed it—for the first time since her marriage. "What light is that on the hill?" he added, as it were to hide the caress.

She looked, and saw a flickering firelight proceeding from the open side of a hovel a little way before them. The hovel which she had hitherto always found empty, seemed to be inhabited now.

"Since you have come so far," said Eustacia, "will you see me safely past that hut? I thought I should have met Clym somewhere about here, but as he doesn't appear I will hasten on and get to Blooms-End before he leaves."

They advanced to the turf-shed, and when they got near it the firelight and the lantern inside showed distinctly enough the form of a woman reclining on a bed of fern, a group of heath men and women standing around her. Eustacia did not recognize Mrs. Yeobright in the reclining figure, nor Clym as one of the standers-by till she came close. Then she quickly pressed her hand upon Wildeve's arm and signified to him to come back from the open side of the shed into the shadow.

"It is my husband and his mother," she whispered in an agitated voice "What can it mean? Will you step forward and tell me?"

Wildeve left her side and went to the back wall of the hut. Presently Eustacia perceived that he was beckoning to her, and she advanced and joined him.

"It is a serious case," said Wildeve.

From their position they could hear what was proceeding inside.

"I cannot think where she could have been going," said Clym to some one. "She had evidently walked a long way, but even when she was able to speak just now she would not tell me where. What do you really think of her?"

"There is a great deal of fear," was gravely answered in a voice which Eustacia recognized as that of the only surgeon in the district. "She has suffered somewhat from the bite of the adder, but it is exhaustion which has overpowered her. My impression is that her walk must have been exceptionally long."

"I used to tell her not to overwalk herself this weather," said Clym, with distress. "Do you think we did well in using the adder's fat?"

"Well, it is a very ancient remedy—the old remedy of the viper-catchers, I believe," replied the doctor. "It is mentioned as an infallible ointment by Hoffman, Mead, and I think the Abbé Fontana. Undoubtedly it was as good a thing as you could do, though I question if some other oils would not have been equally efficacious."

"Come here, come here!" was then rapidly said in soft female tones, and Clym and the doctor could be heard rushing forward from the back part of the shed, where they had been standing.

"O, what is it?" whispered Eustacia.

"'Twas Thomasin who spoke," said Wildeve. "Then they have fetched her. I wonder if I had better go in—yet it might do harm."

For a long time there was utter silence among the group within, and it was broken at last by Clym saying, in an agonized voice, "O doctor, what does it mean?"

The doctor did not reply at once, ultimately he said, "She is sinking fast. Her heart was previously affected, and physical exhaustion has dealt the finishing blow."

Then there was a weeping of women, then waiting, then hushed exclamations, then a strange gasping sound, then a painful stillness.

"It is all over," said the doctor.

Further back in the hut the cotters whispered, "Mrs. Yeobright is dead."

Almost at the same moment the two watchers observed the form of a small old-fashioned child entering at the open side of the shed. Susan Nunsuch, whose boy it was, went forward to the opening and silently beckoned to him to go back.

"I've got something to tell 'ee, mother," he cried in a shrill tone. "That woman asleep there walked along with me today, and she said I was to say that I had seed her, and she was a broken-hearted woman and cast off by her son, and then I came on home."

A confused sob as from a man was heard within, upon which Eustacia

gasped faintly, "That's Clym—I must go to him—yet dare I do it? No come away!"

When they had withdrawn from the neighborhood of the shed she said huskily, "I am to blame for this There is evil in store for me"

"Was she not admitted to your house after all?" Wildevve inquired

"No, and that's where it all lies! O, what shall I do! I shall not intrude upon them I shall go straight home Damon, good bye! I cannot speak to you any more now"

They parted company, and when Eustacia had reached the next hill she looked back A melancholy procession was wending its way by the light of the lantern from the hut towards Blooms End Wildevve was nowhere to be seen

BOOK FIFTH THE DISCOVERY

I "WHEREFORE IS LIGHT GIVEN TO HIM THAT IS IN MISERY"

ONE EVENING, about three weeks after the funeral of Mrs Yeobright, when the silver face of the moon sent a bundle of beams directly upon the floor of Clym's house at Alderworth, a woman came forth from within She reclined over the garden gate as if to refresh herself awhile The pale lunar touches which make beauties of hags lent divinity to this face, already beautiful

She had not long been there when a man came up the road and with some hesitation said to her, "How is he tonight, ma'am, if you please?"

"He is better, though still very unwell, Humphrey," replied Eustacia

"Is he light-headed, ma'am?"

"No He is quite sensible now"

"Do he rave about his mother just the same, poor fellow?" continued Humphrey

"Just as much, though not quite so wildly," she said in a low voice

"It was very unfortunate, ma'am, that the boy Johnny should ever ha' told him his mother's dying words, about her being broken hearted and cast off by her son 'Twas enough to upset any man alive"

Eustacia made no reply beyond that of a slight catch in her breath, as of one who fain would speak but could not, and Humphrey, finding that she was disinclined to say more, went home again

Eustacia turned, entered the house, and ascended to the front bedroom, where a shaded light was burning In the bed lay Clym, pale, haggard, wide awake, tossing to one side and to the other, his eyes lit by a hot light, as if the fire in their pupils were burning up their substance

"Is it you, Eustacia?" he said as she sat down

"Yes, Clym I have been down to the gate The moon is shining beautifully, and there is not a leaf stirring"

"Shining, is it? What's the moon to a man like me? Let it shine—let

anything be, so that I never see another day! Eustacia, I don't know where to look my thoughts go through me like swords O, if any man wants to make himself immortal by painting a picture of wretchedness, let him come here!"

"Why do you say so?"

"I cannot help feeling that I did my best to kill her"

"No, Clym"

"Yes, it was so, it is useless to excuse me! My conduct to her was too hideous—I made no advances, and she could not bring herself to forgive me Now she is dead! If I had only shown myself willing to make it up with her sooner, and we had been friends, and then she had died, it wouldn't be so hard to bear But I never went near her house, so she never came near mine, and didn't know how welcome she would have been—that's what troubles me She did not know I was going to her house that very night, for she was too insensible to understand me If she had only come to see me! I longed that she would But it was not to be"

There escaped from Eustacia one of those shivering sighs which used to shake her like a pestilent blast She had not yet told

But Yeobright was too deeply absorbed in the ramblings incidental to his remorseful state to notice her During his illness he had been continually talking thus Despair had been added to his original grief by the unfortunate disclosure of the boy who had received the last words of Mrs Yeobright—words too bitterly uttered in an hour of misapprehension Then his distress had overwhelmed him, and he longed for death, as a field laborer longs for the shade It was the pitiful sight of a man standing in the very focus of sorrow He continually bewailed his tardy journey to his mother's house, because it was an error which could never be rectified, and insisted that he must have been horribly perverted by some fiend not to have thought before that it was his duty to go to her, since she did not come to him He would ask Eustacia to agree with him in his self-condemnation, and when she, seared inwardly by a secret she dared not tell, declared that she could not give an opinion, he would say, "That's because you didn't know my mother's nature She was always ready to forgive if asked to do so, but I seemed to her to be as an obstinate child, and that made her unyielding Yet not unyielding she was proud and reserved, no more Yes, I can understand why she held out against me so long She was waiting for me I dare say she said a hundred times in her sorrow, 'What a return he makes for all the sacrifices I have made for him!' I never went to her! When I set out to visit her it was too late To think of that is nearly intolerable!"

Sometimes his condition had been one of utter remorse, unsoftened by a single tear of pure sorrow and then he writhed as he lay, fevered far more by thought than by physical ills "If I could only get one assurance that she did not die in a belief that I was resentful," he said one day when in this mood, "it would be better to think of than a hope of heaven But that I cannot do"

"You give yourself up too much to this wearying despair," said Eustacia "Other men's mothers have died"

"That doesn't make the loss of mine less Yet it is less the loss than the

circumstances of the loss I sinned against her, and on that account there is no light for me "

"She sinned against you, I think "

"No she did not I committed the guilt, and may the whole burden be upon my head!"

"I think you might consider twice before you say that," Eustacia replied "Single men have, no doubt, a right to curse themselves as much as they please, but men with wives involve two in the doom they pray down "

"I am in too sorry a state to understand what you are refining on," said the wretched man "Day and night shout at me, 'You have helped to kill her' But in loathing myself I may, I own, be unjust to you, my poor wife Forgive me for it, Eustacia, for I scarcely know what I do "

Eustacia was always anxious to avoid the sight of her husband in such a state as this, which had become as dreadful to her as the trial scene was to Judas Iscariot It brought before her eyes the specter of a worn out woman knocking at a door which she would not open, and she shrank from contemplating it Yet it was better for Yeobright himself when he spoke openly of his sharp regret, for in silence he endured infinitely more, and would sometimes remain so long in a tense, brooding mood, consuming himself by the gnawing of his thought, that it was imperatively necessary to make him talk aloud, that his grief might in some degree expend itself in the effort

Eustacia had not been long indoors after her look at the moonlight when a soft footstep came up to the house, and Thomasin was announced by the woman downstairs

'Ah, Thomasin! Thank you for coming tonight," said Clym when she entered the room "Here am I, you see Such a wretched spectacle am I, that I shrink from being seen by a single friend, and almost from you "

"You must not shrink from me, dear Clym," said Thomasin earnestly, in that sweet voice of hers which came to a sufferer like fresh air into a Black Hole "Nothing in you can ever shock me or drive me away I have been here before, but you don't remember it "

"Yes, I do, I am not delirious, Thomasin, nor have I been so at all Don't you believe that if they say so I am only in great misery at what I have done and that, with the weakness, makes me seem mad But it has not upset my reason Do you think I should remember all about my mother's death if I were out of my mind? No such good luck Two months and a half, Thomasin, the last of her life, did my poor mother live alone, distracted and mourning because of me, yet she was unvisited by me, though I was living only five miles off Two months and a half—seventy-five days did the sun rise and set upon her in that deserted state which a dog didn't deserve! Poor people who had nothing in common with her would have cared for her, and visited her had they known her sickness and loneliness, but I, who should have been all to her, stayed away like a cur If there is any justice in God let Him kill me now He has nearly blinded me, but that is not enough If He would only strike me with more pain I would believe in Him for ever!"

"Hush, hush! O, pray, Clym, don't, don't say it!" implored Thomasin, afrighted into sobs and tears, while Eustacia, on the other side of the room,

though her pale face remained calm, writhed in her chair Clym went on without heeding his cousin

"But I am not worth receiving further proof even of Heaven's reprobation Do you think, Thomasin, that she knew me—that she did not die in that horrid mistaken notion about my not forgiving her, which I can't tell you how she acquired? If you could only assure me of that! Do you think so, Eustacia? Do speak to me"

"I think I can assure you that she knew better at last," said Thomasin The pallid Eustacia said nothing

"Why didn't she come to my house? I would have taken her in and showed her how I loved her in spite of all But she never came, and I didn't go to her, and she died on the heath like an animal kicked out, nobody to help her till it was too late If you could have seen her, Thomasin, as I saw her—a poor dying woman, lying in the dark upon the bare ground, moaning, nobody near, believing she was utterly deserted by all the world, it would have moved you to anguish, it would have moved a brute And this poor woman my mother! No wonder she said to the child, 'You have seen a broken-hearted woman' What a state she must have been brought to, to say that! and who can have done it but I? It is too dreadful to think of, and I wish I could be punished more heavily than I am How long was I what they called out of my senses?"

"A week, I think"

"And then I became calm"

"Yes, for four days"

"And now I have left off being calm"

"But try to be quiet please do, and you will soon be strong If you could remove that impression from your mind—"

"Yes, yes," he said impatiently "But I don't want to get strong What's the use of my getting well? It would be better for me if I die, and it would certainly be better for Eustacia Is Eustacia there?"

"Yes"

"It would be better for you, Eustacia, if I were to die?"

"Don't press such a question, dear Clym"

"Well, it really is but a shadowy supposition, for unfortunately I am going to live I feel myself getting better Thomasin, how long are you going to stay at the inn, now that all this money has come to your husband?"

"Another month or two, probably, until my illness is over We cannot get off till then I think it will be a month or more"

"Yes, yes Of course Ah, Cousin Tamsie, you will get over your trouble—one little month will take you through it, and bring something to console you, but I shall never get over mine, and no consolation will come!"

"Clym, you are unjust to yourself Depend upon it, aunt thought kindly of you. I know that, if she had lived, you would have been reconciled with her"

"But she didn't come to see me, though I asked her, before I married, if she would come Had she come, or had I gone there, she would never have died saying, 'I am a broken-hearted woman, cast off by my son' My door has always been open to her—a welcome here has always awaited her But that she never came to see."

"You had better not talk any more now, Clym," said Eustacia faintly, from the other part of the room, for the scene was growing intolerable to her

"Let me talk to you instead for the little time I shall be here," Thomasin said soothingly "Consider what a one sided way you have of looking at the matter, Clym When she said that to the little boy you had not found her and taken her into your arms, and it might have been uttered in a moment of bitterness It was rather like aunt to say things in haste She sometimes used to speak so to me Though she did not come I am convinced that she thought of coming to see you Do you suppose a man's mother could live two or three months without one forgiving thought? She forgave me, and why should she not have forgiven you?"

"You labored to win her round, I did nothing I, who was going to teach people the higher secrets of happiness, did not know how to keep out of that gross misery which the most untaught are wise enough to avoid"

"How did you get here tonight, Thomasin?" said Eustacia

"Damon set me down at the end of the lane He has driven into the village on business, and he will come and pick me up by-and-by"

Accordingly they soon after heard the noise of wheels Wildevé had come, and was waiting outside with his horse and gig

"Send out and tell him I will be down in two minutes," said Thomasin

"I will run down myself," said Eustacia

She went down Wildevé had alighted, and was standing before the horse's head when Eustacia opened the door He did not turn for a moment, thinking the comer Thomasin Then he looked, started ever so little, and said one word "Well?"

"I have not yet told him," she replied in a whisper

"Then don't do so till he is well—it will be fatal You are ill yourself"

"I am wretched O Damon," she said, bursting into tears, "I—I can't tell you how unhappy I am! I can hardly bear this I can tell nobody of my trouble—nobody knows of it but you"

"Poor girl!" said Wildevé, visibly affected at her distress, and at last led on so far as to take her hand "It is hard, when you have done nothing to deserve it, that you should have got involved in such a web as this You were not made for these sad scenes I am to blame most If I could only have saved you from it all!"

"But, Damon, please pray tell me what I must do? To sit by him hour after hour, and hear him reproach himself as being the cause of her death, and to know that I am the sinner, if any human being is at all, drives me into cold despair I don't know what to do Should I tell him or should I not tell him? I always am asking myself that O, I want to tell him, and yet I am afraid If he finds it out he must surely kill me, for nothing else will be in proportion to his feelings now 'Beware the fury of a patient man' sounds day by day in my ears as I watch him"

"Well, wait till he is better, and trust to chance And when you tell, you must only tell part—for his own sake"

"Which part should I keep back?"

Wildevé paused "That I was in the house at the time," he said in a low tone.

"Yes, it must be concealed, seeing what has been whispered. How much easier are hasty actions than speeches that will excuse them!"

"If he were only to die—" Wildeve murmured

"Do not think of it! I would not buy hope of immunity by so cowardly a desire even if I hated him. Now I am going up to him again. Thomasin bade me tell you she would be down in a few minutes. Good-bye."

She returned, and Thomasin soon appeared. When she was seated in the gig with her husband, and the horse was turning to go off, Wildeve lifted his eyes to the bedroom windows. Looking from one of them, he could discern a pale, tragic face watching him drive away. It was Eustacia's.

II A LURID LIGHT BREAKS IN UPON A DARKENED UNDERSTANDING

CLYM's grief became mitigated by wearing itself out. His strength returned, and a month after the visit of Thomasin he might have been seen walking about the garden. Endurance and despair, equanimity and gloom, the tints of health and the pallor of death, mingled weirdly in his face. He was now unnaturally silent upon all of the past that related to his mother, and though Eustacia knew that he was thinking of it none the less, she was only too glad to escape the topic ever to bring it up anew. When his mind had been weaker his heart had led him to speak out, but reason having now somewhat recovered itself he sank into taciturnity.

One evening when he was thus standing in the garden, abstractedly spudding up a weed with his stick, a bony figure turned the corner of the house and came up to him.

"Christian, isn't it?" said Clym. "I am glad you have found me out. I shall soon want you to go to Blooms-End and assist me in putting the house in order. I suppose it is all locked up as I left it?"

"Yes, Mister Clym."

"Have you dug up the potatoes and other roots?"

"Yes, without a drop o' rain, thank God. But I was coming to tell 'ee of something else which is quite different from what we have lately had in the family. I be sent by the rich gentleman at the Woman, that we used to call the landlord, to tell 'ee that Mrs. Wildeve is doing well of a girl, which was born punctually at one o'clock at noon, or a few minutes more or less, and 'tis said that expecting of this increase is what have kept them there since they came into their money."

"And she is getting on well, you say?"

"Yes, sir. Only Mr. Wildeve is twanky because 'tisn't a boy—that's what they say in the kitchen, but I was not supposed to notice that."

"Christian, now listen to me."

"Yes, sure, Mr. Yeobright."

"Did you see my mother the day before she died?"

"No, I did not."

Yeobright's face expressed disappointment.

"But I seed her the morning of the same day she died"

Clym's look lighted up "That's nearer still to my meaning," he said

"Yes, I know 'twas the same day, for she said, 'I be going to see him Christian, so I shall not want any vegetables brought in for dinner'"

"See whom?"

"See you She was going to your house, you understand"

Yeobright regarded Christian with intense surprise "Why did you never mention this?" he said "Are you sure it was my house she was coming to?"

"O yes I didn't mention it because I've never seed you lately And as she didn't get there it was all nought, and nothing to tell"

"And I have been wondering why she should have walked in the heath on that hot day! Well, did she say what she was coming for? It is a thing, Christian, I am very anxious to know"

"Yes, Mister Clym She didn't say it to me, though I think she did to one here and there"

"Do you know one person to whom she spoke of it?"

"There is one man, please, sir, but I hope you won't mention my name to him, as I have seen him in strange places, particular in dreams One night last summer he glared at me like Famine and Sword, and it made me feel so low that I didn't comb out my few hairs for two days He was standing, as it might be, Mister Yeobright, in the middle of the path to Mistover, and your mother came up, looking as pale—"

"Yes, when was that?"

"Last summer, in my dream"

"Pooh! Who's the man?"

"Diggory, the reddleman He called upon her and sat with her the evening before she set out to see you I hadn't gone home from work when he came up to the gate"

"I must see Venn—I wish I had known it before," said Clym anxiously "I wonder why he has not come to tell me?"

"He went out of Egdon Heath the next day, so would not be likely to know you wanted him"

"Christian," said Clym, "you must go and find Venn I am otherwise engaged, or I would go myself Find him at once, and tell him I want to speak to him"

"I am a good hand at hunting up folk by day," said Christian, looking dubiously round at the declining light, "but as to night-time, never is such a bad hand as I, Mister Yeobright"

"Search the heath when you will, so that you bring him soon Bring him tomorrow, if you can"

Christian then departed The morrow came, but no Venn In the evening Christian arrived, looking very weary He had been searching all day, and had heard nothing of the reddleman

"Inquire as much as you can tomorrow without neglecting your work," said Yeobright "Don't come again till you have found him"

The next day Yeobright set out for the old house at Blooms-End, which, with the garden, was now his own His severe illness had hindered all prepara

tions for his removal thither, but it had become necessary that he should go and overlook its contents, as administrator to his mother's little property, for which purpose he decided to pass the next night on the premises

He journeyed onward, not quickly or decisively, but in the slow walk of one who has been awakened from a stupefying sleep. It was early afternoon when he reached the valley. The expression of the place, the tone of the hour, were precisely those of many such occasions in days gone by, and these antecedent similarities fostered the illusion that she, who was there no longer, would come out to welcome him. The garden gate was locked and the shutters were closed, just as he himself had left them on the evening after the funeral. He unlocked the gate, and found that a spider had already constructed a large web, tying the door to the lintel, on the supposition that it was never to be opened again. When he had entered the house and flung back the shutters he set about his task of overhauling the cupboards and closets, burning papers, and considering how best to arrange the place for Eustacia's reception, until such time as he might be in a position to carry out his long-delayed scheme, should that time ever arrive.

As he surveyed the rooms he felt strongly disinclined for the alterations which would have to be made in the time honored furnishing of his parents and grandparents, to suit Eustacia's modern ideas. The gaunt oak-cased clock, with the picture of the Ascension on the door-panel and the Miraculous Draught of Fishes on the base, his grandmother's corner cupboard with glass door, through which the spotted china was visible, the dumb-waiter, the wooden tea-trays, the hanging fountain with the brass tap—whither would these venerable articles have to be banished?

He noticed that the flowers in the window had died for want of water, and he placed them out upon the ledge, that they might be taken away. While thus engaged he heard footsteps on the gravel without, and somebody knocked at the door.

Yeobright opened it, and Venn was standing before him.

"Good morning," said the reddleman. "Is Mrs. Yeobright at home?"

Yeobright looked upon the ground. "Then you have not seen Christian or any of the Egdon folks?" he said.

"No. I have only just returned after a long stay away. I called here the day before I left."

"And you have heard nothing?"

"Nothing."

"My mother is—dead."

"Dead!" said Venn mechanically.

"Her home now is where I shouldn't mind having mine."

Venn regarded him, and then said, "If I didn't see your face I could never believe your words. Have you been ill?"

"I had an illness."

"Well, the change! When I parted from her a month ago everything seemed to say that she was going to begin a new life."

"And what seemed came true."

"You say right, no doubt Trouble has taught you a deeper vein of talk than mine All I meant was regarding her life here She has died too soon"

"Perhaps through my living too long I have had a bitter experience on that score this last month, Diggory But come in, I have been wanting to see you"

He conducted the reddleman into the large room where the dancing had taken place the previous Christmas, and they sat down in the settle together "There's the cold fireplace, you see," said Clym "When that half-burnt log and those cinders were alight she was alive! Little has been changed here yet I can do nothing My life creeps like a snail"

"How came she to die?" said Venn

Yeobright gave him some particulars of her illness and death, and continued "After this no kind of pain will ever seem more than an indisposition to me—I began saying that I wanted to ask you something, but I stray from subjects like a drunken man I am anxious to know what my mother said to you when she last saw you You talked with her a long time, I think?"

"I talked with her more than half an hour"

"About me?"

"Yes And it must have been on account of what we said that she was on the heath Without question she was coming to see you"

"But why should she come to see me if she felt so bitterly against me? There's the mystery"

"Yet I know she quite forgave you"

"But, Diggory—would a woman who had quite forgiven her son, say, when she felt herself ill on the way to his house, that she was broken-hearted because of his ill-usage? Never!"

"What I know is, that she d.d.n't blame you at all She blamed herself for what had happened, and only herself I had it from her own lips"

"You had it from her lips that I had not ill-treated her and at the same time another had it from her lips that I had ill-treated her? My mother was no impulsive woman who changed her opinion every hour without reason How can it be, Venn, that she should have told such different stories in close succession?"

"I cannot say It is certainly odd, when she had forgiven you, and had forgiven your wife, and was going to see you on purpose to make friends"

"If there was one thing wanting to bewilder me it was this incomprehensible thing! Diggory, if we, who remain alive, were only allowed to hold conversation with the dead—just once, a bare minute, even through a screen of iron bars, as with persons in prison—what we might learn! How many who now ride smiling would hide their heads! And this mystery—I should then be at the bottom of it at once But the grave has for ever shut her in, and how shall it be found out now?"

No reply was returned by his companion, since none could be given, and when Venn left, a few minutes later, Clym had passed from the dullness of sorrow to the fluctuation of carking incertitude

He continued in the same state all the afternoon A bed was made up for him in the same house by a neighbor, that he might not have to return again the next day, and when he retired to rest in the deserted place it was only to

remain awake hour after hour thinking the same thoughts. How to discover a solution to this riddle of death seemed a query of more importance than highest problems of the living. There was housed in his memory a vivid picture of the face of a little boy as he entered the hovel where Clym's mother lay. The round eyes, eager gaze, the piping voice which enunciated the words, had operated like stilettos on his brain.

A visit to the boy suggested itself as a means of gleanings new particulars, though it might be quite unproductive. To probe a child's mind after the lapse of six weeks, not for facts which the child had seen and understood, but to get at those which were in their nature beyond him, did not promise much, yet when every obvious channel is blocked we grope towards the small and obscure. There was nothing else left to do, after that he would allow the enigma to drop into the abyss of undiscoverable things.

It was about daybreak when he had reached this decision, and he at once arose. He locked up the house and went out into the green patch which merged in heather further on. In front of the white garden-palings the path branched into three like a broad-arrow. The road to the right led to the Quiet Woman and its neighborhood, the middle track led to Mistover Knap, the left-hand track led over the hill to another part of Mistover, where the child lived. On inclining into the latter path Yeobright felt a creeping chilliness, familiar enough to most people, and probably caused by the unsunned morning air. In after days he thought of it as a thing of singular significance.

When Yeobright reached the cottage of Susan Nunsuch, the mother of the boy he sought, he found that the inmates were not yet astir. But in upland hamlets the transition from a-bed to abroad is surprisingly swift and easy. There no dense partition of yawns and toilets divides humanity by night from humanity by day. Yeobright tapped at the upper window-sill, which he could reach with his walking-stick, and in three or four minutes the woman came down.

It was not till this moment that Clym recollected her to be the person who had behaved so barbarously to Eustacia. It partly explained the insuavity with which the woman greeted him. Moreover, the boy had been ailing again, and Susan now, as ever since the night when he had been pressed into Eustacia's service at the bonfire, attributed his indispositions to Eustacia's influence as a witch. It was one of those sentiments which lurk like moles underneath the visible surface of manners, and may have been kept alive by Eustacia's entreaty to the captain, at the time that he had intended to prosecute Susan for the pricking in church, to let the matter drop, which he accordingly had done.

Yeobright overcame his repugnance, for Susan had at least borne his mother no ill-will. He asked kindly for the boy, but her manner did not improve.

"I wish to see him," continued Yeobright, with some hesitation, "to ask him if he remembers anything more of his walk with my mother than what he has previously told."

She regarded him in a peculiar and criticising manner. To anybody but a half-blind man it would have said, "You want another of the knocks which have already laid you so low."

She called the boy downstairs, asked Clym to sit down on a stool, and continued, "Now, Johnny, tell Mr Yeobright anything you can call to mind"

'You have not forgotten how you walked with the poor lady on that hot day?' said Clym

"No," said the boy

"And what she said to you?"

The boy repeated the exact words he had used on entering the hut Yeobright rested his elbow on the table and shaded his face with his hand, and the mother looked as if she wondered how a man could want more of what had stung him so deeply

"She was going to Alderworth when you first met her?"

No, she was coming away "

'That can't be "

"Yes, she walked along with me I was coming away, too "

'Then where did you first see her?"

At your house "

'Attend, and speak the truth!' said Clym sternly

Yes, sir, at your house was where I seed her first "

Clym started up, and Susan smiled in an expectant way, which did not embellish her face, it seemed to mean, "Something sinister is coming!"

'What did she do at my house?"

She went and sat under the trees at the Devil's Bellows "

'Good God! this is all news to me!"

'You never told me this before?" said Susan

"No, mother, because I didn't like to tell 'ee I had been so far I was picking black hearts, and they don't grow nearer "

"What did she do then?" said Yeobright

"Looked at a man who came up and went into your house "

"That was myself—a furze cutter, with brambles in his hand "

"No, 'twas not you 'Twas a gentleman You had gone in afore "

"Who was he?"

'I don't know '

"Now tell me what happened next "

'The poor lady went and knocked at your door, and the lady with black hair looked out of the side-window at her "

The boy's mother turned to Clym and said, "This is something you didn't expect?"

Yeobright took no more notice of her than if he had been of stone "Go on, go on," he said hoarsely to the boy

"And when she saw the young lady look out of the window the old lady knocked again, and when nobody came she took up the furze hook and looked at it, and put it down again, and then she looked at the faggot-bonds, and then she went away, and walked across to me, and blowed her breath very hard, like this We walked on together, she and I, and I talked to her and she talked to me a bit, but not much, because she couldn't blow her breath "

"O!" murmured Clym, in a low tone, and bowed his head "Let's have more," he said

"She couldn't talk much, and she couldn't walk, and her face was, O so queer!"

"How was her face?"

"Like yours is now"

The woman looked at Yeobright, and beheld him colorless, in a cold sweat "Isn't there meaning in it?" she sud stealthily "What do you think of her now?"

"Silence!" said Clym fiercely And, turning to the boy, "And then you left her to die?"

"No," said the woman, quickly and angrily "He did not leave her to die! She sent him away Whoever says he forsook her says what's not true"

"Trouble no more about that," answered Clym, with a quivering mouth "What he did is a trifle in comparison with what he saw Door kept shut, did you say? Kept shut, she looking out of window? Good heart of God!—what does it mean?"

The child shrank away from the gaze of his questioner

"He sud so," answered the mother, "and Johnny's a God-fearing boy and tells no lies"

"'Cast off by my son!' No, by my best life, dear mother, it is not so! But by your son's, your son's— May all murderesses get the torment they deserve!'

With these words Yeobright went forth from the little dwelling The pupils of his eyes, fixed steadfastly on blankness, were vaguely lit with an icy shine his mouth had passed into the phase more or less imaginatively rendered in studies of Oedipus The strangest deeds were possible to his mood But they were not possible to his situation Instead of there being before him the pale face of Eustacia, and a masculine shpe unknown, there was only the imperturbable countenance of the heath, which, having defied the cataclysmil onsets of centuries, reduced to insignificance by its seamed and antique features the wildest turmoil of a single man

III EUSTACIA DRESSES HERSELF ON A BLACK MORNING

A CONSCIOUSNESS of a vast impassivity in all which lay around him took possession even of Yeobright in his wild walk towards Alderworth He had once before felt in his own person this overpowering of the fervid by the inanimate, but then it had tended to enervate a passion far sweeter than that which at present pervaded him It was once when he stood parting from Eustacia in the moist still levels beyond the hills

But dismissing all this he went onward again, and came to the front of his house The blinds of Eustacia's bedroom were still closely drawn, for she was no early riser All the life visible was in the shape of a solitary thrush crackling a small snail upon the door-stone for his breakfast, and his tapping seemed a loud noise in the general silence which prevailed, but on going to the door Clym found it unfastened, the young girl who attended upon Eustacia being astr in the back part of the premises Yeobright entered and went straight to his wife's room

The noise of his arrival must have aroused her, for when he opened the door she was standing before the looking glass in her night-dress, the ends of her hair gathered into one hand, with which she was coiling the whole mass round her head, previous to beginning toilette operations. She was not a woman given to speaking first at a meeting, and she allowed Clym to walk across in silence, without turning her head. He came behind her, and she saw his face in the glass. It was ashy, haggard, and terrible. Instead of starting towards him in sorrowful surprise, as even Eustacia, undemonstrative wife as she was, would have done in days before she burdened herself with a secret, she remained motionless, looking at him in the glass. And while she looked, the carmine flush with which warmth and sound sleep had suffused her cheeks and neck, dissolved from view, and the death-like pallor in his face flew across into hers. He was close enough to see this, and the sight instigated his tongue.

"You know what is the matter," he said huskily. "I see it in your face."

Her hand relinquished the rope of hair and dropped to her side, and the pile of tresses, no longer supported, fell from the crown of her head about her shoulders and over the white night gown. She made no reply.

"Speak to me," said Yeobright peremptorily.

The blanching process did not cease in her, and her lips now became as white as her face. She turned to him and said, "Yes, Clym, I'll speak to you. Why do you return so early? Can I do anything for you?"

"Yes, you can listen to me. It seems that my wife is not very well?"

"Why?"

"Your face, my dear, your face. Or perhaps it is the pale morning light which takes your color away? Now I am going to reveal a secret to you. Ha-ha!"

"O, that is ghastly!"

"What?"

"Your laugh."

"There's reason for ghastliness. Eustacia, you have held my happiness in the hollow of your hand, and like a devil you have dashed it down!"

She started back from the dressing-table, retreated a few steps from him, and looked him in the face. "Ah! you think to frighten me," she said, with a slight laugh. "Is it worth while? I am undefended, and alone."

"How extraordinary!"

"What do you mean?"

"As there is ample time I will tell you, though you know well enough I mean that it is extraordinary that you should be alone in my absence. Tell me, now, where is he who was with you on the afternoon of the thirty-first of August? Under the bed? Up the chimney?"

A shudder overcame her and shook the light fabric of her night dress throughout. "I do not remember dates so exactly," she said. "I cannot recollect that anybody was with me besides yourself."

"The day I mean," said Yeobright, his voice growing louder and harsher, "was the day you shut the door against my mother and killed her. O, it is too much—too bad!" He leant over the footpiece of the bedstead for a few moments, with his back towards her, then rising again. "Tell me, tell me! tell

me—do you hear?” he cried, rushing up to her and seizing her by the loose folds of her sleeve

The superstratum of timidity which often overlies those who are daring and defiant at heart had been passed through, and the mettlesome substance of the woman was reached. The red blood inundated her face, previously so pale

“What are you going to do?” she said in a low voice, regarding him with a proud smile. “You will not alarm me by holding on so, but it would be a pity to tear my sleeve”

Instead of letting go he drew her closer to him. “Tell me the particulars of—my mother’s death,” he said in a hard, panting whisper, “or—I’ll—I’ll—”

“Clym,” she answered slowly, “do you think you dare do anything to me that I dare not bear? But before you strike me listen. You will get nothing from me by a blow, even though it should kill me, as it probably will. But perhaps you do not wish me to speak—killing may be all you mean?”

“Kill you! Do you expect it?”

“I do”

“Why?”

“No less degree of rage against me will match your previous grief for her”

“Phew—I shall not kill you,” he said contemptuously, as if under a sudden change of purpose. “I did think of it, but—I shall not. That would be making a martyr of you, and sending you to where she is, and I would keep you away from her till the universe come to an end, if I could”

“I almost wish you would kill me,” said she with gloomy bitterness. “It is with no strong desire, I assure you, that I play the part I have lately played on earth. You are no blessing, my husband”

“You shut the door—you looked out of the window upon her—you had a man in the house with you—you sent her away to die. The inhumanity—the treachery—I will not touch you—stand away from me—and confess every word!”

“Never! I’ll hold my tongue like the very death that I don’t mind meeting, even though I can clear myself of half you believe by speaking. Yes, I will! Who of any dignity would take the trouble to clear cobwebs from a wild man’s mind after such language as this? No, let him go on, and think his narrow thoughts, and run his head into the mire. I have other cares”

“’Tis too much—but I must spare you”

“Poor charity”

“By my wretched soul you sting me, Eustacia! I can keep it up, and hotly too. Now, then, madam, tell me his name!”

“Never, I am resolved”

“How often does he write to you? Where does he put his letters—when does he meet you? Ah, his letters! Do you tell me his name?”

“I do not”

“Then I’ll find it myself” His eye had fallen upon a small desk that stood near, on which she was accustomed to write her letters. He went to it. It was locked

“Unlock this!”

“You have no right to say it. That’s mine”

Without another word he seized the desk and dashed it to the floor. The hinge burst open, and a number of letters tumbled out.

"Stay!" said Eustacia, stepping before him with more excitement than she had hitherto shown.

"Come, come! stand away! I must see them."

She looked at the letters as they lay, checked her feeling, and moved indifferently aside, when he gathered them up, and examined them.

By no stretch of meaning could any but a harmless construction be placed upon a single one of the letters themselves. The solitary exception was an empty envelope directed to her, and the handwriting was Wildeve's. Yeobright held it up. Eustacia was doggedly silent.

"Can you read, madam? Look at this envelope. Doubtless we shall find more soon, and what was inside them. I shall no doubt be gratified by learning in good time what a well finished and full blown adept in a certain trade my lady is."

"Do you say it to me—do you?" she gasped.

He searched further, but found nothing more. "What was in this letter?" he said.

"Ask the writer. Am I your hound that you should talk to me in this way?"

"Do you brave me? do you stand me out, mistress? Answer. Don't look at me with those eyes as if you would bewitch me again! Sooner than that I die. You refuse to answer?"

"I wouldn't tell you after this, if I were as innocent as the sweetest babe in heaven!"

"Which you are not."

"Certainly I am not absolutely," she replied. "I have not done what you suppose, but if to have done no harm at all is the only innocence recognized, I am beyond forgiveness. But I require no help from your conscience."

"You can resist, and resist again! Instead of hating you I could, I think, mourn for and pity you, if you were contrite, and would confess all. Forgive you I never can. I don't speak of your lover—I will give you the benefit of the doubt in that matter, for it only affects me personally. But the other—had you half killed me, had it been that you willfully took the sight away from these feeble eyes of mine, I could have forgiven you. But that's too much for nature!"

"Say no more. I will do without your pity. But I would have saved you from uttering what you will regret."

"I am going away now. I shall leave you."

"You need not go, as I am going myself. You will keep just as far away from me by staying here."

"Call her to mind—think of her—what goodness there was in her. It showed in every line of her face! Most women, even when but slightly annoyed, show a flicker of evil in some curl of the mouth or some corner of the cheek, but as for her, never in her angriest moments was there anything malicious in her look. She was angered quickly, but she forgave just as readily, and underneath her pride there was the meekness of a child. What came of it?—what cared you? You hated her just as she was learning to love you. O! couldn't you see what was best for you, but must bring a curse upon me, and agony and death

THE RETURN OF THE NATIVE

upon her, by doing that cruel deed! What was the devil's name who was keeping you company and causing you to add cruelty to her to your wrong to me? Was it Wildeve? Was it poor Thomasin's husband? Heaven, what wickedness! Lost your voice, have you? It is natural after detection of that most noble trick.

Eustacia, didn't any tender thought of your own mother lead you to think of being gentle to mine at such a time of weariness? Did not one grain of pity enter your heart as she turned away? Think what a vast opportunity was then lost of beginning a forgiving and honest course. Why did not you kick him out, and let her in, and say, I'll be an honest wife and a noble woman from this hour? Had I told you to go and quench eternally our last flickering chance of happiness here you could have done no worse. Well, she's asleep now, and have you a hundred gallants, neither they nor you can insult her any more."

"You exaggerate fearfully," she said in a faint, weary voice, "but I cannot enter into my defense—it is not worth doing. You are nothing to me in future, and the past side of the story may as well remain untold. I have lost all through you, but I have not complained. Your blunders and misfortunes may have been a sorrow to you, but they have been a wrong to me. All persons of refinement have been scared away from me since I sank into the mire of marriage. Is this your cherishing—to put me into a hut like this, and keep me like the wife of a hind? You deceived me—not by words, but by appearances, which are less seen through than words. But the place will serve as well as any other—as somewhere to pass from—into my grave." Her words were smothered in her throat, and her head drooped down.

"I don't know what you mean by that. Am I the cause of your sin?" (Eustacia made a trembling motion towards him.) "What, you can begin to shed tears and offer me your hand? Good God! can you? No, not I. I'll not commit the fault of taking that." (The hand she had offered dropped nervelessly, but the tears continued flowing.) "Well, yes, I'll take it, if only for the sake of my own foolish kisses that were wasted there before I knew what I cherished. How bewitched I was! How could there be any good in a woman that everybody spoke ill of?"

"O, O, O!" she cried, breaking down at last, and, shaking with sobs which choked her, she sank upon her knees. "O, will you have done! O, you are too relentless—there's a limit to the cruelty of savages! I have held out long—but you crush me down. I beg for mercy—I cannot bear this any longer—it is inhuman to go further with this! If I had—killed your—mother with my own hand—I should not deserve such a scourging to the bone as this. O, O! God have mercy upon a miserable woman! You have beaten me in this game—I beg of you to stay your hand in pity! I confess that I—willfully did not undo the door the first time she knocked—but—I—should have unfastered it the second—if I had not thought you had gone to do it yourself. When I found you had not I opened it, but she was gone. That's the extent of my crime—towards her. Best natures commit bad faults sometimes, don't they?—I think they do. Now I will leave you—for ever and ever!"

"Tell all, and I will pity you, Was the man in the house with you Wildeve?"

"I cannot tell," she said desperately through her sobbing "Don't insist further—I cannot tell I am going from this house We cannot both stay here"

"You need not go I will go You can stay here"

"No, I will dress, and then I will go"

"Where?"

"Where I came from, or elsewhere"

She hastily dressed herself, Yeobright moodily walking up and down the room the whole of the time At last all her things were on Her little hands quivered so violently as she held them to her chin to fasten her bonnet that she could not tie the strings, and after a few moments she relinquished the attempt Seeing this he moved forward and said, "Let me tie them"

She assented in silence, and lifted her chin For once at least in her life she was totally oblivious of the charm of her attitude But he was not, and he turned his eyes aside, that he might not be tempted to softness

The strings were tied, she turned from him "Do you still prefer going away yourself to my leaving you?" he inquired again

"I do"

"Very well—let it be And when you will confess to the man I may pity you"

She flung her shawl about her and went downstairs, leaving him standing in the room

Eustacia had not long been gone when there came a knock at the door of the bedroom, and Yeobright said, "Well?"

It was the servant, and she replied, "Somebody from Mrs Wildev's have called to tell 'ee that the mis'ess and the baby are getting on wonderful well, and the baby's name is to be Eustacia Clementine" And the girl retired

"What a mockery!" said Clym "This unhappy marriage of mine to be perpetuated in that child's name!"

IV THE MINISTRATIONS OF A HALF-FORGOTTEN ONE

EUSTACIA'S journey was at first as vague in direction as that of thistledown in the wind She did not know what to do She wished it had been night instead of morning, that she might at least have borne her misery without the possibility of being seen Going listlessly along between the dying ferns and the wet white spiders' webs, she at length turned her steps towards her grandfather's house On reaching it she found the front door closed and locked Mechanically she went round to the end where the stable was, and on looking in at the stable-door she saw Charley standing within

"Captain Vye is not at home?" she said

"No, ma'am," said the lad in a flutter of feeling, "he's gone to Weatherbury, and won't be home till night And the servant is gone home for a holiday So the house is locked up"

Eustacia's face was not visible to Charley as she stood at the doorway, her back being to the sky, and the stable but indifferently lighted, but the wild-

ness of her manner arrested his attention. She turned and walked away across the enclosure to the gate, and was hidden by the bank.

When she had disappeared Charley, with misgiving in his eyes, slowly came from the stable door, and going to another point in the bank he looked over. Eustacia was leaning against it on the outside, her face covered with her hands, and her head pressing the dewy heather which bearded the bank's outer side. She appeared to be utterly indifferent to the circumstance that her bonnet, hair, and garments were becoming wet and disarranged by the moisture of her cold, harsh pillow. Clearly something was wrong.

Charley had always regarded Eustacia as Eustacia had regarded Clym when she first beheld him—as a romantic and sweet vision, scarcely incarnate. He had been so shut off from her by the dignity of her look and the pride of her speech except at that one blissful interval when he was allowed to hold her hand, that he had hardly deemed her a woman, wingless and earthly, subject to household conditions and domestic jars. The inner details of her life he had only conjectured. She had been a lovely wonder, predestined to an orbit in which the whole of his own was but a point, and this sight of her leaning like a helpless, despairing creature against a wild wet bank, filled him with an amazed horror. He could not longer remain where he was. Leaping over, he came up, touched her with his finger, and said tenderly, "You are poorly, ma'am. What can I do?"

Eustacia started up, and said, "Ah, Charley—you have followed me. You did not think when I left home in the summer that I should come back like this!"

"I did not, dear ma'am. Can I help you now?"

"I am afraid not. I wish I could get into the house. I feel giddy—that's all."

"Lean on my arm, ma'am, till we get to the porch, and I will try to open the door."

He supported her to the porch, and there depositing her on a seat hastened to the back, climbed to a window by the help of a ladder, and descending inside opened the door. Next he assisted her into the room, where there was an old-fashioned horsehair settee as large as a donkey-wagon. She lay down here, and Charley covered her with a cloak he found in the hall.

"Shall I get you something to eat and drink?" he said.

"If you please, Charley. But I suppose there is no fire."

"I can light it, ma'am."

He vanished, and she heard a splitting of wood and a blowing of bellows, and presently he returned, saying, "I have lighted a fire in the kitchen, and now I'll light one here."

He lit the fire, Eustacia dreamily observing him from her couch. When it was blazing up he said, "Shall I wheel you round in front of it, ma'am, as the morning is chilly?"

"Yes, if you like."

"Shall I go and bring the breakfast now?"

"Yes, do," she murmured languidly.

When he had gone, and the dull sounds occasionally reached her ears of his

movements in the kitchen, she forgot where she was, and had for a moment to consider by an effort what the sounds meant. After an interval which seemed short to her whose thoughts were elsewhere, he came in with a tray on which steamed tea and toast

"Place it on the table," she said "I shall be ready soon"

He did so, and retired to the door when, however, he perceived that she did not move he came back a few steps

"Let me hold it to you, if you don't wish to get up," said Charley. He brought the tray to the front of the couch, where he knelt down, adding, "I will hold it for you"

Eustacia sat up and poured out a cup of tea "You are very kind to me, Charley," she murmured as she sipped

"Well, I ought to be," said he diffidently, taking great trouble not to rest his eyes upon her, though this was their only natural position, Eustacia being immediately before him "You have been kind to me"

"How have I?" said Eustacia

"You let me hold your hand when you were a maiden at home"

"Ah, so I did. Why did I do that? My mind is lost—it had to do with the mumming, had it not?"

"Yes, you wanted to go in my place"

"I remember I do indeed remember—too well!"

She again became utterly downcast, and Charley, seeing that she was not going to eat or drink any more, took away the tray

Afterwards he occasionally came in to see if the fire was burning, to ask her if she wanted anything, to tell her that the wind had shifted from south to west, to ask her if she would like him to gather her some blackberries, to all which inquiries she replied in the negative or with indifference

She remained on the settee some time longer, when she aroused herself and went upstairs. The room in which she had formerly slept still remained much as she had left it, and the recollection that this forced upon her of her own greatly changed and infinitely worse situation again set on her face the undetermined and formless misery which it had worn on her first arrival. She peeped into her grandfather's room, through which the fresh autumn air was blowing from the open windows. Her eye was arrested by what was a familiar sight enough, though it broke upon her now with a new significance

It was a brace of pistols, hanging near the head of her grandfather's bed, which he always kept there loaded, as a precaution against possible burglars, the house being very lonely. Eustacia regarded them long, as if they were the page of a book in which she read a new and a strange matter. Quickly, like one afraid of herself, she returned downstairs and stood in deep thought

"If I could only do it!" she said "It would be doing much good to myself and all connected with me, and no harm to a single one"

The idea seemed to gather force within her, and she remained in a fixed attitude nearly ten minutes, when a certain finality was expressed in her gaze, and no longer the blankness of indecision

She turned and went up the second time—softly and stealthily now—and

entered her grandfather's room, her eyes at once seeking the head of the bed. The pistols were gone.

The instant quashing of her purpose by their absence affected her brain as a sudden vacuum affects the body—she nearly fainted. Who had done this? There was only one person on the premises besides herself. Eustacia involuntarily turned to the open window which overlooked the garden as far as the bank that bounded it. On the summit of the latter stood Charley, sufficiently elevated by its height to see into the room. His gaze was directed eagerly and solicitously upon her.

She went downstairs to the door and beckoned to him.

"You have taken them away?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Why did you do it?"

"I saw you looking at them too long."

"What has that to do with it?"

"You have been heart-broken all the morning, as if you did not want to live."

"Well?"

"And I could not bear to leave them in your way. There was meaning in your look at them."

"Where are they now?"

"Locked up."

"Where?"

"In the stable."

"Give them to me."

"No, ma'am."

"You refuse?"

"I do! I care too much for you to give 'em up."

She turned aside, her face for the first time softening from the stony immobility of the earlier day, and the corners of her mouth resuming something of that delicacy of cut which was always lost in her moments of despair. At last she confronted him again.

"Why should I not die if I wish?" she said tremulously. "I have made a bad bargain with life, and I am weary of it—weary. And now you have hindered my escape. O, why did you, Charley! What makes death painful except the thought of others' grief?—and that is absent in my case, for not a sigh would follow me!"

"Ah, it is trouble that has done this! I wish in my very soul that he who brought it about might die and rot, even if 'tis transportation to say it!"

"Charley, no more of that. What do you mean to do about this you have seen?"

"Keep it close as night, if you promise not to think of it again."

"You need not fear. The moment has passed. I promise." She then went away, entered the house, and lay down.

Later in the afternoon her grandfather returned. He was about to question her categorically, but on looking at her he withheld his words.

"Yes, it is too bad to talk of," she slowly returned in answer to his glance.

"Can my old room be got ready for me tonight, grandfather? I shall want to occupy it again."

He did not ask what it all meant, or why she had left her husband, but ordered the room to be prepared.

V AN OLD MOVE INADVERTENTLY REPEATED

CHARLEY's attentions to his former mistress were unbounded. The only solace to his own trouble lay in his attempts to relieve hers. Hour after hour he considered her wants; he thought of her presence there with a sort of gratitude, and, while uttering imprecations on the cause of her unhappiness, in some measure blessed the result. Perhaps she would always remain there, he thought, and then he would be as happy as he had been before. His dread was lest she should think fit to return to Alderworth, and in that dread his eyes, with all the inquisitiveness of affection, frequently sought her face when she was not observing him, as he would have watched the head of a stockdove to learn if it contemplated flight. Having once really succored her, and possibly preserved her from the rashest of acts, he mentally assumed in addition a guardian's responsibility for her welfare.

For this reason he busily endeavored to provide her with pleasant distractions, bringing home curious objects which he found in the heath, such as white trumpet-shaped mosses, red-headed lichens, stone arrow-heads used by the old tribes on Egdon, and faceted crystals from the hollows of flints. These he deposited on the premises in such positions that she should see them as if by accident.

A week passed, Eustacia never going out of the house. Then she walked into the enclosed plot and looked through her grandfather's spy-glass, as she had been in the habit of doing before her marriage. One day she saw, at a place where the high-road crossed the distant valley, a heavily laden wagon passing along. It was piled high with household furniture. She looked again and again, and recognized it to be her own. In the evening her grandfather came indoors with a rumor that Yeobright had removed that day from Alderworth to the old house at Blooms-End.

On another occasion when reconnoitering thus she beheld two female figures walking in the vale. The day was fine and clear, and the persons not being more than half a mile off she could see their every detail with the telescope. The woman walking in front carried a white bundle in her arms, from one end of which hung a long appendage of drapery, and when the walkers turned, so that the sun fell more directly upon them, Eustacia could see that the object was a baby. She called Charley, and asked him if he knew who they were, though she well guessed.

"Mrs. Wildeve and the nurse-girl," said Charley.

"The nurse is carrying the baby?" said Eustacia.

"No, 'tis Mrs. Wildeve carrying that," he answered, "and the nurse walks behind carrying nothing."

The lad was in good spirits that day, for the fifth of November had again

come round, and he was planning yet another scheme to divert her from her too absorbing thoughts. For two successive years his mistress had seemed to take pleasure in lighting a bonfire on the bank overlooking the valley, but this year she had apparently quite forgotten the day and the customary deed. He was careful not to remind her, and went on with his secret preparations for a cheerful surprise, the more zealously that he had been absent last time and unable to assist. At every vacant minute he hastened to gather furze-stumps, thorn-tree roots, and other solid materials from the adjacent slopes, hiding them from cursory view.

The evening came, and Eustacia was still seemingly unconscious of the anniversary. She had gone indoors after her survey through the glass, and had not been visible since. As soon as it was quite dark Charley began to build the bonfire, choosing precisely that spot on the bank which Eustacia had chosen at previous times.

When all the surrounding bonfires had burst into existence Charley kindled his, and arranged its fuel so that it should not require tending for some time. He then went back to the house, and lingered round the door and windows till she should by some means or other learn of his achievement and come out to witness it. But the shutters were closed, the door remained shut, and no heed whatever seemed to be taken of his performance. Not liking to call her he went back and replenished the fire, continuing to do this for more than half an hour. It was not till his stock of fuel had greatly diminished that he went to the back door and sent in to beg that Mrs. Yeobright would open the window-shutters and see the sight outside.

Eustacia, who had been sitting listlessly in the parlor, started up at the intelligence and flung open the shutters. Facing her on the bank blazed the fire, which at once sent a ruddy glare into the room where she was, and overpowered the candles.

"Well done, Charley!" said Captain Vye from the chimney-corner. "But I hope it is not my wood that he's burning. Ah, it was this time last year that I met with that man Venn, bringing home Thomasin Yeobright—to be sure it was! Well, who would have thought that girl's troubles would have ended so well? What a snipe you were in that matter, Eustacia! Has your husband written to you yet?"

"No," said Eustacia, looking vaguely through the window at the fire, which just then so much engaged her mind that she did not resent her grandfather's blunt opinion. She could see Charley's form on the bank, shoveling and stirring the fire, and there flashed upon her imagination some other form which that fire might call up.

She left the room, put on her garden-bonnet and cloak, and went out. Reaching the bank she looked over with a wild curiosity and misgiving, when Charley said to her, with a pleased sense of himself, "I made it o' purpose for you, ma'am."

"Thank you," she said hastily. "But I wish you to put it out now."

"It will soon burn down," said Charley, rather disappointed. "Is it not a pity to knock it out?"

"I don't know," she musingly answered.

They stood in silence, broken only by the crackling of the flames, till Charley, perceiving that she did not want to talk to him, moved reluctantly away.

Eustacia remained within the bank looking at the fire, intending to go in-doors, yet lingering still. Had she not by her situation been inclined to hold in indifference all things honored of the gods and of men she would probably have come away. But her state was so hopeless that she could play with it. To have lost is less disturbing than to wonder if we may possibly have won, and Eustacia could now, like other people at such a stage, take a standing-point outside herself, observe herself as a disinterested spectator, and think what a sport for Heaven this woman Eustacia was.

While she stood she heard a sound. It was the splash of a stone in the pond.

Had Eustacia received the stone full in the bosom her heart could not have given a more decided thump. She had thought of the possibility of such a signal in answer to that which had been unwittingly given by Charley, but she had not expected it yet. How prompt Wildeva was! Yet how could he think her capable of deliberately wishing to renew their assignations now? An impulse to leave the spot, a desire to stay, struggled within her, and the desire held its own. More than that it did not do, for she refrained even from ascending the bank and looking over. She remained motionless, not disturbing a muscle of her face or raising her eyes, for were she to turn up her face the fire on the bank would shine upon it, and Wildeva might be looking down.

There was a second splash into the pond.

Why did he stay so long without advancing and looking over? Curiosity had its way—she ascended one or two of the earth-steps in the bank and glanced out.

Wildeva was before her. He had come forward after throwing the last pebble, and the fire now shone into each of their faces from the bank stretching breast-high between them.

"I did not light it!" cried Eustacia quickly. "It was lit without my knowledge. Don't, don't come over to me!"

"Why have you been living here all these days without telling me? You have left your home. I fear I am something to blame in this!"

"I did not let in his mother, that's how it is!"

"You do not deserve what you have got, Eustacia, you are in great misery, I see it in your eyes, your mouth, and all over you. My poor, poor girl!" He stepped over the bank. "You are beyond everything unhappy!"

"No, no, not exactly—"

"It has been pushed too far—it is killing you. I do think it!"

Her usually quiet breathing had grown quicker with his words. "I—I—" she began, and then burst into quivering sobs, shaken to the very heart by the unexpected voice of pity—a sentiment whose existence in relation to herself she had almost forgotten.

This outbreak of weeping took Eustacia herself so much by surprise that she could not leave off, and she turned aside from him in some shame, though turning hid nothing from him. She sobbed on desperately, then the outpour lessened, and she became quieter. Wildeva had resisted the impulse to clasp her, and stood without speaking.

"Are you not ashamed of me, who used never to be a crying animal?" she asked in a weak whisper as she wiped her eyes "Why didn't you go away? I wish you had not seen quite all that, it reveals too much by half"

"You might have wished it, because it makes me as sad as you," he said with emotion and deference "As for revealing—the word is impossible between us two"

"I did not send for you—don't forget it, Damon, I am in pain, but I did not send for you! As a wife, at least, I've been straight"

"Never mind—I came O, Eustacia, forgive me for the harm I have done you in these two past years! I see more and more that I have been your ruin"

"Not you The place I live in"

"Ah, your generosity may naturally make you say that But I am the culprit I should either have done more or nothing at all"

"In what way?"

"I ought never to have hunted you out, or, having done it, I ought to have persisted in retaining you But of course I have no right to talk of that now I will only ask this can I do anything for you? Is there anything on the face of the earth that a man can do to make you happier than you are at present? If there is, I will do it You may command me, Eustacia, to the limit of my influence, and don't forget that I am richer now Surely something can be done to save you from this! Such a rare plant in such a wild place it grieves me to see Do you want anything bought? Do you want to go anywhere? Do you want to escape the place altogether? Only say it and I'll do anything to put an end to those tears, which but for me would never have been at all"

"We are each married to another person," she said faintly, "and assistance from you would have an evil sound—after—after—"

"Well, there's no preventing slanderers from having their fill at any time, but you need not be afraid Whatever I may feel I promise you on my word of honor never to speak to you about—or act upon—until you say I may I know my duty to Thomasin quite as well as I know my duty to you as a woman unfairly treated What shall I assist you in?"

"In getting away from here"

"Where do you wish to go?"

"I have a place in my mind If you could help me as far as Budmouth I can do all the rest Steamers sail from there across the Channel, and so I can get to Paris, where I want to be Yes," she pleaded earnestly, "help me to get to Budmouth harbor without my grandfather's or my husband's knowledge, and I can do all the rest"

"Will it be safe to leave you there alone?"

"Yes, yes I know Budmouth well"

"Shall I go with you? I am rich now"

She was silent

"Say yes, sweet!"

She was silent still

"Well, let me know when you wish to go We shall be at our present house till December, after that we remove to Casterbridge Command me in anything till that time"

"I will think of this," she said hurriedly "Whether I can honestly make use of you as a friend, or must close with you as a lover—that is what I must ask myself If I wish to go and decide to accept your company I will signal to you some evening at eight o'clock punctually and this will mean that you are to be ready with a horse and trap at twelve o'clock the same night to drive me to Budmouth harbor in time for the morning boat "

"I will look out every night at eight, and no signal shall escape me "

"Now please go away If I decide on this escape I can only meet you once more unless—I cannot go without you Go—I cannot bear it longer Go—go!"

Wildeve slowly went up the steps and descended into the darkness on the other side, and as he walked he glanced back, till the bank blotted out her form from his further view

VI THOMASIN ARGUES WITH HER COUSIN, AND HE WRITES A LETTER

YROBRIGHT was at this time at Blooms End, hoping that Eustacia would return to him The removal of furniture had been accomplished only that day, though Clym had lived in the old house for more than a week He had spent the time in working about the premises, sweeping the leaves from the garden-paths, cutting dead stalks from the flower-beds, and nailing up creepers which had been displaced by the autumn winds He took no particular pleasure in these deeds, but they formed a screen between himself and despair Moreover, it had become a religion with him to preserve in good condition all that had lapsed from his mother's hands to his own

During these operations he was constantly on the watch for Eustacia That there should be no mistake about her knowing where to find him he had ordered a notice-board to be affixed to the garden gate at Alderworth, signifying in white letters whither he had removed When a leaf floated to the earth he turned his head, thinking it might be her footfall A bird searching for worms in the mould of the flower-beds sounded like her hand on the latch of the gate, and at dusk, when soft, strange ventriloquisms came from holes in the ground, hollow stalks, curled dead leaves, and other crannies wherein breezes, worms, and insects can work their will, he fancied that they were Eustacia, standing without and breathing wishes of reconciliation

Up to this time he had persevered in his resolve not to invite her back At the same time the severity with which he had treated her lulled the sharpness of his regret for his mother, and awoke some of his old solicitude for his mother's supplanter Harsh feelings produce harsh usage, and this by reaction quenches the sentiments that gave it birth The more he reflected the more he softened But to look upon his wife as innocence in distress was impossible, though he could ask himself whether he had given her quite time enough—if he had not come a little too suddenly upon her on that somber morning

Now that the first flush of his anger had paled he was disinclined to ascribe to her more than an indiscreet friendship with Wildeve, for there had not appeared in her manner the signs of dishonor And this once admitted, an

absolutely dark interpretation of her act towards his mother was no longer forced upon him

On the evening of the fifth of November his thoughts of Eustacia were intense Echoes from those past times when they had exchanged tender words all the day long came like the diffused murmur of a seashore left miles behind "Surely," he said, "she might have brought herself to communicate with me before now, and confess honestly what Wildeve was to her"

Instead of remaining home that night he determined to go and see Thomasin and her husband If he found opportunity he would allude to the cause of the separation between Eustacia and himself, keeping silence, however, on the fact that there was a third person in his house when his mother was turned away If it proved that Wildeve was innocently there he would doubtless openly mention it If he were there with unjust intentions Wildeve, being a man of quick feeling, might possibly say something to reveal the extent to which Eustacia was compromised

But on reaching his cousin's house he found that only Thomasin was at home, Wildeve being at that time on his way towards the bonfire innocently lit by Charley at Mistover Thomasin then, as always, was glad to see Clym, and took him to inspect the sleeping baby, carefully screening the candlelight from the infant's eyes with her hand

"Tamsin, have you heard that Eustacia is not with me now?" he said when they had sat down again

"No," said Thomasin, alarmed

"And not that I have left Alderworth?"

"No I never hear tidings from Alderworth unless you bring them What is the matter?"

Clym in a disturbed voice related to her his visit to Susan Nunsuch's boy, the revelation he had made, and what had resulted from his charging Eustacia with having willfully and heartlessly done the deed He suppressed all mention of Wildeve's presence with her

"All this, and I not knowing it!" murmured Thomasin in an awestruck tone "Terrible! What could have made her—O, Eustacia! And when you found it out you went in hot haste to her? Were you too cruel?—or is she really so wicked as she seems?"

"Can a man be too cruel to his mother's enemy?"

"I can fancy so"

"Very well, then—I'll admit that he can But now what is to be done?"

"Make it up again—if a quarrel so deadly can ever be made up I almost wish you had not told me But do try to be reconciled There are ways, after all, if you both wish to"

"I don't know that we do both wish to make it up," said Clym "If she had wished it, would she not have sent to me by this time?"

"You seem to wish to, and yet you have not sent to her"

"True, but I have been tossed to and fro in doubt if I ought, after such strong provocation To see me now, Thomasin, gives you no idea of what I have been, of what depths I have descended to in these few last days O, it

was a bitter shame to shut out my mother like that! Can I ever forget it, or even agree to see her again?"

"She might not have known that anything serious would come of it, and perhaps she did not mean to keep aunt out altogether"

"She saved herself that she did not But the fact remains that keep her out she did"

"Believe her sorry, and send for her"

"How if she will not come?"

"It will prove her guilty, by showing that it is her habit to nourish enmity But I do not think that for a moment"

"I will do this I will wait for a day or two longer—not longer than two days certainly, and if she does not send to me in that time I will indeed send to her I thought to have seen Wildeve here tonight Is he from home?"

Thomasin blushed a little "No," she said "He is merely gone out for a walk"

"Why didn't he take you with him? The evening is fine You want fresh air as well as he"

"O, I don't care for going anywhere, besides, there is baby"

"Yes, yes Well, I have been thinking whether I should not consult your husband about this as well as you," said Clym steadily

"I fancy I would not," she quickly answered "It can do no good"

Her cousin looked her in the face No doubt Thomasin was ignorant that her husband had any share in the events of that tragic afternoon, but her countenance seemed to signify that she concealed some suspicion or thought of the reputed tender relations between Wildeve and Eustacia in days gone by

Clym, however, could make nothing of it, and he rose to depart, more in doubt than when he came

"You will write to her in a day or two?" said the young woman earnestly "I do so hope the wretched separation may come to an end"

"I will," said Clym, "I don't rejoice in my present state at all"

And he left her and climbed the hills to Blooms-End Before going to bed he sat down and wrote the following letter

"MY DEAR EUSTACIA—I must obey my heart without consulting my reason too closely Will you come back to me? Do so, and the past shall never be mentioned I was too severe, but O, Eustacia, the provocation! You don't know, you never will know, what those words of anger cost me which you drew down upon yourself All that an honest man can promise you I promise you now, which is that from me you shall never suffer anything on this score again After all the vows we have made, Eustacia, I think we had better pass the remainder of our lives in trying to keep them Come to me, then, even if you reproach me I have thought of your sufferings that morning on which I parted from you I know they were genuine and they are as much as you ought to bear Our love must still continue Such hearts as ours would never have been given us but to be concerned with each other I could not ask you back at first, Eustacia, for I was unable to persuade myself that he who was with you was not there as a lover But if you will come and explain distracting appearances I do not question that you can show your honesty to me Why have you not come before? Do you think I will not listen to you? Surely not when you re-

member the kisses and vows we exchanged under the summer moon Return then, and you shall be warmly welcomed I can no longer think of you to your prejudice—I am but too much absorbed in justifying you—Your husband as ever,

“CLYM”

“There,” he said, as he laid it in his desk, “that’s a good thing done If she does not come before tomorrow night I will send it to her”

Meanwhile, at the house he had just left Thomasin sat sighing uneasily Fidelity to her husband had that evening induced her to conceal all suspicion that Wildeve’s interest in Eustacia had not ended with his marriage But she knew nothing positive, and though Clym was her well-beloved cousin there was one nearer to her still

When, a little later, Wildeve returned from his walk to Mistover, Thomasin said, “Damon, where have you been? I was getting quite frightened, and thought you had fallen into the river I dislike being in the house by myself”

“Frightened?” he said, touching her cheek as if she were some domestic animal “Why, I thought nothing could frighten you It is that you are getting proud, I am sure, and don’t like living here since we have risen above our business Well, it is a tedious matter, this getting a new house, but I couldn’t have set about it sooner, unless our ten thousand pounds had been a hundred thousand, when we could have afforded to despise caution”

“No—I don’t mind waiting—I would rather stay here twelve months longer than run any risk with baby But I don’t like your vanishing so in the evenings There’s something on your mind—I know there is, Damon You go about so gloomily, and look at the heath as if it were somebody’s jail instead of a nice wild place to walk in”

He looked towards her with pitying surprise “What, do you like Egdon Heath?” he said

“I like what I was born near to, I admire its grim old face”

“Pooh, my dear You don’t know what you like”

“I am sure I do There’s only one thing unpleasant about Egdon”

“What’s that?”

“You never take me with you when you walk there Why do you wander so much in it yourself if you dislike it?”

The inquiry, though a simple one, was plainly disconcerting, and he sat down before replying “I don’t think you often see me there Give an instance”

“I will,” she answered triumphantly “When you went out this evening I thought that as baby was asleep I would see where you were going to so mysteriously without telling me So I ran out and followed behind you You stopped at the place where the road forks, looked round at the bonfires, and then said, ‘Damn it, I’ll go!’ And you went quickly up the left hand road Then I stood and watched you”

Wildeve frowned, afterwards saying, with a forced smile, “Well, what wonderful discovery did you make?”

“There—now you are angry, and we won’t talk of this any more” She went across to him, sat on a footstool and looked up in his face

“Nonsense!” he said, “that’s how you always back out We will go on with

it now we have begun What did you next see? I particularly want to know "Don't be like that, Damon!" she murmured "I didn't see anything You vanished out of sight, and then I looked round at the bonfires and came in "

"Perhaps this is not the only time you have dogged my steps Are you trying to find out something bad about me?"

"Not at all! I have never done such a thing before, and I shouldn't have done it now if words had not sometimes been dropped about you"

"What do you mean?" he impatiently asked

"They say—they say you used to go to Alderworth in the evenings, and it puts into my mind what I have heard about—"

Wildeva turned angrily and stood up in front of her "Now," he said, flourishing his hand in the air, "just out with it, madam! I demand to know what remarks you have heard "

"Well, I heard that you used to be very fond of Eustacia—nothing more than that, though told more in a bit-by-bit way You ought not to be angry!"

He observed that her eyes were brimming with tears "Well," he said, "there is nothing new in that, and of course I don't mean to be rough towards you, so you need not cry Now, don't let us speak of the subject any more "

And no more was said, Thomasin being glad enough of a reason for not mentioning Clym's visit to her that evening, and his story

VII THE NIGHT OF THE SIXTH OF NOVEMBER

HAVING resolved on flight, Eustacia at times seemed anxious that something should happen to thwart her own intention The only event that could really change her position was the appearance of Clym The glory which had encircled him as her lover was departed now, yet some good simple quality of his would occasionally return to her memory and stir a momentary throb of hope that he would again present himself before her But, calmly considered, it was not likely that such a severance as now existed would ever close up she would have to live on as a painful object, isolated, and out of place She had used to think of the heath alone as an uncongenial spot to be in, she felt it now of the whole world

Towards evening on the sixth her determination to go away again revived About four o'clock she packed up anew a few small articles she had brought in her flight from Alderworth and also some belonging to her which had been left here the whole formed a bundle not too large to be carried in her hand for a distance of a mile or two The scene without grew darker, mud-colored clouds bellied downwards from the sky like vast hammocks slung across it, and with the increase of night a stormy wind arose, but as yet there was no rain

Eustacia could not rest indoors, having nothing more to do, and she wandered to and fro on the hill, not far from the house she was soon to leave In these desultory ramblings she passed the cottage of Susan Nunsuch, a little lower down than her grandfather's The door was ajar, and a riband of bright firelight fell over the ground without As Eustacia crossed the firebeams she

appeared for an instant as distinct as a figure in a phantasmagoria—a creature of light surrounded by an area of darkness the moment passed and she was absorbed in night again

A woman who was sitting inside the cottage had seen and recognized her in that momentary irradiation This was Susan herself, occupied in preparing a posset for her little boy, who, often ailing, was now seriously unwell Susan dropped the spoon, shook her fist at the vanished figure, and then proceeded with her work in a musing, absent way

At eight o'clock, the hour at which Eustacia had promised to signal to Wild eve if ever she signaled at all, she looked around the premises to learn if the coast was clear, went to the furze-rick, and pulled thence a long stemmed bough of that fuel This she carried to the corner of the bank, and, glancing behind to see if the shutters were all closed, she struck a light, and kindled the furze When it was thoroughly ablaze Eustacia took it by the stem and waved it in the air above her head till it had burned itself out

She was gratified, if gratification were possible to such a mood, by seeing a similar light in the vicinity of Wildevie's residence a minute or two later Having agreed to keep watch at this hour every night, in case she should require assistance, this promptness proved how strictly he had held to his word Four hours after the present time, that is, at midnight, he was to be ready to drive her to Budmouth, as prearranged

Eustacia returned to the house Supper having been got over she retired early, and sat in her bedroom waiting for the time to go by The night being dark and threatening Captain Vye had not strolled out to gossip in any cottage or to call at the inn, as was sometimes his custom on these long autumn nights, and he sat sipping grog alone downstairs About ten o'clock there was a knock at the door When the servant opened it the rays of the candle fell upon the form of Fairway

"I was a-forced to go to Lower Mistover tonight," he said, "and Mr Yeobright asked me to leave this here on my way, but, faith, I put it in the lining of my hat, and thought no more about it till I got back and was hasping my gate before going to bed So I have run back with it at once"

He handed in a letter and went his way The girl brought it to the captain, who found that it was directed to Eustacia He turned it over and over, and fancied that the writing was her husband's, though he could not be sure However, he decided to let her have it at once if possible, and took it upstairs for that purpose, but on reaching the door of her room and looking in at the keyhole he found there was no light within, the fact being that Eustacia, without undressing, had flung herself upon the bed, to rest and gather a little strength for her coming journey Her grandfather concluded from what he saw that he ought not to disturb her, and descending again to the parlor, he placed the letter on the mantelpiece to give it to her in the morning

At eleven o'clock he went to bed himself, smoked for some time in his bedroom, put out his light at half-past eleven, and then, as was his invariable custom, pulled up the blind before getting into bed, that he might see which way the wind blew on opening his eyes in the morning, his bedroom window commanding a view of the flagstaff and vane Just as he had lain down he

was surprised to observe the white pole of the staff flash into existence like a streak of phosphorus drawn downwards across the shade of night without. Only one explanation met this—a light had been suddenly thrown upon the pole from the direction of the house. As everybody had retired to rest the old man felt it necessary to get out of bed, open the window softly, and look to the right and left. Eustacia's bedroom was lighted up, and it was the shine from her window which had lighted the pole. Wondering what had aroused her he remained undecided at the window, and was thinking of fetching the letter to slip it under her door, when he heard a slight brushing of garments on the partition dividing his room from the passage.

The captain concluded that Eustacia, feeling wakeful, had gone for a book, and would have dismissed the matter as unimportant if he had not also heard her distinctly weeping.

"She is thinking of that husband of hers," he said to himself. "Ah, the silly goose! she had no business to marry him. I wonder if that letter is really *his*?"

He arose, threw his boat-cloak round him, opened the door, and said, "Eustacia!" There was no answer. "Eustacia!" he repeated louder, "there *is* a letter on the mantelpiece for you."

But no response was made to this statement save an imaginary one from the wind, which seemed to gnaw at the corners of the house, and the stroke of a few drops of rain upon the windows.

He went on to the landing, and stood waiting nearly five minutes. Still she did not return. He went back for a light, and prepared to follow her, but first he looked into her bedroom. There, on the outside of the quilt, was the impression of her form, showing that the bed had not been opened, and, what was more significant, she had not taken her candlestick downstairs. He was now thoroughly alarmed, and hastily putting on his clothes he descended to the front door, which he himself had bolted and locked. It was now unfastened. There was no longer any doubt that Eustacia had left the house at this midnight hour, and whither could she have gone? To follow her was almost impossible. Had the dwelling stood in an ordinary road, two persons setting out, one in each direction, might have made sure of overtaking her, but it was a hopeless task to seek for anybody on a heath in the dark, the practicable directions for flight across it from any point being as numerous as the meridians radiating from the pole. Perplexed what to do he looked into the parlor, and was vexed to find that the letter still lay there untouched.

At half-past eleven, finding that the house was silent, Eustacia had lighted her candle, put on some warm outer wrappings, taken her bag in her hand, and, extinguishing the light again, descended the staircase. When she got into the outer air she found that it had begun to rain, and as she stood pausing at the door it increased, threatening to come on heavily. But having committed herself to this line of action there was no retreating for bad weather, since Wildeve had been communicated with, and was probably even then waiting for her. The gloom of the night was funereal, all nature seemed clothed in crape. The spiky points of the fir trees behind the house rose into the sky.

like the turrets and pinnacles of an abbey. Nothing below the horizon was visible save a light which was still burning in the cottage of Susan Nunsuch.

Eustacia opened her umbrella and went out from the enclosure by the steps over the bank, after which she was beyond all danger of being perceived. Skirting the pool she followed the path towards Rainbarrow, occasionally stumbling over twisted furze-roots, tufts of rushes, or oozing lumps of fleshy fungi, which at this season lay scattered about the heath like the rotten liver and lungs of some colossal animal. The moon and stars were closed up by cloud and rain to the degree of extinction. It was a night which led the traveler's thoughts instinctively to dwell on nocturnal scenes of disaster in the chronicles of the world, on all that is terrible and dark in history and legend—the last plague of Egypt, the destruction of Sennacherib's host, the agony in Gethsemane.

Eustacia at length reached Rainbarrow, and stood still there to think. Never was harmony more perfect than that between the chaos of her mind and the chaos of the world without. A sudden recollection had flashed on her this moment: she had not money enough for undertaking a long journey. Amid the fluctuating sentiments of the day her impractical mind had not dwelt on the necessity of being well-provided, and now that she thoroughly realized the conditions she sighed bitterly and ceased to stand erect, gradually crouching down under the umbrella as if she were drawn into the Barrow by a hand from beneath. Could it be that she was to remain a captive still? Money she had never felt its value before. Even to efface herself from the country means were required. To ask Wildeve for pecuniary aid without allowing him to accompany her was impossible to a woman with the shadow of pride left in her: to fly as his mistress—and she knew that he loved her—was of the nature of humiliation.

Any one who had stood by now would have pitied her, not so much on account of her exposure to weather, and isolation from all of humanity except the mouldered remains inside the Barrow, but for that other form of misery which was denoted by the slightly rocking movement that her feelings imparted to her person. Extreme unhappiness weighed visibly upon her. Between the drippings of the rain from her umbrella to her mantle, from her mantle to the heather, from the heather to the earth, very similar sounds could be heard coming from her lips, and the tearfulness of the outer scene was repeated upon her face. The wings of her soul were broken by the cruel obstructiveness of all about her, and even had she seen herself in a promising way of getting to Budmouth, entering a steamer, and sailing to some opposite port she would have been but little more buoyant, so fearfully malignant were other things. She uttered words aloud. When a woman in such a situation, neither old, deaf, crazed, nor whimsical, takes upon herself to sob and soliloquize aloud there is something grievous the matter.

"Can I go, can I go?" she moaned. "He's not great enough for me to give myself to—he does not suffice for my desire! If he had been a Saul or a Bonaparte—ah! But to break my marriage vow for him—it is too poor a luxury! And I have no money to go alone! And if I could, what comfort to me? I must drag on next year, as I have dragged on this year, and the year

after that as before. How I have tried and tried to be a splendid woman, and how destiny has been against me! I do not deserve my lot!" she cried in a frenzy of bitter revolt. "O, the cruelty of putting me into this ill conceived world! I was capable of much, but I have been injured and blighted and crushed by things beyond my control! O, how hard it is of Heaven to devise such tortures for me, who have done no harm to Heaven at all!"

The distant light which Eustacia had cursorily observed in leaving the house came, as she had divined, from the cottage window of Susan Nunsuch. What Eustacia did not divine was the occupation of the woman within at that moment. Susan's sight of her passing figure earlier in the evening, not five minutes after the sick boy's exclamation, "Mother, I do feel so bad!" persuaded the matron that an evil influence was certainly exercised by Eustacia's propinquity.

On this account Susan did not go to bed as soon as the evening's work was over, as she would have done at ordinary times. To counteract the malign spell which she imagined poor Eustacia to be working, the boy's mother busied herself with a ghastly invention of superstition, calculated to bring powerlessness, atrophy, and annihilation on any human being against whom it was directed. It was a practice well known on Egdon at that date, and one that is not quite extinct at the present day.

She passed with her candle into an inner room, where, among other utensils, were two large brown pans, containing together perhaps a hundredweight of liquid honey, the produce of the bees during the foregoing summer. On a shelf over the pans was a smooth and solid yellow mass of a hemispherical form, consisting of beeswax from the same take of honey. Susan took down the lump, and, cutting off several thin slices, heaped them in an iron ladle, with which she returned to the living room, and placed the vessel in the hot ashes of the fireplace. As soon as the wax had softened to the plasticity of dough she kneaded the pieces together. And now her face became more intent. She began moulding the wax, and it was evident from her manner of manipulation that she was endeavoring to give it some preconceived form. The form was human.

By warming and kneading, cutting and twisting, dismembering and re-joining the incipient image she had in about a quarter of an hour produced a shape which tolerably well resembled a woman, and was about six inches high. She laid it on the table to get cold and hard. Meanwhile she took the candle and went upstairs to where the little boy was lying.

"Did you notice, my dear, what Mrs. Eustacia wore this afternoon besides the dark dress?"

"A red ribbon round her neck."

"Anything else?"

"No—except sandal-shoes."

"A red ribbon and sandal shoes," she said to herself.

Mrs. Nunsuch went and searched till she found a fragment of the narrowest red ribbon, which she took downstairs and tied round the neck of the image. Then fetching ink and a quill from the rickety bureau by the window, she blackened the feet of the image to the extent presumably covered by shoes, and

on the instep of each foot marked cross-lines in the shape taken by the sandal strings of those days. Finally she tied a bit of black thread round the upper part of the head, in faint resemblance to a fillet worn for confining the hair.

Susan held the object at arm's length and contemplated it with a satisfaction in which there was no smile. To anybody acquainted with the inhabitants of Egdon Heath the image would have suggested Eustacia Yeobright.

From her work-basket in the window-seat the woman took a paper of pins, of the old long and yellow sort, whose heads were disposed to come off at their first usage. These she began to thrust into the image in all directions, with apparently excruciating energy. Probably as many as fifty were thus inserted, some into the head of the wax model, some into the shoulders, some into the trunk, some upwards through the soles of the feet, till the figure was completely permeated with pins.

She turned to the fire. It had been of turf, and though the high heap of ashes which turf fires produce was somewhat dark and dead on the outside upon raking it abroad with the shovel the inside of the mass showed a glow of red heat. She took a few pieces of fresh turf from the chimney-corner and built them together over the glow upon which the fire brightened. Seizing with the tongs the image that she had made of Eustacia, she held it in the heat, and watched it as it began to waste slowly away. And while she stood thus engaged, there came from between her lips a murmur of words.

It was a strange jargon—the Lord's Prayer repeated backwards—the incantation usual in proceedings for obtaining unhallowed assistance against an enemy. Susan uttered the lugubrious discourse three times slowly and when it was completed the image had considerably diminished. As the wax dropped into the fire a long flame arose from the spot, and curling its tongue round the figure eat still further into its substance. A pin occasionally dropped with the wax, and the embers heated it red as it lay.

VIII RAIN, DARKNESS, AND ANXIOUS WANDERERS

WHILE the effigy of Eustacia was melting to nothing, and the fair woman herself was standing on Rainbarrow, her soul in an abyss of desolation seldom plumbed by one so young, Yeobright sat lonely at Blooms-End. He had fulfilled his word to Thomasin by sending off Fairway with the letter to his wife, and now waited with increased impatience for some sound or signal of her return. Were Eustacia still at Mistover the very least to be expected was that she would send him back a reply tonight by the same hand, though, to leave all to her inclination he had cautioned Fairway not to ask for an answer. If one were told or handed to him he was to bring it immediately, if not, he was to go straight home without troubling to come round to Blooms-End again that night.

But secretly Clym had a more pleasing hope. Eustacia might possibly decline to use her pen—it was rather her way to work silently—and surprise him by appearing at his door.

To Clym's regret it began to rain and blow hard as the evening advanced.

The wind rasped and scraped at the corners of the house, and filliped the eavesdroppings like peas against the panes. He walked restlessly about the untenanted rooms, stopping strange noises in windows and doors by jamming splinters of wood into the casements and crevices and pressing together the lead-work of the quarries where it had become loosened from the glass. It was one of those nights when cracks in the walls of old churches widen, when ancient stains on the ceilings of decayed manor-houses are renewed and enlarged from the size of a man's hand to an area of many feet. The little gate in the palings before his dwelling continually opened and clicked together again, but when he looked out eagerly nobody was there, it was as if invisible shapes of the dead were passing in on their way to visit him.

Between ten and eleven o'clock, finding that neither Fairway nor anybody else came to him, he retired to rest, and despite his anxieties soon fell asleep. His sleep, however, was not very sound, by reason of the expectancy he had given way to, and he was easily awakened by a knocking which began at the door about an hour after. Clym arose and looked out of the window. Rain was still falling heavily, the whole expanse of heath before him emitting a subdued hiss under the downpour. It was too dark to see anything at all.

"Who's there?" he cried.

Light footsteps shifted their position in the porch, and he could just distinguish in a plaintive female voice the words, "O Clym, come down and let me in!"

He flushed hot with agitation. "Surely it is Eustacia!" he murmured. If so, she had indeed come to him unawares.

He hastily got a light, dressed himself, and went down. On his flinging open the door the rays of the candle fell upon a woman closely wrapped up, who at once came forward.

"Thomasin!" he exclaimed in an indescribable tone of disappointment. "It is Thomasin, and on such a night as this! O, where is Eustacia?"

Thomasin it was, wet, frightened, and panting.

"Eustacia? I don't know, Clym, but I can think," she said with much perturbation. "Let me come in and rest—I will explain this. There is a great trouble brewing—my husband and Eustacia!"

"What, what?"

"I think my husband is going to leave me or do something dreadful—I don't know what—Clym, will you go and see? I have nobody to help me but you! Eustacia has not come home?"

"No."

She went on breathlessly. "Then they are going to run off together! He came indoors tonight about eight o'clock and said in an off-hand way, 'Tamsie, I have just found that I must go a journey.' 'When?' I said. 'Tonight,' he said. 'Where?' I asked him. 'I cannot tell you at present,' he said, 'I shall be back again tomorrow.' He then went and busied himself in looking up his things, and took no notice of me at all. I expected to see him start, but he did not, and then it came to be ten o'clock, when he said, 'You had better go to bed.' I didn't know what to do, and I went to bed. I believe he thought I fell asleep, for half an hour after that he came up and unlocked the oak chest we keep

money in when we have much in the house and took out a roll of something which I believe was bank-notes, though I was not aware that he had 'em there. These he must have got from the bank when he went there the other day. What does he want bank-notes for, if he is only going off for a day? When he had gone down I thought of Eustacia, and how he had met her the night before—I know he did meet her, Clym, for I followed him part of the way, but I did not like to tell you when you called, and so make you think ill of him, as I did not think it was so serious. Then I could not stay in bed. I got up and dressed myself, and when I heard him out in the stable I thought I would come and tell you. So I came downstairs without any noise and slipped out."

"Then he was not absolutely gone when you left?"

"No. Will you, dear Cousin Clym, go and try to persuade him not to go? He takes no notice of what I say, and puts me off with the story of his going on a journey, and will be home tomorrow, and all that, but I don't believe it. I think you could influence him."

"I'll go," said Clym. "O, Eustacia!"

Thomasin carried in her arms a large bundle, and having by this time seated herself she began to unroll it, when a baby appeared as the kernel to the husks—dry, warm, and unconscious of travel or rough weather. Thomasin briefly kissed the baby, and then found time to begin crying as she said, "I brought baby, for I was afraid what might happen to her. I suppose it will be her death, but I couldn't leave her with Rachel!"

Clym hastily put together the logs on the hearth, raked abroad the embers, which were scarcely yet extinct, and blew up a flame with the bellows.

"Dry yourself," he said. "I'll go and get some more wood."

"No, no—don't stay for that. I'll make up the fire. Will you go at once—please will you?"

Yeobright ran upstairs to finish dressing himself. While he was gone another rapping came to the door. This time there was no delusion that it might be Eustacia's, the footsteps just preceding it had been heavy and slow. Yeobright, thinking it might possibly be Fairway with a note in answer, descended again and opened the door.

"Captain Vye?" he said to a dripping figure.

"Is my grand-daughter here?" said the captain.

"No."

"Then where is she?"

"I don't know."

"But you ought to know—you are her husband."

"Only in name apparently," said Clym with rising excitement. "I believe she means to elope tonight with Wildeve. I am just going to look to it."

"Well, she has left my house, she left about half an hour ago. Who's sitting there?"

"My cousin Thomasin."

The captain bowed in a preoccupied way to her. "I only hope it is no worse than an elopement," he said.

"Worse? What's worse than the worst a wife can do?"

"Well, I have been told a strange tale Before starting in search of her I called up Charley, my stable-lad I missed my pistols the other day "

"Pistols?"

"He said at the time that he took them down to clean He has now owned that he took them because he saw Eustacia looking curiously at them, and she afterwards owned to him that she was thinking of taking her life but bound him to secrecy, and promised never to think of such a thing again I hardly suppose she will ever have bravado enough to use one of them, but it shows what has been lurking in her mind, and people who think of that sort of thing once think of it again "

"Where are the pistols?"

"Safely locked up O no, she won't touch them again But there are more ways of letting out life than through a bullet-hole What did you quarrel about so bitterly with her to drive her to all this? You must have treated her badly indeed Well, I was always against the marriage, and I was right "

"Are you going with me?" said Yeobright, paying no attention to the captain's latter remark "If so, I can tell you what we quarreled about as we walk along "

"Where to?"

"To Wildeve's—that was her destination, depend upon it "

Thomasin here broke in, still weeping "He said he was only going on a sudden short journey, but if so, why did he want so much money? O, Clym, what do you think will happen? I am afraid that you, my poor baby, will soon have no father left to you!"

"I am off now," said Yeobright, stepping into the porch

"I would fain go with ye," said the old man doubtfully "But I begin to be afraid that my legs will hardly carry me there such a night as this I am not so young as I was If they are interrupted in their flight she will be sure to come back to me and I ought to be at the house to receive her But be it as 'twill I can't walk to the Quiet Woman, and that's an end on't I'll go straight home "

"It will perhaps be best," said Clym "Thomasin, dry yourself, and be as comfortable as you can "

With this he closed the door upon her, and left the house in company with Captain Vye, who parted from him outside the gate taking the middle path, which led to Mistover Clym crossed by the right hand track towards the inn

Thomasin, being left alone, took off some of her wet garments, carried the baby upstairs to Clym's bed, and then came down to the sitting room again, where she made a larger fire, and began drying herself The fire soon flared up the chimney, giving the room an appearance of comfort that was doubled by contrast with the drumming of the storm without which snapped at the window-panes and breathed into the chimney strange low utterances that seemed to be the prologue to some tragedy

But the least part of Thomasin was in the house, for her heart being at ease about the little girl upstairs she was mentally following Clym on his journey Having indulged in this imaginary peregrination for some considerable interval, she became impressed with a sense of the intolerable slowness of

time But she sat on The moment then came when she could scarcely sit longer, and it was like a satire on her patience to remember that Clym could hardly have reached the inn as yet At last she went to the baby's bedside The child was sleeping soundly, but her imagination of possibly disastrous events at her home, the predominance within her of the unseen over the seen, agitated her beyond endurance She could not refrain from going down and opening the door The rain still continued, the candlelight falling upon the nearest drops and making glistening darts of them as they descended across the throng of invisible ones behind To plunge into that medium was to plunge into water slightly diluted with air But the difficulty of returning to her house at this moment made her all the more desirous of doing so, anything was better than suspense "I have come here well enough," she said, "and why shouldn't I go back again? It is a mistake for me to be away"

She hastily fetched the infant, wrapped it up, cloaked herself as before, and shoveling the ashes over the fire, to prevent accidents, went into the open air Pausing first to put the door-key in its old place behind the shutter, she resolutely turned her face to the confronting pile of firmamental darkness beyond the palings, and stepped into its midst But Thomasin's imagination being so actively engaged elsewhere, the night and the weather had for her no terror beyond that of their actual discomfort and difficulty

She was soon ascending Blooms End valley and traversing the undulations on the side of the hill The noise of the wind over the heath was shrill, and as if it whistled for joy at finding a night so congenial as this Sometimes the path led her to hollows between thickets of tall and dripping bracken, dead, though not yet prostrate, which enclosed her like a pool When they were more than usually tall she lifted the baby to the top of her head, that it might be out of the reach of their drenching fronds On higher ground, where the wind was brisk and sustained, the rain flew in a level flight without sensible descent so that it was beyond all power to imagine the remoteness of the point at which it left the bosoms of the clouds Here self defense was impossible and individual drops stuck into her like the arrows into Saint Sebastian She was enabled to avoid puddles by the nebulous paleness which signified their presence, though beside anything less dark than the heath they themselves would have appeared as blackness

Yet in spite of all this, Thomasin was not sorry that she had started To her there were not, as to Eustacia, demons in the air, and malice in every bush and bough The drops which lashed her face were not scorpions, but prosy rain, Egdon in the mass was no monster whatever, but impersonal open ground Her fears of the place were rational, her dislikes of its worst moods reasonable At this time it was in her view a windy, wet place, in which a person might experience much discomfort, lose the path without care, and possibly catch cold

If the path is well known the difficulty at such times of keeping therein is not altogether great, from its familiar feel to the feet, but once lost it is irrecoverable Owing to her baby, who somewhat impeded Thomasin's view forward and distracted her mind, she did at last lose the track This mishap occurred when she was descending an open slope about two-thirds home Instead of at-

tempting, by wandering hither and thither the hopeless task of finding such a mere thread she went straight on, trusting for guidance to her general knowledge of the district, which was scarcely surpassed by Clym's or by that of the heath-croppers themselves

At length Thomasin reached a hollow and began to discern through the rain a faint blotted radiance, which presently assumed the oblong form of an open door. She knew that no house stood hereabouts, and was soon aware of the nature of the door by its height above the ground.

"Why, it is Diggory Venn's van, surely!" she said.

A certain secluded spot near Rainbarrow was, she knew, often Venn's chosen center when staying in this neighborhood, and she guessed at once that she had stumbled upon this mysterious retreat. The question arose in her mind whether or not she should ask him to guide her into the path. In her anxiety to reach home she decided that she would appeal to him notwithstanding the strangeness of appearing before his eyes at this place and season. But when, in pursuance of this resolve, Thomasin reached the van and looked in she found it to be untenanted, though there was no doubt that it was the reddleman's. The fire was burning in the stove, the lantern hung from the nail. Round the doorway the floor was merely sprinkled with rain, and not saturated, which told her that the door had not long been opened.

While she stood uncertainly looking in Thomasin heard a footstep advancing from the darkness behind her, and turning, beheld the well-known form in corduroy, lurid from head to foot, the lantern beams falling upon him through an intervening gauze of raindrops.

"I thought you went down the slope," he said, without noticing her face. "How do you come back here again?"

"Diggory?" said Thomasin faintly.

"Who are you?" said Venn, still unperceiving. "And why were you crying so just now?"

"O, Diggory! don't you know me?" said she. "But of course you don't, wrapped up like this. What do you mean? I have not been crying here, and I have not been here before."

Venn then came nearer till he could see the illuminated side of her form.

"Mrs. Wildeve!" he exclaimed, staring. "What a time for us to meet! And the baby, too! What dreadful thing can have brought you out on such a night as this?"

She could not immediately answer, and without asking her permission he stepped into his van, took her by the arm, and drew her up after him.

"What is it?" he continued when they stood within.

"I have lost my way coming from Blooms-End, and I am in a great hurry to get home. Please show me as quickly as you can! It is so silly of me not to know Egdon better, and I cannot think how I came to lose the path. Show me quickly, Diggory, please."

"Yes, of course I will go with ye. But you came to me before this, Mrs. Wildeve?"

"I only came this minute."

"That's strange. I was lying down here asleep about five minutes ago, with

the door shut to keep out the weather, when the brushing of a woman's clothes over the heath-bushes just outside woke me up (for I don't sleep heavy), and at the same time I heard a sobbing or crying from the same woman. I opened my door and held out my lantern, and just as far as the light would reach I saw a woman, she turned her head when the light shined on her, and then hurried on downhill. I hung up the lantern, and was curious enough to pull on my things and dog her a few steps, but I could see nothing of her any more. That was where I had been when you came up, and when I saw you I thought you were the same one."

"Perhaps it was one of the heath-folk going home?"

"No, it couldn't. 'Tis too late. The noise of her gown over the heath was of a whistling sort that nothing but silk will make."

"It wasn't I, then. My dress is not silk, you see. Are we anywhere in a line between Mistover and the inn?"

"Well, yes, not far out."

"Ah, I wonder if it was she! Diggory, I must go at once!"

She jumped down from the van before he was aware, when Venn unhooked the lantern and leaped down after her. "I'll take the baby, ma'am," he said. "You must be tired out by the weight."

Thomasin hesitated a moment and then delivered the baby into Venn's hands. "Don't squeeze her, Diggory," she said, "or hurt her little arm, and keep the cloak close over her like this, so that the rain may not drop in her face."

"I will," said Venn earnestly. "As if I could hurt anything belonging to you!"

"I only meant accidentally," said Thomasin.

"The baby is dry enough, but you are pretty wet," said the reddleman when, in closing the door of his cart to padlock it, he noticed on the floor a ring of water-drops where her cloak had hung from her.

Thomasin followed him as he wound right and left to avoid the larger bushes, stopping occasionally and covering the lantern, while he looked over his shoulder to gain some idea of the position of Rainbarrow above them which it was necessary to keep directly behind their backs to preserve a proper course.

"You are sure the rain does not fall upon baby?"

"Quite sure. May I ask how old he is, ma'am?"

"He!" said Thomasin reproachfully. "Anybody can see better than that in a moment. She is nearly two months old. How far is it now to the inn?"

"A little over a quarter of a mile."

"Will you walk a little faster?"

"I was afraid you could not keep up."

"I am very anxious to get there. Ah, there is a light from the window!"

"'Tis not from the window. That's a gig-lamp to the best of my belief."

"O!" said Thomasin in despair. "I wish I had been there sooner—give me the baby, Diggory—you can go back now."

"I must go all the way," said Venn. "There is a quag between us and that light, and you will walk into it up to your neck unless I take you round."

"But the light is at the inn, and there is no quag in front of that."

"No, the light is below the inn some two or three hundred yards."

"Never mind," said Thomasin hurriedly "Go towards the light, and not towards the inn"

"Yes," answered Venn, swerving round in obedience, and, after a pause, "I wish you would tell me what this great trouble is I think you have proved that I can be trusted"

"There are some things that cannot be—cannot be told to—" And then her heart rose into her throat, and she could say no more

IX SIGHTS AND SOUNDS DRAW THE WANDERERS TOGETHER

HAVING seen Eustacia's signal from the hill at eight o'clock, Wildevé immediately prepared to assist her in her flight, and, as he hoped, accompany her He was somewhat perturbed, and his manner of informing Thomasin that he was going on a journey was in itself sufficient to rouse her suspicions When she had gone to bed he collected the few articles he would require, and went upstairs to the money-chest, whence he took a tolerably bountiful sum in notes, which had been advanced to him on the property he was so soon to have in possession, to defray expenses incidental to the removal.

He then went to the stable and coach-house to assure himself that the horse, gig, and harness were in a fit condition for a long drive Nearly half an hour was spent thus, and on returning to the house Wildevé had no thought of Thomasin being anywhere but in bed He had told the stable-lad not to stay up, leading the boy to understand that his departure would be at three or four in the morning, for this, though an exceptional hour, was less strange than midnight, the time actually agreed on, the packet from Budmouth sailing between one and two

At last all was quiet, and he had nothing to do but to wait By no effort could he shake off the oppression of spirits which he had experienced ever since his last meeting with Eustacia, but he hoped there was that in his situation which money could cure He had persuaded himself that to act not ungenerously towards his gentle wife by settling on her the half of his property, and with chivalrous devotion towards another and greater woman by sharing her fate, was possible And though he meant to adhere to Eustacia's instructions to the letter, to deposit her where she wished and to leave her, should that be her will, the spell that she had cast over him intensified, and his heart was beating fast in the anticipated futility of such commands in the face of a mutual wish that they should depart together

He would not allow himself to dwell long upon these conjectures, maxims, and hopes, and at twenty minutes to twelve he again went softly to the stable, harnessed the horse, and lit the lamps, whence, taking the horse by the head, he led him with the covered car out of the yard to a spot by the roadside some quarter of a mile below the inn

Here Wildevé waited, slightly sheltered from the driving rain by a high bank that had been cast up at this place Along the surface of the road where lit by the lamps the loosened gravel and small stones scudded and clicked together before the wind, which, leaving them in heaps, plunged into the heath and

boomed across the bushes into darkness. Only one sound rose above this din of weather, and that was the roaring of a ten-hatch weir a few yards further on, where the road approached the river which formed the boundary of the heath in this direction.

He lingered on in perfect stillness till he began to fancy that the midnight hour must have struck. A very strong doubt had arisen in his mind if Eustacia would venture down the hill in such weather, yet knowing her nature he felt that she might. "Poor thing! 'tis like her ill-luck," he murmured.

At length he turned to the lamp and looked at his watch. To his surprise it was nearly a quarter past midnight. He now wished that he had driven up the circuitous road to Mistover, a plan not adopted because of the enormous length of the route in proportion to that of the pedestrian's path down the open hillside, and the consequent increase of labor for the horse.

At this moment a footstep approached, but the light of the lamps being in a different direction, the comer was not visible. The step paused, then came on again.

"Eustacia?" said Wildeve.

The person came forward, and the light fell upon the form of Clym, glistening with wet, whom Wildeve immediately recognized, but Wildeve, who stood behind the lamp, was not at once recognized by Yeobright.

He stopped as if in doubt whether this waiting vehicle could have anything to do with the flight of his wife or not. The sight of Yeobright at once banished Wildeve's sober feelings, who saw him again as the deadly rival from whom Eustacia was to be kept at all hazards. Hence Wildeve did not speak, in the hope that Clym would pass by without particular inquiry.

While they both hung thus in hesitation, a dull sound became audible above the storm and wind. Its origin was unmistakable—it was the fall of a body into the stream adjoining, apparently at a point near the weir.

Both started. "Good God! can it be she?" said Clym.

"Why should it be she?" said Wildeve, in his alarm forgetting that he had hitherto screened himself.

"Ah!—that's you, you traitor, is it?" cried Yeobright. "Why should it be she? Because last week she would have put an end to her life if she had been able. She ought to have been watched! Take one of the lamps and come with me."

Yeobright seized the one on his side and hastened on, Wildeve did not wait to unfasten the other, but followed at once along the meadow-track to the weir, a little in the rear of Clym.

Shadwater Weir had at its foot a large circular pool, fifty feet in diameter, into which the water flowed through ten huge hatches, raised and lowered by a winch and cogs in the ordinary manner. The sides of the pool were of masonry, to prevent the water from washing away the bank, but the force of the stream in winter was sometimes such as to undermine the retaining wall and precipitate it into the hole. Clym reached the hatches, the framework of which was shaken to its foundations by the velocity of the current. Nothing but the froth of the waves could be discerned in the pool below. He got upon the plank bridge over the race, and holding to the rail, that the wind might not blow him off, crossed to the other side of the river. There he leant over the

wall and lowered the lamp, only to behold the vortex formed at the curl of the returning current

Wildeve meanwhile had arrived on the former side, and the light from Yeobright's lamp shed a flecked and agitated radiance across the weir-pool, revealing to the ex-engineer the tumbling courses of the currents from the hatches above. Across this gashed and puckered mirror a dark body was slowly borne by one of the backward currents.

"O, my darling!" exclaimed Wildeve in an agonized voice, and, without showing sufficient presence of mind even to throw off his great coat he leaped into the boiling hole.

Yeobright could now also discern the floating body, though but indistinctly, and imagining from Wildeve's plunge that there was life to be saved he was about to leap after. Bethinking himself of a wiser plan he placed the lamp against a post to make it stand upright, and running round to the lower part of the pool, where there was no wall, he sprang in and boldly waded upwards towards the deeper portion. Here he was taken off his legs, and in swimming was carried round into the center of the basin, where he perceived Wildeve struggling.

While these hasty actions were in progress here, Venn and Thomasin had been toiling through the lower corner of the heath in the direction of the light. They had not been near enough to the river to hear the plunge, but they saw the removal of the carriage lamp, and watched its motion into the mead. As soon as they reached the car and horse Venn guessed that something new was amiss, and hastened to follow in the course of the moving light. Venn walked faster than Thomasin, and came to the weir alone.

The lamp placed against the post by Clym still shone across the water, and the reddleman observed something floating motionless. Being encumbered with the infant he ran back to meet Thomasin.

"Take the baby, please, Mrs Wildeve," he said hastily. "Run home with her, call the stable-lad, and make him send down to me any men who may be living near. Somebody has fallen into the weir."

Thomasin took the child and ran. When she came to the covered car, the horse, though fresh from the stable, was standing perfectly still, as if conscious of misfortune. She saw for the first time whose it was. She nearly fainted, and would have been unable to proceed another step but that the necessity of preserving the little girl from harm nerved her to an amazing self-control. In this agony of suspense she entered the house, put the baby in a place of safety, woke the lad and the female domestic, and ran out to give the alarm at the nearest cottage.

Diggory, having returned to the brink of the pool, observed that the small upper hatches or floats were withdrawn. He found one of these lying upon the grass, and taking it under one arm, and with his lantern in his hand, entered at the bottom of the pool as Clym had done. As soon as he began to be in deep water he flung himself across the hatch, thus supported he was able to keep afloat as long as he chose, holding the lantern aloft with his disengaged hand. Propelled by his feet he steered round and round the pool, ascending each time by one of the back streams and descending in the middle of the current.

At first he could see nothing. Then amidst the glistening of the whirlpools and the white clots of foam he distinguished a woman's bonnet floating alone. His search was now under the left wall when something came to the surface almost close beside him. It was not, as he had expected, a woman, but a man. The reddleman put the ring of the lantern between his teeth, seized the floating man by the collar, and, holding on to the hatch with his remaining arm, struck out into the strongest race, by which the unconscious man, the hatch, and himself were carried down the stream. As soon as Venn found his feet dragging over the pebbles of the shallower part below he secured his footing and waded towards the brink. There, where the water stood at about the height of his waist, he flung away the hatch, and attempted to drag forth the man. This was a matter of great difficulty, and he found as the reason that the legs of the unfortunate stranger were tightly embraced by the arms of another man, who had hitherto been entirely beneath the surface.

At this moment his heart bounded to hear footsteps running towards him, and two men, roused by Thomasin, appeared at the brink above. They ran to where Venn was, and helped him in lifting out the apparently drowned persons, separating them, and laying them out upon the grass. Venn turned the light upon their faces. The one who had been uppermost was Yeobright, he who had been completely submerged was Wildeve.

Now we must search the hole again," said Venn. "A woman is in there somewhere. Get a pole."

One of the men went to the foot-bridge and tore off the handrail. The reddleman and the two others then entered the water together from below as before, and with their united force probed the pool forwards to where it sloped down to its central depth. Venn was not mistaken in supposing that any person who had sunk for the last time would be washed down to this point, for when they had examined to about half-way across, something impeded their thrust.

"Pull it forward," said Venn, and they raked it in with the pole till it was close to their feet.

Venn vanished under the stream, and came up with an armful of wet drapery enclosing a woman's cold form, which was all that remained of the desperate Eustacia.

When they reached the bank there stood Thomasin in a stress of grief, bending over the two unconscious ones who already lay there. The horse and car were brought to the nearest point in the road, and it was the work of a few minutes only to place the three in the vehicle. Venn led on the horse, supporting Thomasin upon his arm, and the two men followed, till they reached the inn.

The woman who had been shaken out of her sleep by Thomasin had hastily dressed herself and lighted a fire, the other servant being left to snore on in peace at the back of the house. The insensible forms of Eustacia, Clym, and Wildeve were then brought in and laid on the carpet, with their feet to the fire, when such restorative processes as could be thought of were adopted at once, the stableman being in the meantime sent for a doctor. But there seemed to be not a whiff of life left in either of the bodies. Then Thomasin, whose stupor of grief had been thrust off awhile by frantic action, applied a bottle of

hartshorn to Clym's nostrils, having tried it in vain upon the other two. He sighed

"Clym's alive!" she exclaimed

He soon breathed distinctly, and again and again did she attempt to revive her husband by the same means, but Wildeve gave no sign. There was too much reason to think that he and Eustacia both were forever beyond the reach of stimulating perfumes. Their exertions did not relax till the doctor arrived when, one by one, the senseless three were taken upstairs and put into warm beds.

Venn soon felt himself relieved from further attendance, and went to the door, scarcely able yet to realize the strange catastrophe that had befallen the family in which he took so great an interest. Thomasin surely would be broken down by the sudden and overwhelming nature of this event. No firm and sensible Mrs. Yeobright lived now to support the gentle girl through the ordeal, and, whatever an unimpassioned spectator might think of her loss of such a husband as Wildeve, there could be no doubt that for the moment she was distracted and horrified by the blow. As for himself, not being privileged to go to her and comfort her, he saw no reason for waiting longer in a house where he remained only as a stranger.

He returned across the heath to his van. The fire was not yet out, and everything remained as he had left it. Venn now bethought himself of his clothes, which were saturated with water to the weight of lead. He changed them, spread them before the fire, and lay down to sleep. But it was more than he could do to rest here while excited by a vivid imagination of the turmoil they were in at the house he had quitted, and, blaming himself for coming away, he dressed in another suit, locked up the door, and again hastened across to the inn. Rain was still falling heavily when he entered the kitchen. A bright fire was shining from the hearth, and two women were bustling about, one of whom was Olly Dowden.

"Well, how is it going on now?" said Venn in a whisper.

"Mr. Yeobright is better, but Mrs. Yeobright and Mr. Wildeve are dead and cold. The doctor says they were quite gone before they were out of the water."

"Ah! I thought as much when I hauled 'em up. And Mrs. Wildeve?"

"She is as well as can be expected. The doctor had her put between blankets, for she was almost as wet as they that had been in the river, poor young thing. You don't seem very dry, reddleman."

"O, 'tis not much. I have changed my things. This is only a little dampness I've got coming through the rain again."

"Stand by the fire. Mis'ess says you be to have whatever you want, and she was sorry when she was told that you'd gone away."

Venn drew near to the fireplace, and looked into the flames in an absent mood. The steam came from his leggings and ascended the chimney with the smoke, while he thought of those who were upstairs. Two were corpses, one had barely escaped the jaws of death, another was sick and a widow. The last occasion on which he had lingered by that fireplace was when the raffle was in progress, when Wildeve was alive and well, Thomasin active and smiling in the next room, Yeobright and Eustacia just made husband and wife, and Mrs.

Yeobright living at Blooms-End It had seemed at that time that the then position of affairs was good for at least twenty years to come Yet, of all the circle, he himself was the only one whose situation had not materially changed

While he ruminated a footstep descended the stairs It was the nurse, who brought in her hand a rolled mass of wet paper The woman was so engrossed with her occupation that she hardly saw Venn She took from a cupboard some pieces of twine, which she strained across the fireplace, tying the end of each piece to the firedog, previously pulled forward for the purpose, and, unrolling the wet papers, she began pinning them one by one to the strings in a manner of clothes on a line

"What be they?" said Venn

"Poor master's bank-notes," she answered "They were found in his pocket when they undressed him"

"Then he was not coming back again for some time?" said Venn

"That we shall never know," said she

Venn was loth to depart, for all on earth that interested him lay under this roof As nobody in the house had any more sleep that night, except the two who slept forever, there was no reason why he should not remain So he retired into the niche of the fireplace where he had used to sit, and there he continued, watching the steam from the double row of bank-notes as they waved backwards and forwards in the draught of the chimney till their flaccidity was changed to dry crispness throughout Then the woman came and unpinned them, and, folding them together, carried the handful upstairs Presently the doctor appeared from above with the look of a man who could do no more, and, pulling on his gloves, went out of the house, the trotting of his horse soon dying away upon the road

At four o'clock there was a gentle knock at the door It was from Charley, who had been sent by Captain Vye to inquire if anything had been heard of Eustacia The girl who admitted him looked in his face as if she did not know what answer to return, and showed him in to where Venn was seated, saying to the reddleman, "Will you tell him, please?"

Venn told Charley's only utterance was a feeble, indistinct sound He stood quite still, then he burst out spasmodically, "I shall see her once more?"

"I dare say you may see her," said Diggory gravely "But hadn't you better run and tell Captain Vye?"

"Yes, yes Only I do hope I shall see her just once again"

"You shall," said a low voice behind, and starting round they beheld by the dim light a thin, pallid, almost spectral form, wrapped in a blanket, and looking like Lazarus coming from the tomb

It was Yeobright Neither Venn nor Charley spoke, and Clym continued "You shall see her There will be time enough to tell the captain when it gets daylight You would like to see her, too—would you not, Diggory? She looks very beautiful now"

Venn assented by rising to his feet, and with Charley he followed Clym to the foot of the staircase, where he took off his boots, Charley did the same They followed Yeobright upstairs to the landing, where there was a candle

burning, which Yeobright took in his hand, and with it led the way into an adjoining room. Here he went to the bedside and folded back the sheet.

They stood silently looking upon Eustacia, who, as she lay there still in death, eclipsed all her loving phases. Pallor did not include all the quality of her complexion, which seemed more than whiteness, it was almost light. The expression of her finely carved mouth was pleasant, as if a sense of dignity had just compelled her to leave off speaking. Eternal rigidity had seized upon it in a momentary transition between fervor and resignation. Her black hair was looser now than either of them had ever seen it before, and surrounded her brow like a forest. The stateliness of look which had been almost too marked for a dweller in a country domicile had at last found an artistically happy background.

Nobody spoke, till at length Clym covered her and turned aside. "Now come here," he said.

They went to a recess in the same room, and there, on a smaller bed, lay another figure—Wildeve. Less repose was visible in his face than in Eustacia's, but the same luminous youthfulness overspread it, and the least sympathetic observer would have felt at sight of him now that he was born for a higher destiny than this. The only sign upon him of his recent struggle for life was in his finger-tips, which were worn and scarified in his dying endeavors to obtain a hold on the face of the weir-wall.

Yeobright's manner had been so quiet, he had uttered so few syllables since his reappearance, that Venn imagined him resigned. It was only when they had left the room and stood upon the landing that the true state of his mind was apparent. Here he said, with a wild smile, inclining his head towards the chamber in which Eustacia lay, "She is the second woman I have killed this year. I was a great cause of my mother's death, and I am the chief cause of hers."

"How?" said Venn.

"I spoke cruel words to her, and she left my house. I did not invite her back till it was too late. It is I who ought to have drowned myself. It would have been a charity to the living had the river overwhelmed me and borne her up. But I cannot die. Those who ought to have lived, lie dead, and here am I alive!"

"But you can't charge yourself with crimes in that way," said Venn. "You may as well say that the parents be the cause of a murder by the child, for without the parents the child would never have been begot."

"Yes, Venn, that is very true, but you don't know all the circumstances. If it had pleased God to put an end to me it would have been a good thing for all. But I am getting used to the horror of my existence. They say that a time comes when men laugh at misery through long acquaintance with it. Surely that time will soon come to me!"

"Your aim has always been good," said Venn. "Why should you say such desperate things?"

"No, they are not desperate. They are only hopeless, and my great regret is that for what I have done no man or law can punish me!"

BOOK SIXTH *AFTERCOURSES*

I THE INEVITABLE MOVEMENT ONWARD

THE STORY of the deaths of Eustacia and Wildeve was told throughout Egdon, and far beyond, for many weeks and months. All the known incidents of their love were enlarged, distorted, touched up, and modified, till the original reality bore but a slight resemblance to the counterfeit presentation by surrounding tongues. Yet, upon the whole, neither the man nor the woman lost dignity by sudden death. Misfortune had struck them gracefully, cutting off their erratic histories with a catastrophic dash, instead of, as with many, attenuating each life to an uninteresting meagerness, through long years of wrinkles, neglect, and decay.

On those most nearly concerned the effect was somewhat different. Strangers who had heard of many such cases now merely heard of one more, but immediately where a blow falls no previous imaginings amount to appreciable preparation for it. The very suddenness of her bereavement dulled, to some extent, Thomasin's feelings, yet, irrationally enough, a consciousness that the husband she had lost ought to have been a better man did not lessen her mourning at all. On the contrary, this fact seemed at first to set off the dead husband in his young wife's eyes, and to be the necessary cloud to the rainbow.

But the horrors of the unknown had passed. Vague misgivings about her future as a deserted wife were at an end. The worst had once been matter of trembling conjecture, it was now matter of reason only, a limited badness. Her chief interest, the little Eustacia, still remained. There was humility in her grief, no defiance in her attitude, and when this is the case a shaken spirit is apt to be stilled.

Could Thomasin's mournfulness now and Eustacia's serenity during life have been reduced to common measure, they would have touched the same mark nearly. But Thomasin's former brightness made shadow of that which in a somber atmosphere was light itself.

The spring came and calmed her, the summer came and soothed her, the autumn arrived, and she began to be comforted, for her little girl was strong and happy, growing in size and knowledge every day. Outward events flattered Thomasin not a little. Wildeve had died intestate, and she and the child were his only relatives. When administration had been granted, all the debts paid, and the residue of her husband's uncle's property had come into her hands, it was found that the sum waiting to be invested for her own and the child's benefit was little less than ten thousand pounds.

Where should she live? The obvious place was Blooms-End. The old rooms, it is true, were not much higher than the between-decks of a frigate, necessitating a sinking in the floor under the new clock-case she brought from the inn, and the removal of the handsome brass knobs on its head, before there was

height for it to stand, but, such as the rooms were, there were plenty of them, and the place was endeared to her by every early recollection. Clym very gladly admitted her as a tenant, confining his own existence to two rooms at the top of the back staircase, where he lived on, quietly, shut off from Thomasin and the three servants she had thought fit to indulge in now that she was a mistress of money, going his own ways, and thinking his own thoughts.

His sorrows had made some change in his outward appearance, and yet the alteration was chiefly within. It might have been said that he had a wrinkled mind. He had no enemies, and he could get nobody to reproach him, which was why he so bitterly reproached himself.

He did sometimes think he had been ill-used by fortune, so far as to say that to be borne is a palpable dilemma, and that instead of men aiming to advance in life with glory they should calculate how to retreat out of it without shame. But that he and his had been sarcastically and pitilessly handled in having such irons thrust into their souls he did not maintain long. It is usually so, except with the sternest of men. Human beings, in their generous endeavor to construct a hypothesis that shall not degrade a First Cause, have always hesitated to conceive a dominant power of lower moral quality than their own, and, even while they sit down and weep by the waters of Babylon, invent excuses for the oppression which prompts their tears.

Thus, though words of solace were vainly uttered in his presence, he found relief in a direction of his own choosing when left to himself. For a man of his habits the house and the hundred and twenty pounds a year which he had inherited from his mother were enough to supply all worldly needs. Resources do not depend upon gross amounts, but upon the proportion of givings to takings.

He frequently walked the heath alone, when the past seized upon him with its shadowy hand, and held him there to listen to its tale. His imagination would then people the spot with its ancient inhabitants, forgotten Celtic tribes trod their tracks about him, and he could almost live among them, look in their faces, and see them standing beside the barrows which swelled around, untouched and perfect as at the time of their erection. Those of the dyed barbarians who had chosen the cultivable tracts were, in comparison with those who had left their marks here, as writers on paper beside writers on parchment. Their records had perished long ago by the plow, while the works of these remained. Yet they all had lived and died unconscious of the different fates awaiting their works. It reminded him that unforeseen factors operate in the production of immortality.

Winter again came round, with its winds, frosts, tame robins, and sparkling starlight. The year previous Thomasin had hardly been conscious of the season's advance, this year she laid her heart open to external influences of every kind. The life of this sweet cousin, her baby, and her servants, came to Clym's senses only in the form of sounds through a wood partition as he sat over books of exceptionally large type, but his ear became at last so accustomed to these slight noises from the other part of the house that he almost could witness the scenes they signified. A faint beat of half seconds conjured up Thomasin rocking the cradle, a wavering hum meant that she was singing the baby to sleep,

a crunching of sand as between millstones raised the picture of Humphrey's, Fairway's, or Sam's heavy feet crossing the stone floor of the kitchen, a light boyish step, and a gay tune in a high key, betokened a visit from Grandfer Cante, a sudden break-off in the Grandfer's utterances implied the application to his lips of a mug of small beer, a bustling and slamming of doors meant starting to go to market, for Thomasin, in spite of her added scope for gentility, led a ludicrously narrow life, to the end that she might save every possible pound for her little daughter

One summer day Clym was in the garden, immediately outside the parlor-window, which was, as usual, open. He was looking at the pot-flowers on the sill, they had been revived and restored by Thomasin to the state in which his mother had left them. He heard a slight scream from Thomasin, who was sitting inside the room.

"O, how you frightened me!" she said to some one who had entered "I thought you were the ghost of yourself."

Clym was curious enough to advance a little further and look in at the window. To his astonishment there stood within the room Diggory Venn, no longer a reddleman, but exhibiting the strangely altered hues of an ordinary Christian countenance, white shirt-front, light flowered waist coat, blue-spotted neckerchief, and bottle-green coat. Nothing in this appearance was at all singular but the fact of its great difference from what he had formerly been. Red, and all approach to red, was carefully excluded from every article of clothes upon him, for what is there that persons just out of harness dread so much as reminders of the trade which has enriched them?

Yeobright went round to the door and entered.

"I was so alarmed!" said Thomasin, smiling from one to the other "I couldn't believe that he had got white of his own accord! It seemed supernatural."

"I gave up dealing in riddle last Christmas," said Venn "It was a profitable trade, and I found that by that time I had made enough to take the dairy of fifty cows that my rather had in his lifetime. I always thought of getting to that place again if I changed at all, and now I am there."

"How did you manage to become white, Diggory?" Thomasin asked.

"I turned so by degrees, ma'am."

"You look much better than ever you did before."

Venn appeared confused, and Thomasin, seeing how inadvertently she had spoken to a man who might possibly have tender feelings for her still, blushed a little. Clym saw nothing of this, and added good-humoredly—

"What shall we have to frighten Thomasin's baby with, now you have become a human being again?"

"Sit down, Diggory," said Thomasin, "and stay to tea."

Venn moved as if he would retire to the kitchen, when Thomasin said with pleasant pertness as she went on with some sewing, "Of course you must sit down here. And where does your fifty-cow dairy lie, Mr. Venn?"

"At Stickleford—about two miles to the right of Alderworth, ma'am, where the meads begin. I have thought that if Mr. Yeobright would like to pay me a visit sometimes he shouldn't stay away for want of asking. I'll not bide to tea this afternoon, thank'ee, for I've got something on hand that must be settled

'Tis Maypole day tomorrow, and the Shadwater folk have clubbed with a few of your neighbors here to have a pole just outside your palings in the heath, as it is a nice green place" Venn waved his elbow towards the patch in front of the house "I have been talking to Fairway about it," he continued, "and I said to him that before we put up the pole it would be as well to ask Mrs Wildeve"

"I can say nothing against it," she answered "Our property does not reach an inch further than the white palings"

"But you might not like to see a lot of folk going crazy round a stick, under your very nose?"

"I shall have no objection at all"

Venn soon after went away, and in the evening Yeobright strolled as far as Fairway's cottage It was a lovely May sunset, and the birch trees which grew on this margin of the vast Egdon wilderness had put on their new leaves, delicate as butterflies' wings, and diaphanous as amber Beside Fairway's dwelling was an open space recessed from the road, and here were now collected all the young people from within a radius of a couple of miles The pole lay with one end supported on a trestle, and women were engaged in wreathing it from the top downwards with wild flowers The instincts of merry England lingered on here with exceptional vitality, and the symbolic customs which tradition has attached to each season of the year were yet a reality on Egdon Indeed, the impulses of all such outlandish hamlets are pagan still, in these spots homage to nature, self-adoration, frantic gayeties, fragments of Teutonic rites to divinities whose names are forgotten, seem in some way or other to have survived mediaeval doctrine

Yeobright did not interrupt the preparations, and went home again The next morning, when Thomasin withdrew the curtains of her bedroom window, there stood the Maypole in the middle of the green, its top cutting into the sky It had sprung up in the night, or rather early morning, like Jack's beanstalk She opened the casement to get a better view of the garlands and posies that adorned it The sweet perfume of the flowers had already spread into the surrounding air, which, being free from every taint, conducted to her lips a full measure of the fragrance received from the spire of blossom in its midst At the top of the pole were crossed hoops decked with small flowers, beneath these came a milk-white zone of Maybloom, then a zone of bluebells, then of cowslips, then of lilacs, then of ragged-robins, daffodils, and so on, till the lowest stage was reached Thomasin noticed all these, and was delighted that the May-revel was to be so near

When afternoon came people began to gather on the green, and Yeobright was interested enough to look out upon them from the open window of his room Soon after this Thomasin walked out from the door immediately below and turned her eyes up to her cousin's face She was dressed more gayly than Yeobright had ever seen her dress since the time of Wildeve's death, eighteen months before, since the day of her marriage even she had not exhibited herself to such advantage

"How pretty you look today, Thomasin!" he said "Is it because of the Maypole?"

"Not altogether." And then she blushed and dropped her eyes, which he did not specially observe, though her manner seemed to him to be rather peculiar, considering that she was only addressing himself. Could it be possible that she had put on her summer clothes to please him?

He recalled her conduct towards him throughout the last few weeks, when they had often been working together in the garden, just as they had formerly done when they were boy and girl under his mother's eye. What if her interest in him were not so entirely that of a relative as it had formerly been? To Yeobright any possibility of this sort was a serious matter, and he almost felt troubled at the thought of it. Every pulse of loverlike feeling which had not been stilled during Eustacia's lifetime had gone into the grave with her. His passion for her had occurred too far on in his manhood to leave fuel enough on hand for another fire of that sort, as may happen with more boyish loves. Even supposing him capable of loving again, that love would be a plant of slow and labored growth, and in the end only small and sickly, like an autumn hatched bird.

He was so distressed by this new complexity that when the enthusiastic brass band arrived and struck up, which it did about five o'clock, with apparently wind enough among its members to blow down his house, he withdrew from his rooms by the back door, went down the garden, through the gate in the hedge, and away out of sight. He could not bear to remain in the presence of enjoyment today, though he had tried hard.

Nothing was seen of him for four hours. When he came back by the same path it was dusk, and the dews were coating every green thing. The boisterous music had ceased, but, entering the premises as he did from behind, he could not see if the May party had all gone till he had passed through Thomasin's division of the house to the front door. Thomasin was standing within the porch alone.

She looked at him reproachfully. "You went away just when it began, Clym," she said.

"Yes. I felt I could not join in. You went out with them, of course?"

"No, I did not."

"You appeared to be dressed on purpose."

"Yes, but I could not go out alone, so many people were there. One is there now."

Yeobright strained his eyes across the dark-green patch beyond the paling, and near the black form of the Maypole he discerned a shadowy figure, sauntering idly up and down. "Who is it?" he said.

"Mr. Venn," said Thomasin.

"You might have asked him to come in, I think, Tamsie. He has been very kind to you first and last."

"I will now," she said, and, acting on the impulse, went through the wicket to where Venn stood under the Maypole.

"It is Mr. Venn, I think?" she inquired.

Venn started as if he had not seen her—artful man that he was—and said, "Yes."

"Will you come in?"

"I am afraid that I—"

"I have seen you dancing this evening, and you had the very best of the girls for your partners. Is it that you won't come in because you wish to stand here, and think over the past hours of enjoyment?"

"Well, that's partly it," said Mr Venn, with ostentatious sentiment. "But the main reason why I am biding here like this is that I want to wait till the moon rises."

"To see how pretty the Maypole looks in the moonlight?"

"No. To look for a glove that was dropped by one of the maidens."

Thomasin was speechless with surprise. That a man who had to walk some four or five miles to his home should wait here for such a reason pointed to only one conclusion: the man must be amazingly interested in that glove's owner.

"Were you dancing with her, Diggory?" she asked, in a voice which revealed that he had made himself considerably more interesting to her by this disclosure.

"No," he sighed.

"And you will not come in, then?"

"Not tonight, thank you, ma'am."

"Shall I lend you a lantern to look for the young person's glove, Mr Venn?"

"O no, it is not necessary, Mrs Wildeve, thank you. The moon will rise in a few minutes."

Thomasin went back to the porch. "Is he coming in?" said Clym, who had been waiting where she had left him.

"He would rather not tonight," she said, and then passed by him into the house, whereupon Clym too retired to his own rooms.

When Clym was gone Thomasin crept upstairs in the dark, and, just listening by the cot, to assure herself that the child was asleep, she went to the window, gently lifted the corner of the white curtain, and looked out. Venn was still there. She watched the growth of the faint radiance appearing in the sky by the eastern hill, till presently the edge of the moon burst upwards and flooded the valley with light. Diggory's form was now distinct on the green, he was moving about in a bowed attitude, evidently scanning the grass for the precious missing article, walking in zigzags right and left till he should have passed over every foot of the ground.

"How very ridiculous!" Thomasin murmured to herself, in a tone which was intended to be satirical. "To think that a man should be so silly as to go mooning about like that for a girl's glove! A respectable dairyman, too, and a man of money as he is now. What a pity!"

At last Venn appeared to find it, whereupon he stood up and raised it to his lips. Then placing it in his breast-pocket—the nearest receptacle to a man's heart permitted by the modern raiment—he ascended the valley in a mathematically direct line towards his distant home in the meadows.

II THOMASIN WALKS IN A GREEN PLACE BY THE ROMAN ROAD

CLYM saw little of Thomasin for several days after this, and when they met she was more silent than usual. At length he asked her what she was thinking of so intently.

"I am thoroughly perplexed," she said candidly. "I cannot for my life think who it is that Diggory Venn is so much in love with. None of the girls at the Maypole were good enough for him, and yet she must have been there."

Clym tried to imagine Venn's choice for a moment, but ceasing to be interested in the question, he went on again with his gardening.

No clearing up of the mystery was granted her for some time. But one afternoon Thomasin was upstairs getting ready for a walk, when she had occasion to come to the landing and call "Rachel." Rachel was a girl about thirteen, who carried the baby out for airings, and she came upstairs at the call.

"Have you seen one of my last new gloves about the house, Rachel?" inquired Thomasin. "It is the fellow to this one."

Rachel did not reply.

"Why don't you answer?" said her mistress.

"I think it is lost, ma'am."

"Lost? Who lost it? I have never worn them but once."

Rachel appeared as one dreadfully troubled, and at last began to cry. "Please, ma'am, on the day of the Maypole I had none to wear, and I seed yours on the table, and I thought I would borrow 'em. I did not mean to hurt 'em at all, but one of them got lost. Somebody gave me some money to buy another pair for you, but I have not been able to go anywhere to get 'em."

"Who's somebody?"

"Mr. Venn."

"Did he know it was my glove?"

"Yes, I told him."

Thomasin was so surprised by the explanation that she quite forgot to lecture the girl, who glided silently away. Thomasin did not move further than to turn her eyes upon the grass-plot where the Maypole had stood. She remained thinking, then said to herself that she would not go out that afternoon, but would work hard at the baby's unfinished lovely plaid frock, cut on the cross in the newest fashion. How she managed to work hard, and yet do no more than she had done at the end of two hours, would have been a mystery to any one not aware that the recent incident was of a kind likely to divert her industry from a manual to a mental channel.

Next day she went her ways as usual, and continued her custom of walking in the heath with no other companion than little Eustacia, now of the age when it is a matter of doubt with such characters whether they are intended to walk through the world on their hands or on their feet, so that they get into painful complications by trying both. It was very pleasant to Thomasin, when she had carried the child to some lonely place, to give her a little private practice on the

green turf and shepherd's-thyme, which formed a soft mat to fall headlong upon when equilibrium was lost

Once, when engaged in this system of training, and stooping to remove bits of stick, fern stalks, and other such fragments from the child's path, that the journey might not be brought to an untimely end by some insuperable barrier a quarter of an inch high, she was alarmed by the discovering that a man on horseback was almost close beside her, the soft natural carpet having muffled the horse's tread. The rider, who was Venn, waved his hat in the air and bowed gallantly

"Diggory, give me my glove," said Thomasin, whose manner it was under any circumstances to plunge into the midst of a subject which engrossed her

Venn immediately dismounted, put his hand in his breast-pocket, and handed the glove

"Thank you. It was very good of you to take care of it."

"It is very good of you to say so."

"O no. I was quite glad to find you had it. Everybody gets so indifferent that I was surprised to know you thought of me."

"If you had remembered what I was once you wouldn't have been surprised."

"Ah, no," she said quickly. "But men of your character are mostly so independent."

"What is my character?" he asked

"I don't exactly know," said Thomasin simply, "except it is to cover up your feelings under a practical manner, and only to show them when you are alone."

"Ah, how do you know that?" said Venn strategically

"Because," said she, stopping to put the little girl, who had managed to get herself upside down, right end up again, "because I do."

"You mustn't judge by folks in general," said Venn. "Still I don't know much what feelings are now-a-days. I have got so mixed up with business of one sort and t'other that my soft sentiments are gone off in vapor like. Yes, I am given up body and soul to the making of money. Money is all my dream."

"O Diggory, how wicked!" said Thomasin reproachfully, and looking at him in exact balance between taking his words seriously and judging them as said to tease her

"Yes, 'tis rather a rum course," said Venn, in the bland tone of one comfortably resigned to sins he could no longer overcome

"You, who used to be so nice!"

"Well, that's an argument I rather like, because what a man has once been he may be again." Thomasin blushed. "Except that it is rather harder now," Venn continued

"Why?" she asked

"Because you be richer than you were at that time."

"O no—not much. I have made it nearly all over to the baby, as it was my duty to do, except just enough to live on."

"I am rather glad of that," said Venn softly, and regarding her from the corner of his eye, "for it makes it easier for us to be friendly."

Thomasin blushed again, and, when a few more words had been said of a not unpleasing kind, Venn mounted his horse and rode on

This conversation had passed in a hollow of the heath near the old Roman road, a place much frequented by Thomasin. And it might have been observed that she did not in future walk that way less often from having met Venn there now. Whether or not Venn abstained from riding thither because he had met Thomasin in the same place might easily have been guessed from her proceedings about two months later in the same year.

III THE SERIOUS DISCOURSE OF CLYM WITH HIS COUSIN

THROUGHOUT this period Yeobright had more or less pondered on his duty to his cousin Thomasin. He could not help feeling that it would be a pitiful waste of sweet material if the tender-natured thing should be doomed from this early stage of her life onwards to dribble away her win some qualities on lonely gorse and fern. But he felt this as an economist merely, and not as a lover. His passion for Eustacia had been a sort of conserve of his whole life, and he had nothing more of that supreme quality left to bestow. So far the obvious thing was not to entertain any idea of marriage with Thomasin, even to oblige her.

But this was not all. Years ago there had been in his mother's mind a great fancy about Thomasin and himself. It had not positively amounted to a desire, but it had always been a favorite dream. That they should be man and wife in good time, if the happiness of neither were endangered thereby, was the fancy in question. So that what course save one was there now left for any son who revered his mother's memory as Yeobright did? It is an unfortunate fact that any particular whim of parents, which might have been dispersed by half an hour's conversation during their lives, becomes sublimated by their deaths into a fiat the most absolute, with such results to conscientious children as those parents, had they lived, would have been the first to decry.

Had only Yeobright's own future been involved he would have proposed to Thomasin with a ready heart. He had nothing to lose by carrying out a dead mother's hope. But he dreaded to contemplate Thomasin wedded to the mere corpse of a lover that he now felt himself to be. He had but three activities alive in him. One was his almost daily walk to the little graveyard wherein his mother lay, another, his just as frequent visits by night to the more distant enclosure which numbered his Eustacia among its dead, the third was self-preparation for a vocation which alone seemed likely to satisfy his cravings—that of an itinerant preacher of the eleventh commandment. It was difficult to believe that Thomasin would be cheered by a husband with such tendencies as these.

Yet he resolved to ask her, and let her decide for herself. It was even with a pleasant sense of doing his duty that he went downstairs to her one evening for this purpose, when the sun was sending up the valley the same long shadow of the housetop that he had seen lying there times out of number while his mother lived.

Thomasin was not in her room, and he found her in the front garden. "I

have long been wanting, Thomasin," he began, "to say something about a matter that concerns both our futures"

"And you are going to say it now?" she remarked quickly, coloring as she met his gaze "Do stop a minute, Clym, and let me speak first, for oddly enough, I have been wanting to say something to you"

"By all means say on, Tamsie"

"I suppose nobody can overhear us?" she went on, casting her eyes around and lowering her voice "Well, first you will promise me this—that you won't be angry and call me anything harsh if you disagree with what I propose?"

Yeobright promised, and she continued "What I want is your advice, for you are my relation—I mean, a sort of guardian to me—aren't you, Clym?"

"Well, yes, I suppose I am, a sort of guardian In fact, I am, of course," he said, altogether perplexed as to her drift

"I am thinking of marrying," she then observed blandly "But I shall not marry unless you assure me that you approve of such a step Why don't you speak?"

"I was taken rather by surprise But, nevertheless, I am very glad to hear such news I shall approve, of course, dear Tamsie Who can it be? I am quite at a loss to guess No, I am not—'tis the old doctor!—not that I mean to call him old, for he is not very old after all Ah—I noticed when he attended you last time!"

"No, no," she said hastily "'Tis Mr Venn"

Clym's face suddenly became grave

"There, now, you don't like him, and I wish I hadn't mentioned him!" she exclaimed almost petulantly "And I shouldn't have done it, either, only he keeps on bothering me so till I don't know what to do!"

Clym looked out of window "I like Venn well enough," he answered at last "He is a very honest and at the same time astute man He is clever too, as is proved by his having got you to favor him But really, Thomasin, he is not quite—"

"Gentleman enough for me? That is just what I feel I am sorry now that I asked you, and I won't think any more of him At the same time I must marry him if I marry anybody—that I will say!"

"I don't see that," said Clym, carefully concealing every clue to his own interrupted intention, which she plainly had not guessed "You might marry a professional man, or somebody of that sort, by going into the town to live and forming acquaintances there"

"I am not fit for town life—so very rural and silly as I always have been Do not you yourself notice my countrified ways?"

"Well, when I came home from Paris I did, a little, but I don't now"

"That's because you have got countrified too O, I couldn't live in a street for the world! Egdon is a ridiculous old place, but I have got used to it, and I couldn't be happy anywhere else at all"

"Neither could I," said Clym

"Then how could you say that I should marry some town man? I am sure, say what you will, that I must marry Diggory, if I marry at all He has been

kinder to me than anybody else, and has helped me in many ways that I don't know of!" Thomasin almost pouted now

"Yes, he has," said Clym in a neutral tone "Well, I wish with all my heart that I could say, marry him But I cannot forget what my mother thought on that matter, and it goes rather against me not to respect her opinion There is too much reason why we should do the little we can to respect it now"

"Very well, then," sighed Thomasin "I will say no more"

"But you are not bound to obey my wishes I merely say what I think"

"O no—I don't want to be rebellious in that way," she said sadly "I had no business to think of him—I ought to have thought of my family What dreadfully bad impulses there are in me!" Her lip trembled, and she turned away to hide a tear

Clym, though vexed at what seemed her unaccountable taste, was in a measure relieved to find that at any rate the marriage question in relation to himself was shelved Through several succeeding days he saw her at different times from the window of his room moping disconsolately about the garden He was half angry with her for choosing Venn, then he was grieved at having put himself in the way of Venn's happiness, who was, after all, as honest and persevering a young fellow as any on Egdon, since he had turned over a new leaf In short, Clym did not know what to do

When next they met she said abruptly, "He is much more respectable now than he was then!"

"Who? O yes—Diggory Venn"

"Aunt only objected because he was a reddleman"

"Well, Thomasin, perhaps I don't know all the particulars of my mother's wish So you had better use your own discretion"

"You will always feel that I slighted your mother's memory"

"No, I will not I shall think you are convinced that, had she seen Diggory in his present position, she would have considered him a fitting husband for you Now, that's my real feeling Don't consult me any more, but do as you like, Thomasin I shall be content"

It is to be supposed that Thomasin was convinced, for a few days after this, when Clym strayed into a part of the heath that he had not lately visited, Humphrey, who was at work there, said to him, "I am glad to see that Mrs Wildeve and Venn have made it up again, seemingly"

"Have they?" said Clym abstractedly

"Yes, and he do contrive to stumble upon her whenever she walks out on fine days with the chiel But, Mr Yeobright, I can't help feeling that your cousin ought to have married you 'Tis a pity to make two chimley-corners where there need be only one You could get her away from him now, 'us my belief, if you were only to set about it"

"How can I have the conscience to marry after having driven two women to their deaths? Don't think such a thing, Humphrey After my experience I should consider it too much of a burlesque to go to church and take a wife In the words of Job, 'I have made a covenant with mine eyes, why then should I think upon a maid?'"

"No, Mr Clym, don't fancy that about driving two women to their deaths You shouldn't say it"

"Well, we'll leave that out," said Yeobright "But anyhow the times have set a mark upon me which wouldn't look well in a love-making scene I have two ideas in my head, and no others I am going to keep a night school, and I am going to turn preacher What have you got to say to that, Humphrey?"

"I'll come and hear ye with all my heart"

"Thanks 'Tis all I wish"

As Clym descended into the valley Thomasin came down by the other path, and met him at the gate "What do you think I have to tell you, Clym?" she said, looking archly over her shoulder at him

"I can guess," he replied

She scrutinized his face "Yes, you guess right It is going to be after all He thinks I may as well make up my mind, and I have got to think so too It is to be on the twenty-fifth of next month, if you don't object"

"Do what you think right, dear I am only too glad that you see your way clear to happiness again My sex owes you every amends for the treatment you received in days gone by"

IV CHEERFULNESS AGAIN ASSERTS ITSELF AT BLOOMS-END, AND CLYM FINDS HIS VOCATION

ANYBODY who had passed through Blooms-End about eleven o'clock on the morning fixed for the wedding would have found that, while Yeobright's house was comparatively quiet, sounds denoting great activity came from the dwelling of his nearest neighbor, Timothy Fairway It was chiefly a noise of feet, briskly crunching hither and thither over the sanded floor within One man only was visible outside, and he seemed to be later at an appointment than he had intended to be, for he hastened up to the door, lifted the latch, and walked in without ceremony

The scene within was not quite the customary one Standing about the room was the little knot of men who formed the chief part of the Egdon coterie, there being present Fairway himself, Grandfer Cante, Humphrey, Christian, and one or two turf-cutters It was a warm day, and the men were as a matter of course in their shirt sleeves, except Christian, who had always a nervous fear of parting with a scrap of his clothing when in anybody's house but his own Across the stout oak table in the middle of the room was thrown a mass of striped linen, which Grandfer Cante held down on one side, and Humphrey on the other, while Fairway rubbed its surface with a yellow lump, his face being damp and creased with the effort of the labor

"Waxing a bed-tick, souls?" said the new-comer

"Yes, Sam," said Grandfer Cante, as a man too busy to waste words "Shall I stretch this corner a shade tighter, Timothy?"

Fairway replied, and the waxing went on with unabated vigor "'Tis going to be a good bed, by the look o't," continued Sam, after an interval of silence "Who may it be for?"

"'Tis a present for the new folks that's going to set up housekeeping," said Christian, who stood helpless and overcome by the majesty of the proceedings

"Ah, to be sure, and a valuable one, 'a b'lieve"

"Beds be dear to fokes that don't keep geese, bain't they, Mister Fairway?" said Christian, as to an omniscient being

"Yes," said the furze dealer, standing up, giving his forehead a thorough mopping, and handing the beeswax to Humphrey, who succeeded at the rubbing forthwith "Not that this couple be in want of one, but 'twas well to show 'em a bit of friendliness at this great racketing vagary of their lives I set up both my own daughters in one when they was married, and there have been feathers enough for another in the house the last twelve months Now then, neighbors, I think we have laid on enough wax Grandfer Cantle, you turn the tick the right way outwards, and then I'll begin to shake in the feathers"

When the bed was in proper trim Fairway and Christian brought forward vast paper bags, stuffed to the full, but light as balloons, and began to turn the contents of each into the receptacle just prepared As bag after bag was emptied, airy tufts of down and feathers floated about the room in increasing quantity till, through a mishap of Christian's, who shook the contents of one bag outside the tick, the atmosphere of the room became dense with gigantic flakes, which descended upon the workers like a windless snowstorm

"I never saw such a clumsy chap as you, Christian," said Grandfer Cantle severely "You might have been the son of a man that's never been outside Blooms-End in his life for all the wit you have Really all the soldiering and smartness in the world in the father seems to count for nothing in forming the nater of the son As far as that chiel Christian is concerned I might as well have stayed at home and seed nothing, like all the rest of ye here Though, as far as myself is concerned, a dashing spirit has counted for sommat, to be sure!"

"Don't ye let me down so, father, I feel no bigger than a ninepin after it I've made but a bruckle hit, I'm afeard"

"Come, come Never pitch yerself in such a low key as that, Christian, you shoud try more," said Fairway

"Yes, you should try more," echoed the Grandfer with insistence, as if he had been the first to make the suggestion "In common conscience every man ought either to marry or go for a soldier 'Tis a scandal to the nation to do neither one nor t'other I did both, thank God! Neither to raise men nor to lay 'em low—that shows a poor do-nothing spirit indeed"

"I never had the nerve to stand fire," faltered Christian "But as to marrying, I own I've asked here and there, though without much fruit from it Yes, there's some house or other that might have had a man for a master—such as he is—that's now ruled by a woman alone Still it might have been awkward if I had found her, for, d'ye see, neighbors, there'd have been nobody left at home to keep down father's spirits to the decent pitch that becomes a old man"

"And you've your work cut out to do that, my son," said Grandfer Cantle smartly "I wish that the dread of infirmities was not so strong in me!—I'd start the very first thing tomorrow to see the world over again! But seventy-one, though nothing at home, is a high figure for a rover Ay, seventy-one last

Candlemas-day Gad, I'd sooner have it in guineas than in years!" and the old man sighed

"Don't you be mournful, Grandfer," said Fairway "Empt some more feathers into the bed-tick, and keep up yer heart Though rather lean in the stalks you be a green-leaved old man still There's time enough left to ye yet to fill whole chronicles"

"Begad, I'll go to 'em, Timothy—to the married pair!" said Grandfer Cattle in an encouraged voice, and starting round briskly "I'll go to 'em tonight and sing a wedding-song, hey? 'Tis like me to do so, you know, and they'd see it as such My 'Down in Cupid's Gardens' was well liked in four, still, I've got others as good, and even better What do you say to my

"She cal led to her love
From the lat tice a bove,
"O, come in from the fog gy fog gy dew "'

"Twould please 'em well at such a time! Really, now I come to think of it, I haven't turned my tongue in my head to the shape of a real good song since Old Midsummer night, when we had the 'Barley Mow' at the Woman, and 'tis a pity to neglect your strong point where there's few that have the compass for such things!"

"So 'tis, so 'tis," said Fairway "Now gie the bed a shake down We've put in seventy pound of best feathers, and I think that's as many as the tick will fairly hold A bit and a drap wouldn't be amiss now, I reckon Christian, maul down the vituals from the corner-cupboard if canst reach, man, and I'll draw a drap o' sommat to wet it with"

They sat down to a lunch in the midst of their work, feathers around, above, and below them, the original owners of which occasionally came to the open door and cackled begrudgingly at sight of such a quantity of their old clothes

"Upon my soul I shall be chokt," said Fairway when, having extracted a feather from his mouth, he found several others floating on the mug as it was handed round

"I've swallowed several, and one had a tolerable quill," said Sam placidly from the corner

"Hullo—what's that—wheels I hear coming?" Grandfer Cattle exclaimed, jumping up and hastening to the door "Why, 'tis they back again I didn't expect 'em yet this half-hour To be sure, how quick marrying can be done when you are in the mind for't!"

"O yes, it can soon be done," said Fairway, as if something should be added to make the statement complete

He arose and followed the Grandfer, and the rest also went to the door In a moment an open fly was driven past, in which sat Venn and Mrs Venn, Yeobright, and a grand relative of Venn's who had come from Budmouth for the occasion The fly had been hired at the nearest town, regardless of distance and cost, there being nothing on Egdon Heath, in Venn's opinion, dignified enough for such an event when such a woman as Thomasin was the bride, and the church was too remote for a walking bridal-party

As the fly passed the group which had run out from the homestead they

shouted "Hurrah!" and waved their hands, feathers and down floating from their hair, their sleeves, and the folds of their garments at every motion, and Grindfer Cattle's seals dancing merrily in the sunlight as he twirled himself about. The driver of the fly turned a supercilious gaze upon them, he even treated the wedded pair themselves with something of condescension, for in what other state than heathen could people, rich or poor, exist who were doomed to abide in such a world's end as Egdon? Thomasin showed no such superiority to the group at the door, fluttering her hand as quickly as a bird's wing towards them, and asking Diggory, with tears in her eyes, if they ought not to alight and speak to these kind neighbors. Venn, however, suggested that, as they were all coming to the house in the evening, this was hardly necessary.

After this excitement the saluting party returned to their occupation, and the stuffing and sewing was soon afterwards finished, when Fairway harnessed a horse, wrapped up the cumbrous present, and drove off with it in the cart to Venn's house at Stickleford.

Yeobright, having filled the office at the wedding-service which naturally fell to his hands, and afterwards returned to the house with the husband and wife, was indisposed to take part in the feasting and dancing that wound up the evening. Thomasin was disappointed.

"I wish I could be there without dashing your spirits," he said. "But I might be too much like the skull at the banquet."

"No, no."

"Well, dear, apart from that, if you would excuse me, I should be glad I know it seems unkind, but, dear Thomasin, I fear I should not be happy in the company—there, that's the truth of it. I shall always be coming to see you at your new home, you know, so that my absence now will not much matter."

"Then I give in. Do whatever will be most comfortable to yourself."

Clym retired to his lodging at the housetop much relieved, and occupied himself during the afternoon in noting down the heads of a sermon, with which he intended to initiate all that really seemed practicable of the scheme that had originally brought him hither, and that he had so long kept in view under various modifications, and through evil and good report. He had tested and weighed his convictions again and again, and saw no reason to alter them, though he had considerably lessened his plan. His eyesight, by long humoring in his native air, had grown stronger, but not sufficiently strong to warrant his attempting his extensive educational project. Yet he did not repine: there was still more than enough of an unambitious sort to tax all his energies and occupy all his hours.

Evening drew on, and sounds of life and movement in the lower part of the domicile became more pronounced, the gate in the palings clicking incessantly. The party was to be an early one, and all the guests were assembled long before it was dark. Yeobright went down the back staircase and into the heath by another path than that in front, intending to walk in the open air till the party was over, when he would return to wish Thomasin and her husband good bye as they departed. His steps were insensibly bent towards Mistover by the path

that he had followed on that terrible morning when he learnt the strange news from Susan's boy

He did not turn aside to the cottage, but pushed on to an eminence, whence he could see over the whole quarter that had once been Eustacia's home While he stood observing the darkening scene somebody came up Clym, seeing him but dimly, would have let him pass by silently, had not the pedestrian, who was Charley, recognized the young man and spoken to him

"Charley, I have not seen you for a length of time," said Yeobright "Do you often walk this way?"

"No," the lad replied "I don't often come outside the bank"

"You were not at the Maypole?"

"No," said Charley, in the same listless tone "I don't care for that sort of thing now"

"You rather liked Miss Eustacia, didn't you?" Yeobright gently asked Eustacia had frequently told him of Charley's romantic attachment

"Yes, very much Ah, I wish—"

"Yes?"

"I wish, Mr Yeobright, you could give me something to keep that once belonged to her—if you don't mind"

"I shall be very happy to It will give me very great pleasure, Charley Let me think what I have of hers that you would like But come with me to the house, and I'll see"

They walked towards Blooms End together When they reached the front it was dark, and the shutters were closed, so that nothing of the interior could be seen

"Come round this way," said Clym "My entrance is at the back for the present"

The two went round and ascended the crooked stair in darkness till Clym's sitting-room on the upper floor was reached, where he lit a candle, Charley entering gently behind Yeobright searched his desk, and taking out a sheet of tissue-paper unfolded from it two or three undulating locks of raven hair, which fell over the paper like black streams From these he selected one, wrapped it up, and gave it to the lad, whose eyes had filled with tears He kissed the packet, put it in his pocket, and said in a voice of emotion, "O, Mr Clym, how good you are to me!"

"I will go a little way with you," said Clym And amid the noise of merriment from below they descended Their path to the front led them close to a little side-window, whence the rays of candles streamed across the shrubs The window, being screened from general observation by the bushes, had been left unblinded, so that a person in this private nook could see all that was going on within the room which contained the wedding-guests, except in so far as vision was hindered by the green antiquity of the panes

"Charley, what are they doing?" said Clym "My sight is weaker again tonight, and the glass of this window is not good"

Charley wiped his own eyes, which were rather blurred with moisture, and stepped closer to the casement "Mr Venn is asking Christian Cantle to sing,"

he replied, "and Christian is moving about in his chair as if he were much frightened at the question, and his father has struck up a stave instead of him."

"Yes, I can hear the old man's voice," said Clym. "So there's to be no dancing, I suppose. And is Thomasin in the room? I see something moving in front of the candles that resembles her shape, I think."

"Yes. She do seem happy. She is red in the face, and laughing at something Fairway has said to her. O my!"

"What noise was that?" said Clym.

"Mr Venn is so tall that he has knocked his head against the beam in going a skip as he passed under. Mrs Venn hev run up quite frightened and now she's put her hand to his head to feel if there's a lump. And now they be all laughing again as if nothing had happened."

"Do any of them seem to care about my not being there?" Clym asked.

"No, not a bit in the world. Now they are all holding up their glasses and drinking somebody's health."

"I wonder if it is mine?"

"No, 'tis Mr and Mrs Venn's, because he is making a hearty sort of speech. There—now Mrs Venn has got up, and is going away to put on her things, I think."

"Well, they haven't concerned themselves about me, and it is quite right they should not. It is all as it should be, and Thomasin at least is happy. We will not stay any longer now, as they will soon be coming out to go home."

He accompanied the lad into the heath on his way home, and, returning alone to the house a quarter of an hour later, found Venn and Thomasin ready to start, all the guests having departed in his absence. The wedded pair took their seats in the four-wheeled dogcart which Venn's head milker and handy man had driven from Suckleford to fetch them in, little Eustacia and the nurse were packed securely upon the open flat behind, and the milker, on an ancient overstepping pony, whose shoes clashed like cymbals at every tread, rode in the rear, in the manner of a body-servant of the last century.

"Now we leave you in absolute possession of your own house again," said Thomasin as she bent down to wish her cousin good night. "It will be rather lonely for you, Clym, after the hubbub we have been making."

"O, that's no inconvenience," said Clym, smiling rather sadly. And then the party drove off and vanished in the night-shades, and Yeobright entered the house. The ticking of the clock was the only sound that greeted him, for not a soul remained, Christian, who acted as cook, valet, and gardener to Clym, sleeping at his father's house. Yeobright sat down in one of the vacant chairs, and remained in thought a long time. His mother's old chair was opposite, it had been sat in that evening by those who had scarcely remembered it ever was hers. But to Clym she was almost a presence there, now as always. What ever she was in other people's memories, in his she was the sublime saint whose radiance even his tenderness for Eustacia could not obscure. But his heart was heavy, that mother had not crowned him in the day of his espousals and in the day of the gladness of his heart. And events had borne out the accuracy of her judgment, and proved the devotedness of her care. He should have heeded

her for Eustacia's sake even more than for his own "It was all my fault," he whispered "O, my mother, my mother! would to God that I could live my life again, and endure for you what you endured for me!"

On the Sunday after this wedding an unusual sight was to be seen on Rainbarrow. From a distance there simply appeared to be a motionless figure standing on the top of the tumulus, just as Eustacia had stood on that lonely summit some two years and a half before. But now it was fine warm weather, with only a summer breeze blowing, and early afternoon instead of dull twilight. Those who ascended to the immediate neighborhood of the Barrow perceived that the erect form in the center, piercing the sky, was not really alone. Round him upon the slopes of the Barrow a number of heathmen and women were reclining or sitting at their ease. They listened to the words of the man in their midst, who was preaching, while they abstractedly pulled heather, stripped ferns, or tossed pebbles down the slope. This was the first of a series of moral lectures or Sermons on the Mount, which were to be delivered from the same place every Sunday afternoon as long as the fine weather lasted.

The commanding elevation of Rainbarrow had been chosen for two reasons first, that it occupied a central position among the remote cottages around, secondly, that the preacher thereon could be seen from all adjacent points as soon as he arrived at his post, the view of him being thus a convenient signal to those stragglers who wished to draw near. The speaker was bareheaded, and the breeze at each waft gently lifted and lowered his hair, somewhat too thin for a man of his years, these still numbering less than thirty three. He wore a shade over his eyes, and his face was pensive and lined, but, though these bodily features were marked with decay there was no defect in the tones of his voice, which were rich, musical, and stirring. He stated that his discourses to people were to be sometimes secular, and sometimes religious, but never dogmatic, and that his texts would be taken from all kinds of books. This afternoon the words were as follows —

"'And the king rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her, and sat down on his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the king's mother, and she sat on his right hand. Then she said, I desire one small petition of thee, I pray thee say me not nay. And the king said unto her, Ask on, my mother, for I will not say thee nay.'"

Yeobright had, in fact, found his vocation in the career of an itinerant open-air preacher and lecturer on morally unimpeachable subjects, and from this day he labored incessantly in that office, speaking not only in simple language on Rainbarrow and in the hamlets round, but in a more cultivated strain elsewhere—from the steps and porticoes of town-halls, from market-crosses, from conduits, on esplanades and on wharves, from the parapets of bridges, in barns and outhouses, and all other such places in the neighboring Wessex towns and villages. He left alone creeds and systems of philosophy, finding enough and more than enough to occupy his tongue in the opinions and actions common

to all good men. Some believed him, and some believed not, some said that his words were commonplace, others complained of his want of theological doctrine, while others again remarked that it was well enough for a man to take to preaching who could not see to do anything else. But everywhere he was kindly received, for the story of his life had become generally known.

Drama

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Reading and Seeing Drama

DRAMA A SELECTION AND ARRANGEMENT OF LIFE

Why do you go to plays and movies? You will answer, obviously and rightly, for entertainment. But what can you expect to find presented in a play or movie to entertain you? This answer is not so obvious. The most comprehensive and the vaguest answer is "life." The spectacle of life is entertaining, to be sure, but as we see it helter-skelter in our daily round it is certainly not so entertaining as we know it can be if its incidents and motives are selected and arranged for us. So we may answer tentatively that we go to plays and movies to see life selected and arranged for us so as to make entertainment. The selector and arranger is the dramatist, and when we go to see a play or movie we trust that his selection and arrangement will entertain us.

Selected by Conflict Now we may ask, "On what principles does the dramatist select and arrange the materials offered him by life so that they will entertain us?" Well, the recorded history of men shows that they have always been most interested and entertained by conflict, by struggle, by the opposition of men to obstacles in each other, or in social forces, or in Fate, or in impulses within themselves. Because we delight in conflict we delight in sport and games, we delight in competitive business, we delight in speed, we delight in exploration and discovery and invention, in history, in acquiring knowledge and skills. These are not, of course, all conflicts of the same order, but without the element of conflict in them, it is safe to say, men would not have remained so widely interested in them. The dramatist, therefore, can select and arrange the materials offered him by life so as to emphasize and develop conflict, and thereby he may hope to entertain us. In fact, when we go to see plays on stage or screen, we go hoping to see a conflict or conflicts, and consciously or unconsciously we count on the conflict to entertain us.

But, though conflict provides the chief principle whereby the dramatist selects and arranges his material, it is not the only one. All narratives involve conflict: novels, short stories, narrative poems, and biographies. Even lyric poems sometimes show it. To write a *play*, as distinct from any of the other forms, the dramatist must use more principles of selection and arrangement.

Action He must select a conflict which can be expressed in action, in movement. The conflict between a man adrift on a raft and the ocean that surrounds him, for instance, is not a probable conflict for a drama. The conflict is certainly a serious one for the man, in a loose sense it is a dramatic conflict, but it could not likely make a good play because the man could scarcely act and his movement would be quite restricted. A conflict of that sort could be very well handled in a novel or short story, however. Also, many of the con-

licts that go on in the mind, for instance, whether one believes or does not believe in a miracle, are extremely difficult material for the dramatist. Dramatists ordinarily accept these restrictions of their field of selection, though, as always when an art is vital, some dramatists are trying constantly to escape them and widen the field. But the large majority of the conflicts that men meet in living are capable of expression in movement, action.

Dialogue And then the dramatist must, of course, select a conflict which lends itself to development in dialogue. These two, dialogue and movement, provide the means whereby conflicts become understood in the drama and may therefore become entertaining.

But it is a mistake to believe that a conflict expressible in dialogue will necessarily make a good drama. When at a debate we hear the debaters cross-examined after their speeches, we are rarely entertained as we could be at a play, because, although the conflict of opinions may be sharp, the illustration and reinforcement of the dialogue by action is lacking. And it is not enough, to make a drama, that a good plot should be told in dialogue; the dramatist worth his salt creates the movement that makes the dialogue and story like living.

He does this because his work is written to be seen, not merely recited and heard. It is to be *acted*. That means that the people who take the parts in the play have not only flexible voices but also supple and vigorous bodies to express in motion what words by themselves can only express approximately. A dramatist may write, for instance, the single word, "Look." It may be a casual invitation to view a sunset, or it may be a warning of a tidal wave's approach, or it may be a challenge to stupid mental blindness, or a dozen other things. Whatever its use, the dramatist intended it to be accompanied by physical motion which reinforces it with what could not be expressed in words alone so vividly and economically. In this lies the distinction between the art of the drama and the other literary arts, as poetry, fiction, essay, biography, or history. The art of the drama is not merely literary, it is also visual. The dramatist writing his plays must not only imagine what his characters say and how they say it, he must also imagine what they do while they speak and while they are silent.

Scene Besides, the dramatist must imagine all these things in a scene. He is making pictures as well as telling a story. The scene must be one that supports the story, lends it truth and credibility, and, if possible, adds to its beauty and emotional power.

In connection with scene, however, we must differentiate between writing for the movies and writing for the stage. Writing for the movies shares with writing for the stage the need of selection and arrangement, of conflict, of dialogue and movement, and of background or scene. But in the legitimate theater the audience's view of the scene remains fixed, they see the stage always from the same angle, "the front of the house." No matter how skilful the shifting of scenes may become, and it is daily becoming more skilful, no matter how many technical devices are employed to change scenes rapidly and radically, and there are many such devices and will be more, the fixity of the legitimate theater's audience will remain. In the movie, however, by the em-

ployment of moving and multiple cameras, the audience's position relative to the scene can be changed at will, so that we may see the actors now from a position level with them, now from above them, or below them, or from any side of them, at great or little distance. This flexibility of audience position gained in the movie is forbidden to the legitimate dramatist. He must always conceive his play in terms of a scene visible from a certain unvarying angle, within a certain narrow arc. That is, he must think of his play in terms of the theater.

Theater When we speak of the theater here, then, we mean the legitimate theater, not the movie theater. Now, what is the theater? Simply defined, the theater is a mechanism for the production of plays. It consists, baldly, of a large, dark room, filled with seats all turned so that their occupants face a platform which is the only lighted area in the room. The extensions of the platform to right and left, known as the wings, are usually concealed by walls, which are broken in the center to a considerable height and width by an arch called the proscenium arch. The audience look through this arch at the happenings on the platform or stage. Their attention is concentrated upon this stage, both because it is lighted while the rest of the room is dark, and because it is the only place where clearly visible movement takes place. The spectators of the play, when they take their seats in the theater, put themselves under the control of this mechanism, expecting it to reward them with visible and audible entertainment.

This is the mechanism the dramatist must have in mind when he writes his play. He must use this mechanism to work upon the feelings of his audience, not only by showing them a conflict, but by accompanying that conflict with sights and sounds that give it the added force the theater permits. When this is done we say the play is "good theater," or we speak of it as "theatrical." In connection with plays, those are terms of praise.

In *The Emperor Jones*, by Eugene O'Neill, for instance, tom-toms beat continuously after the first scene, in which the emperor makes his futile dash into the forest. They continue even while the scenes are being changed. This is using the mechanism of the theater. In Lord Dunsany's *The Gods of the Mountain*, one hears the clump, clump, clump of stone feet, the feet of doom, approaching the presumptuous beggars. In Herne's *Shore Acres*, one sees a yacht sweep closer and closer to the rocks, until, just when the vessel is to strike, the lighthouse shines out and the helmsman veers away. In Synge's *Riders to the Sea*, as Maurya moves round the body of her dead son, sprinkling him with holy water, the keening of the neighbor women rises and floats in the air. In Chesterton's *Magic*, a family portrait, when spoken to, moves on the wall, a chair falls suddenly with a little crash, a red light at the far end of the garden turns blue. In Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac*, the leaves fall softly from the trees beneath which Cyrano makes his dying speeches. In Shaw's *Cæsar and Cleopatra*, the voice of the terrible bucina, the Roman military tuba, is heard, dimly at first, then louder and closer, until, when Cleopatra finally comes to know that the friendly old gentleman is dreaded Cæsar himself, the bucina is actually on stage, roaring in our ears. In Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya*, as the defeated and broken-hearted niece and uncle face the resump-

tion of their dreary tasks, the hanger on plays softly on a guitar. In Connelly's *The Green Pastures*, as God "r'ars back and passes" the miracle of the Creation, the stage is darkened and thunders roll.

All these are "theater," the use of the mechanism to excite the audience. By themselves they could arouse only vague, undefined emotions, but given the context of the drama, the emotion these sights and sounds arouse becomes defined and significant.

Selected for Credibility We have said that the dramatist must present to us, his audience, a conflict involving action, expressible in dialogue, against a scene or scenes, in a theater. Are there any other principles governing the dramatist's selection and arrangement of the materials offered him by life? Yes, one, and a most important one. The conflict and the people who are involved in it, their actions, their motives, the philosophy by which they govern their lives, must be made credible, must be so planned and ordered that the audience will believe in them, will gain and keep the illusion that this show is real and meaningful.

For it must be remembered that the theater is essentially a place where tricks are played on you. It is a place where magic is done. You know it when you go there, just as you know that a conjurer does not really draw rabbits out of that empty hat. You are willing to be fooled, willing to see the rabbits come out and wonder at it, but if the trick is not done perfectly, if you see a rabbit's tail beneath the magician's vest, you feel no wonder but only boredom and irritation. You go to the theater to see the magic of the re-creation of life by artifice, but the artifice must not show. You must not feel that the dramatist makes his people and their actions just to suit the needs of his play. You will not watch people whose like you never met be governed by desires and impulses you never felt. So somehow the dramatist must make you believe.

At first sight, this seems easy for the dramatist. He has only to take a conflict likely to arise in the lives of his audience, or familiar to them in the lives of their contemporaries, put it on the stage with people like those in the audience, and the problem is solved. Or he can take a familiar conflict, and most conflicts are familiar, and express it through people whose lives are so unfamiliar that the audience cannot possibly check the truth of what the dramatist says about them. Dramatists choosing the first way think they know in what the audience believes, they think they know how the audience thinks life is conducted, and they re-present that. That is, they try to be topical and timely. It should work, but it often does not. Of the plays that fail in any given theatrical season—and about 75 per cent do fail in New York—the majority, probably, will be timely and topical. In other words, the way that seems easy is not easy at all. Ascertaining what an audience will believe about its own time is, in fact, extremely difficult, though of course dramatists must continually attempt it. And even if they succeed for a time, they may not succeed for long. For instance, in 1928 a successful play by a very good American playwright showed us a young man of thirty engaged to the daughter of a very wealthy family, in conflict with his fiancée's father and social circle because he did not wish to work all his life and said so. He wanted

to make \$50,000, or some such sum, and then play *The wealthy family*, however, including the fiancée, insisted that the young man continue to make money even after, by a stock market coup, he had won his \$50,000. In this play the audience is asked to believe that possessors of wealth most desire more wealth, that young men should be free to play, and that \$50,000 can be made practically overnight by young men of thirty. All these beliefs, it is fair to say, were held by the audience of 1928, and the play was perfectly credible—then.

A drama credited by some critics with having brought the dramatic renaissance to England, Sir Arthur Wing Pinero's *The Second Mrs Tanqueray*, illustrates how credibility changes. In that play a widower of social position and means, with a grown daughter in an Irish convent, marries a woman with a shady past, of which he knows generally though not in complete detail. At the very time of the marriage, however, the daughter decides that she will leave the convent and come to live with her father. The country-house society in which the husband lives drops him and his new wife, the pure daughter intuitively suspects that her stepmother has not been a good woman, the wife's friends are obviously vulgar and dissipated people. Against the stepmother's wishes, the daughter goes to Paris, meets and falls in love with a young army officer, and returns with him to her home to arrange for the wedding. But the army officer, it turns out, has been one of Mrs Tanqueray's lovers in the past. The situation is obviously impossible, and Mrs Tanqueray commits suicide.

In this play the audience were asked to believe that a man who knowingly has married a *déclassée* woman will behave after marrying her as if he hadn't, and that she will expect to be treated by his friends as if she were not a *déclassée* woman, that if he or she attempts to conceal her past it will inevitably be revealed, that pure women intuitively recognize impure, that the caste system revealed by the play, to which women are sacrificed as before Moloch, is right. Besides these general beliefs the audience were asked to believe in the particular odd coincidence that the daughter should fall in love with a former lover of the stepmother. This coincidence by itself, however, though damaging to the verity of the play, is not so difficult for an audience to accept as the general beliefs. Sir Arthur Pinero, in 1893, was setting "before the public that which it wishes to have set before it, the views and codes of life by which the public lives and in which it believes," to quote Galsworthy. That these were the views and codes of life in 1893 is proved by the enthusiastic reception of the play then and for some time after. The play was credible, but now would probably be received with considerable incredulity.

This incredulity would probably obtain despite a theater audience's incorrigible will to believe. We can and do accept coincidence, even pretty far-fetched coincidence, in order to see a play move. We accept speed and wisdom and brightness of utterance such as we never find in life. We accept the playwright's assertion, when he presents us with unfamiliar people, say dukes, or Southern poor whites, that these people behave in ways we would not. But if the playwright offers us people like ourselves, we can test conduct and motives by our own experience, and if our experience leads us to believe that

we would not behave as they do, or would be governed by different motives, we refuse to believe

Dating This refusal of belief accounts for "dating," so called. A play is said to be "dated" when we no longer lend it the complete credibility which it exacted when it was written. In Pinero's *Midchannel* a woman says of a man friend, "He would be the sort of husband that lasts." To which an older woman answers, "That lasts? What do you mean?" That is the kind of thing that dates a play. When *Midchannel* was written, the idea of a husband's not lasting was strange and remarkable to a sufficient number of people to make the older woman's surprise reasonable and believable. A later audience, however, find that surprise simply unsympathetic and stupid. Changes in manners and ways of thought make the drama, which must depend on them so largely for its material, extremely liable to dating. The dramatist in this regard suffers a handicap to which his brother poet or novelist is not subject, because the dramatist must find his audience almost immediately his play is written. A dramatist's reputation has never sprung up after he has long ceased to write, though that has happened often among poets and not infrequently among novelists. If a dramatist does not find his audience quickly he never finds it at all. So dramatists are powerfully tempted to be timely, to play upon and use the ideas, ideals, and manners of the momentary audience. Most plays written now, or at any time in the past, we may be sure, were timely plays, and therefore subject to the corrosion of dating. But a dramatist may avoid dating if his conflict is not one peculiar to the time and place of his momentary audience, if his characters are not people created by transitory conditions, as, say, gangsters or forty-niners, if their philosophies and manners are not the expression of a temporary set in the public mind.

Universals. The dramatist who wishes to write a play lastingly credible, the best kind of play, will seek for universals, the fundamental beliefs and desires and habits of men. That men desire women is a universal, but that men desire sophisticated women rather than domestic women is not a universal. A dramatist who makes his men desire sophisticated women runs the risk of becoming incredible. That men wish the respect of their fellows is a universal, but that that respect is to be won by piety and religiosity is not a universal, a pious and religious character would be credible and understandable by an audience at one time but not at another.

This problem of credibility is crucial for the dramatist. His intellectual power and courage is tested by the way he meets it. Yet in meeting it he has great advantages: the willingness of the audience to pretend, which is considerable, for they want to be entertained, and know unconsciously that they will be best entertained if they believe, the mechanism of the theater, which lends itself so well to the imposition of the dramatist's will, the ignorance of the audience about most of life outside their own limited experience. Shakespeare, and many another of the great dramatists, met the problem of credibility chiefly by playing upon this ignorance. Shakespeare puts his scene in times and places remote from his Elizabethan audience, so that they will accept what he says of how his characters behave and why, and so that he may be freer to present universals unaffected by time and place. Only in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*

does he run much risk of challenging his audience's credulity by meeting them where their knowledge might match his own

Many great dramatists do as Shakespeare did, and write historical plays to meet the problem of credibility. And of all kinds of serious plays, probably the historical has the easiest chance of greatness. The serious Greek plays preserved to us were all historical in their own time, though we in our time do not quite define historical as the Greeks did. In any list of great serious dramatists, the writers of historical plays will outnumber the others. And even when these dramatists are not writing about actual historical events, they tend to write of an imagined past or a remote place, in order the better to maintain their control of their audience and ensure their belief.

But how is credibility accomplished in plays whose intention is not serious?

Tragedy, Comedy, Melodrama, Farce At this point we may remember the familiar divisions of drama: tragedy, comedy, melodrama, and farce. All of them require conflict, scene, dialogue, theater, and credibility. The distinctions between them rest mainly upon tone, that is, the attitude which the author takes toward his material and toward his audience. But for our purposes we may define these roughly by the difference in the conflict. In tragedy, the conflict is serious for the participants and to the audience, its issue is unfortunate for the character or characters for whom the most sympathy is aroused. In comedy, the conflict is serious for the participants and to the audience, but the issue is not unfortunate for the sympathetic characters. In farce, the conflict is not serious to the audience and its issue is not important, though happy, the conflict is emphasized and heightened and exaggerated so as to amuse merely. In melodrama, the conflict is serious for participants and to audience, and the issue may or may not be fortunate for the sympathetic characters, but again the conflict is exaggerated and made violent so that the issue becomes unimportant.

These are very loose distinctions, but the forms themselves are rarely found in the pure state. They are abstractions, and useful to us principally for their adjectival derivatives: tragic, comic, farcical, melodramatic, which are helpful critical terms as applied to incidents in plays, or to describe the tone of the author toward his audience and material.

Credibility in Comic Plays Let us return to the question of credibility in comic plays. Comic plays of historical material are possible but infrequent, generally they deal with contemporary life. Therefore the dramatist must be reasonably faithful to what the audience knows and believes about that life. Usually the comic writer is critical of contemporary life, he wishes to arouse satiric laughter about it, or change the audience's opinion about it, or perhaps he wishes to give the pleasure which comes from recognition of it. His characters tend, therefore, more than in serious plays, to become types. And if those types are recognizable people, or have modes of thought and motivations common in the audience's experience, the problem of credibility is solved, and the illusion is maintained. For example, Rachel Crothers' *As Husbands Go* concerns a married woman from Dubuque, who, on a trip to Paris, falls in love with a young Englishman. When she returns to Dubuque she finds herself unable to tell her devoted husband about it. Finally the husband finds

a way to rid her of the affair without putting her to the humiliation of confession. The material here is all contemporary. The playwright must be careful only to keep her characters behaving as contemporary Americans might behave, and the audience will never question the illusion. At the same time, Miss Crothers can make her criticism of the contemporary idea that Americans are not such good lovers as foreigners. In *Arms and the Man*, however, Shaw wishes to make the point that war is not romantic, but as sober and business-like as any other work. To make that point he has to have acting and speaking representatives of both the romantic and anti-romantic view of war. English men and women would not do, because the audience, though they might know and believe in English men and women who thrilled at cavalry charges and "heroism," would not believe in their opponents, if English. Therefore Shaw sets his scene in Bulgaria, and the English audience believes. In Bulgaria one might find the necessary points of view so articulately represented.

The dramatist can also gain belief by making his opening scene carefully realistic, so that the audience suspend disbelief. The dramatist then leads the audience to accept more and more improbability until they swallow all he gives them. Barrie's *Dear Brutus* opens excitingly with the discovery of a thief by a group of week-enders in a country-house, then gradually comes to the real business of the play, a magic wood in which people whose lives have gone awry are enabled to start over. The audience accept the magic wood because they accepted the week-enders and the thief.

Yet occasionally a play defies expectation. One such is Barrie's *Peter Pan*. In that, Barrie begins with his extraordinary dog-nursemaid, Nana, turning down bed covers, preparing the children's bath, putting the nursery in order. This is a truly astounding dog, in whom it is apparently impossible to believe. But Barrie evidently expected his audience to come along with him if he could make them curious and expectant, and the play's record shows that he was right. He demands, however, the utmost naturalness in his actors. They must be and seem unconscious that they are behaving improbably. Their belief must be so strong that they impose it on the audience. But plays whose credibility rests upon so frail a foundation as *Peter Pan* are rare, though perhaps delightful beyond any other sort of play when they appear. In such plays, the dramatist essentially relies upon the mechanism of the theater to bolster his credit, he is confident that his skill in the use of that mechanism will carry his play triumphantly over the audience's doubts.

THREE CRITERIA

We have now reached the point where we may sum up the requirements of a good play. Assuming as necessities conflict, scene, dialogue, we may say that a good play

- (1) Draws upon the materials of life so that the audience may believe in it,
- (2) Uses the mechanism of the theater in the exposition and development of those materials,

(3) Shows the intellectual power of the dramatist in the selection and arrangement of those materials so that our knowledge about life and our understanding of it is enriched and deepened

These standards, of course, we may apply most easily to plays of our own time. In accurately judging plays of other times than ours, we need to know more than we can casually about the life from which the dramatist drew his materials and about the theater for which he wrote his plays. In judging the plays of Shakespeare, for instance, according to this formula, we need to know a great deal about the Elizabethan theater. Shakespeare prefers, clearly enough, to make his characters "unpack their hearts with words," rather than to use silence and pantomime, most effective devices in the contemporary theater, because his theater was noisy, open to the sky and city sounds, his stage was darker than ours and surrounded by the audience on three sides, and that audience was an unruly one, needing to be dominated by the actor's voice. And the beliefs current in the life about him, for example, in ghosts, governed Shakespeare's choice and use of his material. So in applying our formula to non-contemporary plays we must know as much as we can about the time in which they were written. But the formula may be helpful in judging any play if applied with the necessary knowledge, and that knowledge is almost certainly possessed by a theater-goer judging a play of his own time.

These criteria, then, we may take as a means of judging, in general and in total, a play read or seen. What is meant by the first two should now be clear enough. But to the last, the question of the dramatist's intellectual power, we may well give more attention.

Intellectual Power When we meet a man of whom we say that he has intellectual power, we mean usually that he disturbs our minds, makes them active. He may disturb us by seeing more clearly than we do, by insight, or by his wit, or by his vision of a different world. The dramatist of intellectual power will exhibit insight into character, sometimes, or into situation, or into the society he puts upon the stage. Sidney Howard's *The Silver Cord* shows a mother who seems to herself and to the world a complete example of maternal devotion. She protects her sons from trouble, she worries about them constantly, she flatters and coddles them. But by the dramatist's insight we are persuaded that she is a monster who devours her sons' manhood, making babies of them. Her devotion to them is really reckless of them, careful only of herself. Lady Gregory's *Hyacinth Halvey* presents a young man coming to a strange community bearing extravagant recommendations for upright behavior. He is received as an example to the young, a paragon of virtue. Since he has the usual preference for normal rather than goody goody conduct, he tries desperately to break down the public opinion of him. This example illustrates insight into situation. Shaw's *Androcles and the Lion*, though broadly farcical, illustrates insight into a society by showing how different were the kinds of people attracted to Christianity in the first century.

And a dramatist may show his intellectual power, his power to disturb our minds, simply by his wit, even if his play has an incredible conflict and no characters deserving the name. Oscar Wilde's plays prove this. The dramatist

who wrote, "In this world there are only two tragedies. One is not getting what one wants, and the other is getting it," had intellectual power to say neatly what would not disturb our minds if said otherwise.

Or a dramatist may impress us with his intellectual power by his message, by his showing us the need for change in ourselves or in the world. A good play need not have a message, need not lead us to make any generalizations at all. Probably a majority of plays deal with personal relationships merely, more or less unique instances of characters in struggle with other characters or with surrounding circumstance. But some playwrights try to make their characters illuminate social conditions, so that these characters become symbols of something wider than themselves. Such plays to be successful must display intellectual power. Galsworthy's plays almost always do this. By *Justice*, Galsworthy brought about reform in English penology, because the play disturbed the mind of Winston Churchill, Home Secretary when he saw it. *Justice* pleads that criminals deserve treatment as patients rather than pariahs, and the dramatist draws tribute to his intellectual power in presenting his case.

But the play which does not disturb our minds, by insight or wit or message, is inferior to the play that does, however satisfactory the latter may be in other ways. One of the most successful plays of the recent theater is Thomas's *Charley's Aunt*, a farce about a college boy who pretends to be a middle aged woman. This play appeared in the 1880's, is still revived, and has been adapted repeatedly for the movies. It is good theater, it makes itself believed, it entertains admirably, and that is all. No mind was ever disturbed by *Charley's Aunt*. Such fare the theater should give its audience, and surely will. But such fare remains among the theater's less complete services to society. Though the theater is the home of artifice, though its first demand on its audience is "Let's pretend," it serves its public best when it gives not merely good illusion but also good food for the mind.

Even after we have applied our three general criteria to a play, we should give it more detailed analysis.

Suspense. A play should arouse interest in the characters and in the situations in which they find themselves, so that we become curious as to how they will act and what the outcome will be. In general, the sooner this is done the better, but it must be accomplished before the curtain falls for the first time. In a one-act play it must be done very promptly, of course. Sometimes it can be done merely by the setting and what is revealed when the curtain rises, as in Lord Dunsany's *The Glittering Gate*. The setting is a rocky place before a huge golden gate in a gray wall. Here a man sits, wearily opening beer bottles which fall one by one around him. He finds them always empty. Immediately we are in suspense. What is the meaning of this place and that business?

A longer play might gain its suspense later. Henry Becque's *The Vultures*, for instance, does not concern itself with suspense until just as the curtain falls on the first act. Up to then we have seen a happy well-to-do French family enjoying themselves at home. We learn much about the history of the family, their rise from poverty, their plans for their apparently calm future, their

attitude toward the father's business acquaintances. The father goes out, but just at the end of the act he is brought in, helpless from an apoplectic stroke. We ask ourselves what becomes of the family and their plans. Questions like these must arise in our minds by the end of one act to bring us back into the theater after the intermission, to keep us attentive to the play, to let us see each of the opposing sides in the conflict.

Suspense is gained by making the conflict, when it appears, serious for its participants. Even in farce the conflict must be taken seriously by the participants on the stage. In Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*, the girl a man wishes to marry adores the name Ernest, therefore he struggles to find some way to call himself Ernest justifiably. This is certainly not a serious conflict, and no audience will take it seriously. But the actors must, or suspense is lost.

Climax In most plays, but not all, the suspense leads to a confrontation of the elements in the conflict, making a scene of greatest emotional tension. This is called the climax. The use of this word in dramatic criticism is confused, because it is sometimes applied to the point at which the issue of the conflict is decided, or the turning point. It is better, however, to keep the word *climax* for the point of greatest intensity. Sometimes turning point and climax coincide, but not always. For instance, we know during the second act of the play that Cyrano will never win Roxane, and this is the turning point, but the scene of greatest emotional intensity occurs in the fifth act, when Cyrano finally confesses his love. In Sudermann's *Magda*, on the other hand, the issue between Magda and her father, who tries to make her marry to save what seems to him her honor, is decided at the very climax, when he is on the point of killing her for her obduracy.

Sympathy In most plays, also, the dramatist tries to distribute the sympathy of his audience so that they take sides in the conflict. He does this by contrasting the admirable qualities of his would-be sympathetic characters with the less admirable qualities of the others. This adds to the suspense as long as the sympathetic characters are not triumphant or finally defeated. Some dramatists, however, notably the rigid naturalistic writers, such as Gorki and Galsworthy, try to be severely impartial, and rely upon the conflict itself rather than added sympathy to heighten the suspense. The qualities with which a dramatist expects us to sympathize also provide a test of his play's credibility, as is obvious.

The Unexpected The excitement and intensity of plays are heightened also by a shrewd use of the unexpected. In Shaw's *The Devil's Disciple* we see a genial and easy-going American country clergyman, during the Revolutionary War, learn that the British have arrested another man, believing him the clergyman, and are going to hang him. Immediately he becomes energetic and dominant, takes money and a horse, and dashes off stage. We do not know whether he is escaping from the threatened danger or going for help, but we have seen an unexpected change of character. In Pinero's *The Thunderbolt* we see several churlish brothers and sisters nervously awaiting the distribution of the large estate left by the eldest brother, a bachelor, who apparently died without leaving a will, though he had an illegitimate and attractive daughter.

of whom he had been very fond and whom he had had carefully educated. Just when it seems certain that no obstacle prevents the brothers and sisters from taking the property, leaving the daughter penniless, the wife of one of the brothers confesses that she had found the will when the man was dying and had destroyed it. Here we have the unexpected turn of events. Such surprises occur more frequently in drama than in any other literary form. The skilful dramatist, if he does not precisely fill his play with them, at least provides several such in every play he writes. Probably the loose popular use of the word "dramatic," to refer to such events as the sudden winning of a football game by a team apparently hopelessly beaten, derives from the association of this unexpectedness with the drama. It is certain that the skilful use of the unexpected is a virtue in any play.

But surprise in situation should be carefully planned and prepared for, it should always seem credible or at least not incredible, that is, in accord with what we already know of the characters and their conflicts. For example, in Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, a wife is treated by her husband with the unconsciously contemptuous fondness of a superior for an inferior. He jokes with her, makes her dance and play for him, reminds her of her business incompetence, shuts her out so far as he can from his life of affairs. But we early learn that at a crisis in their lives before the play she has shown resourcefulness and energy and devotion, and, though she has not behaved in accordance with the law, she has saved her husband's life unknown to him. When she is in danger of disgrace for her defiance of the legalities, her husband reviles and upbraids her. Then comes the unexpected. The "skylark" wife demands from her husband the respect due her personality, and in order to get it, leaves him and their children. Though her demand contradicts all the empty gaiety we have seen marking her relations with her husband, it agrees with what we have learned of her abilities displayed before the play begins. Therefore the surprise is prepared for, but loses none of the force of the unexpected.

The plays of Barrie, for instance, are delightful for their use of the unexpected, as when Maggie Shand, in *What Every Woman Knows*, asks the Countess to invite to her country-house her husband and, in Maggie's stead, the girl her husband thinks he loves. We need to be prepared for such a surprise only by understanding earlier that Maggie is a singularly resolute and hardy character.

And for surprises in dialogue we need scarcely to be prepared at all. When in Maugham's *The Constant Wife* a daughter asks her mother, "How does one know if one's in love?" and the mother replies, "My dear, I know only one test. Could you use his toothbrush?" our glee comes from pure unexpectedness. But unexpectedness in dialogue can be overused. Too often, people in modern plays have no quality as characters except the ability to say unexpected things. For the sake of the tiny surprise the dramatist has sacrificed their credibility as people.

Exposition. The explanation of character or situation necessary at any point in the play to enable the audience to proceed understandingly is called exposition. Often a considerable part of the first act is given over to exposition. A dramatist shows his skill by the way he manages it. The difficulty arises from

the need of doing the job naturally and economically, without wasting actors on it, and without making it talky and actionless. Pinero, in *The Second Mrs Tanqueray*, makes Aubrey Tanqueray explain his second marriage to two gentlemen friends who never appear again. That is unskilful. An obvious method of exposition, used by Ibsen at the beginning of *The Wild Duck*, is to have servants talking about the family or their guests. This is usually clumsy. Ibsen, in his social plays, always needed to give his audience a great deal of exposition, because these plays were usually the culmination of much action and history antecedent to the play. For instance, in *Hedda Gabler*, conversation between George's aunt and the servant, and later George Tesman, tells us that he has just returned from his honeymoon, that his wife is a proud, gay woman, that he has just won his doctor's degree and wants to become a professor, that he is living beyond his income, that his chief rival for the professorship has just published a book, although he seemed to be out of the running. All this we learn before the wife appears. Then we discover that she is pregnant, that she and the rival have been very close friends, that she married her husband out of desperation and boredom, and dislikes him and her condition thoroughly. All this we have to learn, and much about the rival and his relations with another woman, before the play really starts. Yet Ibsen manages this complicated exposition so skilfully that even though it is not all accomplished by the end of the first act we are so interested in the characters and their relationships that the suspense is created. It is done without making the audience feel the dramatist's need. Nowhere does the skilful dramatist so conceal his art as in the exposition. It must, of necessity, be artificially managed and contrived, but when well done, the contrivance is not apparent.

Character. Exposition, it should be clear, is properly devoted not only to explanation of antecedent action, but also to the nature of characters. In a play like Davies' *The Mollusc*, or Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler*, where the center of the play is one character, the exposition largely concerns itself with that character before he or she appears, and then shows the character in action. It is probably true that the drama is not so well suited as the novel to the delineation of character because of the less time afforded to the play. No dramatist has ever had the space that Galsworthy took for *The Forsyte Saga* or Tolstoy for *War and Peace*, to cite novels notable for their character creation. Plays are rarely longer than 30,000 words, and play usually for not more than two hours and a half. Within that very limited time and space the dramatist must project what character he can. But he has great advantages over the novelist in that he may rely less upon the audience's imagination, he may have lent to him the vital forces of the actors, he may show his people in movement, in feeling, responding quickly to situations, against a background which can be seen and does not need to be described. Most of all, the fact that a play is seen and heard and acted in three dimensional space, rather than read from a cold page, gives the dramatist the opportunity to make his people memorable. An actor's playing in a vital rôle will last in the mind longer than most characters built up in the mind by reading. No one, probably, who ever saw Cyrano de Bergerac will forget him as a person, though he may always be pictured as

the actor seen in the part So it is justifiable in our analysis of plays to ask, did the author create character?

This question can only be answered subjectively If he created a character for you, he created a character But you will be wise to distrust your subjective judgments which do not agree with others' judgments They are apt to be mere eccentricity, more blindness than sight, or brought about more by accident than art

But even a subjective judgment is peculiarly difficult in a play merely read Here the novelist's handicap of the cold page tells equally against the dramatist Since few dramatists seem willing to give their plays the additional preparation required for the reading form, the reader still further suffers What dramatists can do to help readers is shown by the published plays of Barrie and Shaw, but only a few Americans and practically no Continental authors follow their example Barrie makes his plays novelettes in dialogue by the time they appear in print, usually, it may be noted, a long time after they appear on the stage But the reader gains the effect of seeing and hearing characters, not dim fleshless voices, though he loses the sense of acting on a stage when reading Barrie Shaw never permits the reader to lose that, he reminds the reader constantly of the stage by reminding him of the scene and movement against it, in addition he indicates precisely how he wishes a line to be spoken, where it is not obvious, by spacing, like *t h i s*, words he wishes emphasized More dramatists might wisely follow Shaw's example when publishing But if they don't, and if you wish to test their character-creation, what are you to do with their dramas when read and not seen?

First, read them aloud, employing, if you can't get others to read them with you, different voices for different parts It is not necessary to try to use a feminine voice for feminine parts if you are a man, let it be only lighter and higher Say the lines with the feeling that seems to be indicated in them If you look for it, you will almost always find it, and your understanding of it, and of the characters behind it, will grow as you read It is astonishing, often, how much intelligent and energetic reading aloud adds to the impact and understanding of a play, because, you must remember, those published lines were written to be spoken

Then bear in mind how the character looks, as you will often be told by the dramatist At least, you will soon gather information about his age, his bodily habits, his stature, his opinion of the world and its opinion of him, and, speaking the lines as best you can, suddenly you will find your body twitching to act him Your face will take his expression, your body make his gesture If you can act him, do so, then and there, but even if you can't, you may be sure, if he has made your body want to move, he has some vitality as a character Some of that vitality may be due to his especial likeness in tone and temper to yourself, if you are a man, you are less likely to feel the acting urge from female characters, but you will feel it from really well done female characters, Lady Macbeth, for instance You may be sure that hundreds of actresses have wished they might play Hamlet or Cyrano, because Hamlet and Cyrano have power as characters

Of course, the more plays you read aloud according to this procedure, the

more easily you will feel the acting urge, and the better you will think your dramatist's people if you rest on the simple body twitching test. Then you must complicate it somewhat. A really well created character will make you want to act him not only while you are reading the play but afterwards. If, while you are dressing or shaving, you imagine yourself in dialogue with some one, ask yourself how Luka would answer, or Hedda Gabler, or Falstaff. If you hear him or her speak—not a line from his play, but a line in your dialogue—then you know you have read a character. He has possessed himself of your imagination.

This, of course, is what should happen to an actor given a part. You may say and believe that you are a plain, blunt person, with none of the actor in you, and, since we so often pride ourselves on our deficiencies, you may think more of yourself therefor. But you are unlikely to say and believe of yourself that you have no imagination. It's the imagination which is made to work in reading, however plain and blunt, you may exercise your imagination upon acting in secret, at least.

Testing whether a dramatist has created character is relatively easy in a play seen. If you carry the character out of the theater with you, as it were, it has been created, whether by author or actor. But you may reasonably test a character in a drama seen for the elements contributed by the author and by the actor. These can only be determined, of course, by a reading as well as a seeing knowledge. But it quite often happens that a play's effect is made or ruined not by the dramatist but by the actors, who play better or worse than the lines. Hellman's *The Children's Hour* is about a pair of teachers conducting a private school for girls. One of their pupils spreads an ugly and untrue rumor about them, their school is ruined, and one of them commits suicide. When the play was performed, some critics complained that the third act, containing the suicide, was unnecessary and anti-climactic. A reading of the play shows clearly that the author, to fulfil the intention, had to write that third act and that it is necessary to the play as it was conceived. That act seemed unnecessary either because the actress playing the lying pupil, who does not appear there, acted so far above the author's intention that the play faltered when she did not appear, or because the other actors played below the author's intention, or because the author drew well only the one character, the lying pupil. Probably the last of these was truest, unless the other actors were relatively incompetent.

Motivation When characters act, we must understand why they act. Sometimes we are willing to assume that they act without motive, as, if they fall in love. We observe in life the strangest couplings, and are willing to accept them on the stage. But generally we ask why the characters did what they did. We learn what characters are by their motives. The Wylie men, in *What Every Woman Knows*, are rather unattractive until we see their tenderness for their sister Maggie, and how that motivates the strange proposal to give John Shand £300 on condition that he marry her. We learn what Maggie and John are when they accept the proposal, the one for a husband, the other for his career. But with that motivation for the odd mating, it must follow that Maggie devotes herself to her marriage and John to his career. The later conflict between husband and wife is based on that early motivation.

The motivation need not always seem adequate to cause the action if thereby knowledge of character is gained. In Strindberg's *The Father*, Laura tells her husband that he is not the father of their daughter, because she wishes to prevent his sending the daughter away to school. At first this blackening of her own honor for such a reason seems incredible, but we soon learn that the dramatist wishes us to regard Laura as a monster whose hate for her husband is so great that she will stop at nothing to destroy him. The inadequacy of the motive shows that hate. In general, however, the wise dramatist roots his motivations of character in universals such as ambition, love, respect for self, the desire of respect from others, the desire of wealth.

The dramatist has many other less important motivations to consider. If he wishes only part of his stage to be lit at one point in his scene, but another part lit at another point, he must motivate the shift. In the last act of *Elizabeth the Queen*, by Maxwell Anderson, such a shift took place in performance, though it is not indicated in the printed text. Elizabeth and Essex meet just before his execution in a turret in the dead of night. Light, apparently from a single candle, shines on the trap door by which he enters. But as the two are parting, and when the Queen is left alone, grand but desolate, the light of dawn reddens the windows, and a sunbeam strikes in over the Queen's head, picking out two scarlet banners, till then invisible, which seem to drip like bloody fangs. (This scene is excitingly described by the designer, Lee Simonson, in his *The Stage Is Set*.)

The dramatist should also motivate exits and occasionally entrances for his characters. Rarely can a character leave a room on stage as readily and casually as he can in life, though, when he does leave, it should seem as natural as it does in life. So we very commonly have servants interrupt a scene with "My Lady is wanted on the telephone," or some such thing, because the dramatist wanted My Lady off the set. But the exit is thereby motivated, and audiences are not critical of the device. Nor should play-readers be, though they may be more aware of the artifice than the theater audience.

Skilful manipulation of exits and entrances may also be used to bring about a smooth connection of scenes—we use scene here, as we have many times before, to mean one of the series of events that make the play, not the setting. For instance, Maugham, in *The Circle*, found it necessary that a scene between Lady Kitty and her ex-husband should immediately precede a scene between Arnold, Lady Kitty's son, and his wife. Neither of the characters in the earlier scene should be on stage in the later. It would seem forced and unnatural to have Lady Kitty and her ex-husband go off as the other two enter, so the dramatist has Arnold interrupt the earlier scene on an unimportant but characteristic pretext. His mother promptly prevents his disturbing her tête-à-tête, and sends him out again. But the audience know he is just waiting to return, so that when his wife appears and asks for him, just as the other two leave, he can be called naturally.

Dialogue In most prose plays, one would suppose, naturalness should also be maintained in dialogue. But as a matter of fact the dramatist is surprisingly free to write the kind of dialogue he chooses, provided that it constantly advances the action or the audience's knowledge of the characters. But he should

not, of course, write dialogue unsuited to the character, such as highly cultivated language in the mouth of an uneducated person. But he can make uneducated persons clever, saying wise and witty things, if they do not offend against our belief by choice of words or manner. In general, the dialogue should be easy to utter and believable rather than natural. It should clearly suggest to the actor how his lines should be spoken, and, if possible, with what movement.

Movement One of the tests of the worth of a play rests in that movement, in the business it demands. It should require acting, should tempt and provoke a reader's imagination so that he wishes to see it on the stage, wishes even that he might perform in it, should seem to the theater audience to be made up of that nice balance of action and words that may so greatly move us. Then we may rightly say that the play has vitality, makes appeal to eye and ear together. Plays do exist, to be sure, in which that appeal is not made. It is not made for us, sadly enough, in some of Shakespeare's histories, great as any work of Shakespeare's is. As poetry, to be read aloud or silently, they can exert enchantment, but their values as things to be seen have diminished with the passing of the centuries. And the centuries do not always account for the untheatricality of a play. No plays, probably, of any time, are more satisfactory to read than the still living Granville-Barker's. But they strike the imagination as almost movementless. The characters are sharply drawn, they are supremely expressive and articulate, their situations are poignant, but almost the only movement they need is the movement of larynx, tongue, and jaws. They walk on, they talk, they walk off. Reading their talk, as good talk as ever was written, one cannot but wish that an audience for such talk existed—but one knows it doesn't. We would gladly hear, but we want to see, too, and Granville-Barker gives us little to see. For that reason his work is rarely performed.

Scene But we see in the theater not only the movement of the actors, but also the setting against which they move. The dramatist contrives this carefully, of course, to give immediate information about his people, to afford his actors opportunity for striking stage pictures, to heighten the effect of his play. If we see at curtain rise a richly furnished drawing room, we know at once that we are not likely to meet in the play only tramps and hoboes, or if we do, that the setting is going to show us, by their reaction to it, what they are. The setting is always contributory to the effect the dramatist makes, it cannot help contributing. However bare or splendacious, it makes the picture that we look at in the theater and that we keep in our memories when the play is done. So the dramatist must consider carefully whether he wants the setting novel or ordinary, various or monotonous. The resources of the contemporary theater are so great that today's dramatist has considerably more freedom than his predecessors of even twenty years ago to shift his setting, to ignore the usual act divisions, to write scenes only a few minutes long, to demand novelty. But he should make his employment of these resources heighten the effect upon his audience. His business is to thrill, amuse, frighten, horrify, delight. Properly used setting will help to do these things.

A setting seen in the theater we usually regard uncritically, and are attentive

to it only as it is used by the actors or if it is of striking novelty or beauty. In reading plays, however, we must be very attentive to the help the author gives us in erecting the setting in our minds. In fact, no play is really read until the set is pictured firmly, so that one knows where the entrances are and to what they lead, what is on the walls, where the heavy pieces of furniture, such as desks and beds, stand, if there are stairs, on what wall they run, where the windows are, and what they look out on. Outdoor sets are often easy to visualize, but outdoor sets are not so frequent, and even in them one must be careful that the relation of the acting areas to each other are clearly pictured. The best way to help this visualization, in fact, for most people the only way, is by drawing. You need not be an artist or have the slightest gift for drawing beyond the ability to make a line, for it is not merely sufficient, it is actually better, to draw a floor-plan, that is, draw the stage as if it were seen from directly above, in two dimensions, rather than in elevation, as seen by the audience in three dimensions. For a drawing-room, say, you will have three walls, right, left, and rear. The rear wall is the most important, since it is the most visible, and also it is usually the longest. By thickening the line you draw for a wall you may indicate the position of a portrait on it. By appropriate symbol, which you may devise for yourself, you may place anything else on it. If it shows a fireplace, you can draw the shape of a fireplace-breast in the position called for. A door will, of course, be a break in the wall line, and by breaking in or out you may show the direction in which the door opens. Windows may be indicated by boxing the wall line at the proper place.

Having drawn your walls, you will next proceed to place furniture. Little boxes will do for desks and tables, larger ones for beds. A little curve makes a chair. But you must be careful to place your pieces of furniture in the proper positions relative to each other. The helpful dramatists, like Shaw, who publish with a reader really in mind, indicate clearly those relative positions. But you will often find yourself puzzled in placing furniture because the dramatist has not prepared his play properly for readers. Then you must make a tentative plan and read the play, visualizing the action on the plan as you have it, and changing the plan if the action requires it. For instance, in *The Truth about Blayds*, A. A. Milne uses only one drawing-room set, but does not bother to describe it, except that it is solid and handsome, and that a portrait hangs over the fireplace on the rear wall. As you read the play you meet a good deal of action about a desk, implying that it occupies a certain position relative to the portrait. Obviously that desk, as the center of that action, could not be against a wall. It must stand out in the room or it would cramp the actors intolerably. It soon becomes clear, also, that the desk chair, naturally on the long side of the desk, must face across the room, not toward the nearest wall. So, as you read, you place the desk and its chair properly on your plan, and the play thenceforth moves properly in your imagination.

Many sets are more difficult than drawing-rooms usually are. For instance, the first act set for *Cyrano*. Here it will help if you draw the "long rectangle" horizontally, then an oblique line from the lower left corner to a point on the opposite side. This gives you a right-angle triangle. On the shortest side of this triangle is the on-stage stage, the longest side is the line of the foot-

lights, beyond which the real audience sits, the remaining side is the rear wall, through which the on stage audience enters. In other words, the set has two sides instead of three. By this arrangement Rostand gives almost equal visibility for two walls. Of course, you ignore all of your long rectangle except the right angle triangle, but drawing it has made you see in your mind's eye what sort of theater *La Closerie* was performed in.

Galsworthy had a problem similar to Rostand's in scene 2, act II, of *Strife*. Here the "Works" wall should run obliquely from the fence at the foot of the towing path, to throw the platform from which the men speak nearer stage center, thereby making them more visible. Roberts, therefore, at the beginning of the scene, stands leaning against the wall close to the footlights. Galsworthy does not say he is there, but the careful reader who draws the floor-plan of the set will quickly see that that is the only place he can lean.

This instance shows how a clear visualization of a set leads also to a visualization of the action, even when a play is merely read. Player and set continually interact as the dramatist's mind creates the play, a similar interaction should follow in the reader's imagination. As the players move about the set, the inner eye should follow them. With your floor plan before you as you read, you can see where the dramatist meant them to be at any moment. At times you will find it helpful to place them on your floor plan, especially when many people are on stage. For this, a key, as A for Albert, B for Beatrice, etc., will aid you. In placing, or "grouping," remember visibility always. For visibility, the dominant character in a scene should always face downstage, that is, towards the audience, or across stage, almost never upstage, or towards the rear, since that would make him turn his back to the audience. The further back along the center line of the stage the more dominant the actor's position. Unimportant people should be kept from masking important people or actions. With these things in mind you can usually work out a grouping on your floor-plan no matter how many people are on stage.

Given a play properly prepared for reading, or a play with stage business clearly indicated, you will find by following these directions that reading a play is as great a pleasure as seeing it. It may even be more pleasure, since your actors need have no deficiencies. Varying degrees of effort are required, of course, with different plays. But certainly more effort is required than in reading fiction. A drama is not merely a story, it is a living, moving, palpitating organism, having erect and three dimensional life. If you have any visual imagination, you can, by taking pains, transport that life from the dramatist's brain into your own.

TYPES OF DRAMA

The four plays in this volume were chosen because, first, they are all good plays by very able playwrights. But in addition, they represent each a different kind of drama. The distinctions between them are based on the author's attitude toward his material and the devices he uses to exhibit it.

Romance Rostand's play, first, belongs to the class of drama called Ro-

mantic In romantic plays, life is heightened, glorified, colored To persuade the audience to believe, romantic plays are usually, but not always, set in the past The settings tend to be colorful and splendid, the acting flamboyant, the dialogue rhetorical In romantic plays, the people are more dashing, more gallant, or more ugly and vicious than any we meet in life In *Cyrano*, as we can see, everybody is at bottom good Even the villain, De Guiche, is finally likable and honorable Over the whole is cast a glow of warmth and feeling, of idealization The romantic dramatist is not precisely indifferent to truth, but the truth he values is not the truth of observed fact, but the higher truth, he would call it, of human nature at its best and worst, bravest and most depraved, but always most striking Shakespeare is a romantic dramatist usually In *King Lear* Regan and Goneril, for instance, are the cruellest daughters imaginable, and Kent a paragon of fidelity Victor Hugo, D'Annunzio, von Hofmannsthal, Flecker, Besier, Maxwell Anderson, and Barrie have written romantic plays During the nineteenth century, to the last two decades, the dominant dramatic mode was romantic, and romantic plays still appear They are usually highly theatrical, and very charming and delightful

Naturalism But during the last two decades of the nineteenth century appeared a revolt against romance in the theater It called itself Naturalism, and was greatly influenced by the rising authority of science It insisted upon fidelity to observed fact, upon the function of the dramatist as reporter of life as he saw it Theatricality was to be avoided as falsification The dramatist was to be impartial toward his people, creating them, and the conflicts in which he placed them, only out of the life about him The stage was regarded as a room whose fourth wall was removed, and the setting was to look like a room the audience might have seen Acting was to be the closest possible imitation of behavior outside the theater The dialogue was to sound like the speech heard in the streets

You can see that naturalism was a frontal attack on the problem of credibility Naturalism became the dominant mode of dramatic writing during the last decade of the nineteenth century and probably maintains that position now Galsworthy writes in the naturalistic mode, and *Strife* gains its authority by its believability, its faithfulness to observed fact in character and situation, its impartiality Other naturalistic plays are Gorki's *The Lower Depths*, Becque's *The Vultures*, Rice's *Street Scene*, Kirkland's *Tobacco Road*, O'Neill's *Desire Under the Elms*, Hauptmann's *The Weavers* Naturalistic plays are rarely charming, usually they depress the audience, but they do impose the illusion and therefore may move the audience powerfully

Expressionism In the first decade of this century came a new revolt, this time against naturalism, against what O'Neill calls "the banality of surfaces" The rebels felt that the really significant aspects of life, the thoughts, feelings, springs of conduct, motives, were not clearly expressed in fidelity to observed fact Besides, they felt, naturalism might be deficient in the use of the mechanism of the theater, since it forgoes the strange and picturesque So the mode called Expressionism came into being If naturalism owed its impetus to science, Expressionism owed its origin to psychology Expressionism attempts to make concrete and external what is immaterial and inner It regards human

beings fundamentally as types, subject to aberration under the strain of circumstance. The aberration makes the play, but the fundamental typical quality of the character is never lost to sight. *The Emperor Jones* is expressionistic. The Little Formless Fears, for instance, take shape before our eyes, though of course they exist only in Brutus's brain. The settings in an expressionistic play are apt to be distorted and unreal, but evocative. The acting is emotional, but broken, as by sudden flashes of illumination. The dialogue is likely to be unfinished, crude, full of suggestion and implication, revealing, but needing interpretation and addition by the audience. Expressionistic authors cultivate a sort of short-hand dialogue. The movement has not been popular or successful except in Germany and the United States, and even in those countries has probably spent its force. Besides O'Neill, Strindberg, Wedekind, Kaiser, Rice, Toller, and Kaufman and Connelly have written expressionistic plays.

Discussion Play As is true of *Wings Over Europe*, the discussion play chooses for its basic conflict differing points of view. It intends to make the audience think, by personifying these points of view, making them vocal and articulate, and leading the audience to a conclusion apt to be surprising. Shaw has devoted himself almost exclusively to the discussion play, but he derived it from Ibsen, who wrote discussion plays of great distinction between 1877 and 1890, and thereby won the title of father of our modern dramatic renaissance. The discussion play is likely to sacrifice character and movement to debate, but it lends the theater intellectual fibre and social importance. Besides Shaw and Ibsen, Brioux, Granville-Barker, the Copeks, and Pirandello have written discussion plays.

Other Types Other kinds of drama, not represented here, are the well-made and the symbolist. In the first of these, the playwright contrives a good show, usually of personal relationships of no social import, of little or no intellectual value, providing considerable entertainment, skilful use of the theater, superficial observation of character, a good, often exciting, story. The able writer of well-made plays is competent technically, affords acting opportunity, writes clever dialogue, and is soon forgotten, whether seen or read. Such playwrights in our time are Maugham, Coward, Kaufman, Philip Barry, though all of these have written plays of more merit than the run-of-the-mill well-made play. You can often identify a well-made play by watching carefully the exits and entrances of the characters. If they are being pulled on and off stage to keep the play moving, and for little other discoverable reason, you probably have a well-made play.

The symbolist play tries to suggest that the characters mean something besides themselves, or the things they do and say deal with more than the concrete reality. A symbolist play moves on two planes, the visible one, and the invisible but pervading one. Symbolist plays are rare, but the early plays of Maeterlinck, the late plays of Ibsen, and almost all the plays of Andrejev are symbolist.

CYRANO DE BERGERAC¹

by Edmond Rostand

Cyrano de Bergerac is a poetic, romantic drama. Written originally in French and in verse, it has become in translation one of the best known of contemporary Continental plays.

It would be a mistake to try to judge this play according to the tenets of realism. Realism has nothing to do with these flights of fancy, this sentimentalism, this wit, this boasting.

Nevertheless, Rostand has based his play on fact. The time is the middle of the seventeenth century, the scenes are laid in Paris and Arras, and the central figure, the incomparable Cyrano, is historical. He was born in Paris in 1619 of Gascon origin. As a young man he enlisted with his friend Le Bret in a company captained by Carbon de Castel Jaloux, a Gascon. This company was composed largely of Gascon gentlemen, among whom Cyrano's reputation for fighting was such that he became known as *le démon de la bravoure*. Le Bret states that Cyrano on one occasion routed one hundred assailants. At all times he was ready to fight against any one who insulted, or was thought to have insulted, him or his friends (he was particularly sensitive to any remark about his oversized nose), against pedants, condescending noblemen, dramatists, and actors to whom for one reason or other he had formed a dislike (Montfleury, the actor, was one of his hatreds), against priests, the orthodox in general, and plagiarists. His career up to the time when he was severely wounded at the battle of Arras was a succession of quarrels, duels, buffetings, boastings, and condemnations. Cyrano was a Gascon among Gascons, who are traditionally known for their high spirits, boasting, quips, exaggerations. (As one *gasconnade* goes: *J'ai l'air si martial que, quand je me regarde dans un miroir, j'ai peur de moi-même*.) After the battle of Arras, Cyrano devoted himself to the study of philosophy and to the writing of plays and romances. He died in 1655, having been felled with a heavy piece of wood which some one of his many enemies may have dropped on him.

All this is a matter of record. These details and many others Rostand skilfully uses. Ragueneau, the pastry-cook and poet, whose customers, poets also, paid him with verses, Ligniere, whom Cyrano accompanied home, Molière's plagiarizing friend Cyrano (in *Les Fourberies de Scapin*), and the host of background characters. Very likely, too, Cyrano felt alienated, as he does in the play, from some woman whom he loved.

A knowledge of these details adds interest to a reading of the play, but is by no means essential. Here we have a mad cap world of boasters, fighters, wits, sentimentalists, exaggeration of valor, fencing skill, cookery, love sickness, nose, self sacrifice. Wherever there are readers with a zest for life, *Cyrano de Bergerac* will be zestfully welcomed.

Edmond Rostand (1868-1918), the author, achieved an almost unparalleled success when this play was first produced in 1897. He is the author also of two other well known romantic plays, *L'Aiglon* and *Chantecler*. The following prose translation is by Gertrude Hall.

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CHARACTERS

CYRANO DE BERGERAC	A SPECTATOR
CHRISTIAN DE NEUVILLETTÉ	A WATCHMAN
COMTE DE GUICHE	BERTRANDOU THE FIFER
RAGUENEAU	A CAPUCHIN
LE BRET	TWO MUSICIANS
CAPTAIN CARBON DE CASTEL-JALOUX	SEVEN CADETS
LIGNIÈRE	THREE MARQUISES
DE VALVERT	POETS
MONTFLEURY	PASTRYCOOKS
BELLEROSE	
JODELET	ROXANE
CUIGY	SISTER MARTHA
BRISSAILLE	LISE
A BORE	THE SWEETMEAT VENDER
A MOUSQUETAIRE	MOTHER MARGARET
OTHER MOUSQUETAIRES	THE DUENNA
A SPANISH OFFICER	SISTER CLAIRE
A LIGHT-CAVALRY MAN	AN ACTRESS
A DOORKEEPER	A SOUBRETTE
A BURGHER	A FLOWER GIRL
HIS SON	PAGES
A PICKPOCKET	

The crowd, bourgeois, marquises, mousquetaires, pickpockets, pastrycooks, poets, Gascony Cadets, players, fiddlers, pages, children, Spanish soldiers, spectators, precieuses, actresses, bourgeoises, nuns, etc

(The action takes place in Paris and in Arras in the first half of the seventeenth century)

ACT ONE A PLAY AT THE HOTEL DE BOURGOGNE

The great hall of the Hotel de Bourgogne, in 1640 A sort of tennis-court arranged and decorated for theatrical performances

The hall is a long rectangle, seen obliquely, so that one side of it constitutes the background, which runs from the position of the front wing at the right, to the line of the furthest wing at the left, and forms an angle with the stage, which is equally seen obliquely

This stage is furnished, on both sides, along the wings, with benches The drop-curtain is composed of two tapestry hangings, which can be drawn apart Above a harlequin cloak, the royal escutcheon Broad steps lead from the raised platform of the stage into the house On either side of these steps, the musicians' seats A row of candles fills the office of footlights Two galleries run along the side, the lower one is divided into boxes No seats in the pit, which is the stage proper At the back of the pit,

that is to say, at the right, in the front, a few seats raised like steps, one above the other, and, under a stairway which leads to the upper seats, and of which the lower end only is visible, a stand decked with small candelabra, jars full of flowers, flagons and glasses, dishes heaped with sweetmeats, etc

In the centre of the background, under the box-tier, the entrance to the theatre, large door which half opens to let in the spectators On the panels of this door, and in several corners, and above the sweetmeat stand, red playbills announcing LA CLORISE

At the rise of the curtain, the house is nearly dark, and still empty The chandeliers are let down in the middle of the pit, until time to light them The audience, arriving gradually Cavaliers, burghers, lackeys, pages, fiddlers, etc

A tumult of voices is heard beyond the door, enter brusquely a CAVALIER

Doorkeeper [Running in after him] Not so fast! Your fifteen pence!

Cavalier I come in admission free!

Doorkeeper And why?

Cavalier I belong to the king's light cavalry!

Doorkeeper [To another CAVALIER who has entered] You?

Second Cavalier I do not pay!

Doorkeeper But

Second Cavalier I belong to the mousquetaires!

First Cavalier [To the SECOND] It does not begin before two The floor is empty Let us have a bout with foils

[They fence with foils they have brought]

A Lackey [Entering] Pst! Flanquin!

Other Lackey [Arrived a moment before] Champagne?

First Lackey [Taking a pack of cards from his doublet and showing it to SECOND LACKEY] Cards Dice [Sits down on the floor] Let us have a game

Second Lackey [Sitting down likewise] You rascal, willingly!

First Lackey [Taking from his pocket a bit of candle which he lights and sticks on the floor] I prigged an eyeful of my master's light!

One of the Watch [To a FLOWER-GIRL, who comes forward] It is pleasant getting here before the lights [Puts his arm around her waist]

One of the Fencers [Taking a thrust] Hit!

One of the Gamblers Clubs!

The Watchman [Pursuing the girl] A kiss!

The Flower-Girl [Repulsing him] We shall be seen!

The Watchman [Drawing her into a dark corner] No, we shall not!

A Man [Sitting down on the floor with others who have brought provisions] By coming early, you get a comfortable chance to eat

A Burgher [Leading his son] This should be a good place, my boy Let us stay here

One of the Gamblers Ace wins!

A Man [Taking a bottle from under his cloak and sitting down] A proper toper, toping Burgundy [drinks], I say should tope it in Burgundy House!

CYRANO DE BERGERAC

The Burgher [To his son] Might one not suppose we had stumbled into some house of evil fame? [Points with his cane at the drunkard] Guzzlers!

[In breaking guard one of the fencers jostles him] Brawlers! [He falls between the gamblers] Gamesters!

The Watchman [Behind him, still teasing the FLOWER-GIRL] A kiss!

The Burgher [Digging his son precipitately away] Bless my soul! And to reflect that in this very house, my son, were given the plays of the great Rotrou!

The Youth And those of the great Corneille!

[A band of PAGES holding hands rush in performing a farandole and singing]

Pages Tra la la la la la la!

Doorkeeper [Severely to the PAGES] Look, now! you pages, you! none of your tricks!

First Page [With wounded dignity] Sir! this want of confidence [As soon as the DOORKEEPER has turned away, briskly to the SECOND PAGE] Have you a string about you?

Second Page With a fish-hook at the end!

First Page We will sit up there and angle for wigs!

A Pickpocket [Surrounded by a number of individuals of dubious appearance] Come now, my little hopefuls, and learn your A B C's of trade. Being as you're not used to hooking

Second Page [Shouting to other PAGES who have already taken seats in the upper gallery] Ho! Did you bring any pea-shooters?

Third Page [From above] Yes! And peas! [Shoots down a volley of peas]

The Youth [To his father] What are we going to see?

The Burgher Clorise

The Youth By whom?

The Burgher By Balthazar Baro. Ah, what a play it is! [Goes toward the back on his son's arm]

Pickpocket [To his disciples] Particularly the lace-ruffles at the knees, you're to snip off carefully!

A Spectator [To another, pointing toward an upper seat] Look! On the first night of the Cid, I was perched up there!

Pickpocket [With pantomimic suggestion of spitting away] Watches

The Burgher [Coming forward again with his son] The actors you are about to see, my son, are among the most illustrious

Pickpocket [With show of subtracting with furtive little tugs] Pocket handkerchiefs

The Burgher Montfleury

Somebody [Shouting from the upper gallery] Make haste, and light the chandeliers!

The Burgher Bellerose, l'Epy, the Beaupre, Jodelet

A Page [In the pit] Ah! Here comes the goody-seller!

The Sweetmeat Vender [Appearing behind the stand] Oranges Milk

Raspberry cordial Citron-wine

[Hubbub at the door]

Falsetto Voice [*Outside*] Make room, ruffians!

One of the Lackeys [*Astonished*] The marquises in the pit!

Other Lackey Oh, for an instant only!

[*Enter a band of foppish YOUNG MARQUISES*]

One of the Marquises [*Looking around the half-empty house*] What? We happen in like so many linen-drapers? Without disturbing anybody? treading on any feet? Too bad! too bad! too bad! [*He finds himself near several other gentlemen, come in a moment before*] Cuigy, Brissaille!

[*Effusive embraces*]

Cuigy We are of the faithful indeed We are here before the lights

The Marquis Ah, do not speak of it! It has put me in such a humor!

Other Marquis Be comforted, marquis, here comes the candle-lighter!

The Audience [*Greeting the arrival of the candle-lighter*] Ah!

[*Many gather around the chandeliers while they are being lighted A few have taken seats in the galleries*]

[*LIGNIERE enters, arm in arm with CHRISTIAN DE NEUVILLETTES LIGNIERE, in somewhat disordered apparel, appearance of gentlemanly drunkard CHRISTIAN, becomingly dressed, but in clothes of a slightly obsolete elegance*]

Cuigy Ligniere!

Brissaille [*Laughing*] Not tipsy yet?

Ligniere [*Low to CHRISTIAN*] Shall I present you? [*CHRISTIAN nods assent*]
Baron de Neuville

[*Exchange of bows*]

The Audience [*Cheering the ascent of the first lighted chandelier*] Ah!

Cuigy [*To BRISSAILE, looking at CHRISTIAN*] A charming head charm ing!

First Marquis [*Who has overheard*] Pooh!

Ligniere [*Presenting CHRISTIAN*] Messieurs de Cuigy de Brissaille

Christian [*Bowing*] Delighted!

First Marquis [*To SECOND*] He is a pretty fellow enough, but is dressed in the fashion of some other year!

Ligniere [*To CUIGY*] Monsieur is lately arrived from Touraine

Christian Yes, I have been in Paris not over twenty days I enter the Guards tomorrow, the Cadets

First Marquis [*Looking at those who appear in the boxes*] There comes the president Aubry!

Sweetmeat Vender Oranges! Milk!

The Fiddlers [*Tuning*] La la

Cuigy [*To CHRISTIAN, indicating the house which is filling*] A good house!

Christian Yes, crowded

First Marquis The whole of fashion!

[*They give the names of the women, as, very brilliantly attired, these enter the boxes Exchange of bows and smiles*]

Second Marquis Mesdames de Gueménée

Cuigy De Bois-Dauphin

First Marquis Whom time was! we loved!

Brissaille de Chavigny

Second Marquis Who still plays havoc with our hearts!

Ligniere *Tiens!* Monsieur de Corneille has come back from Rouen!

The Youth [To his father] The Academy is present?

The Burgher Yes I perceive more than one member of it Yonder are Boudu, Boissat and Cureau Porcheres, Colomby, Bourzeys, Bourdon, Arbaut All names of which not one will be forgotten What a beautiful thought it is!

First Marquis Attention! Our précieuses are coming into their seats Barthénoide, Urimedonte, Cassandace, Félixerie

Second Marquis Ah, how exquisite are their surnames! Marquis, can you tell them off, all of them?

First Marquis I can tell them off, all of them, marquis!

Ligniere [Drawing CHRISTIAN aside] Dear fellow, I came in here to be of use to you The lady does not come I revert to my vice!

Christian [Imploring] No! No! You who turn into ditties Town and Court, stay by me, you will be able to tell me for whom it is I am dying of love!

The Leader of the Violins [Rapping on his desk with his bow] Gentle men! [He raises his bow]

Sweetmeat Vender Macaroons Citronade

[The fiddles begin playing]

Christian I fear oh, I fear to find that she is fanciful and intricate! I dare not speak to her, for I am of a simple wit The language written and spoken in these days bewilders and baffles me I am a plain soldier shy, to boot—She is always at the right, there, the end the empty box

Ligniere [With show of leaving] I am going

Christian [Still attempting to detain him] Oh, no! Stay, I beseech you!

Ligniere I cannot D'Assoucy is expecting me at the pot house Here is a mortal drought!

Sweetmeat Vender [Passing before him with a tray] Orangeade? .

Lignière Ugh!

Sweetmeat Vender Milk?

Ligniere Pah!

Sweetmeat Vender Lacrima?

Ligniere Stop! [To CHRISTIAN] I will tarry a bit Let us see this lacrima?

[Sits down at the sweetmeat stand The VENDER pours him a glass of lacrima]
[Shouts among the audience at the entrance of a little, merry-faced, roly-poly man]

Audience Ah, RaguenEAU!

Ligniere [To CHRISTIAN] RaguenEAU, who keeps the great cook-shop

RaguenEAU [Attired like a pastrycook in his Sunday best, coming quickly toward LIGNIERE] Monsieur, have you seen Monsieur de Cyrano?

Lignière [Presenting RAGUENEAU to CHRISTIAN] The pastrycook of poets and of players!

RaguenEAU [Abashed] Too much honor

Ligniere No modesty! *Mæcnas*!

Ragueneau It is true, those gentlemen are among my customers

Ligniere Debtors! A considerable poet himself

Ragueneau It has been said!

Ligniere Daft on poetry!

Ragueneau It is true that for an ode

Ligniere You are willing to give at any time a tart!

Ragueneau let A tart-let

Ligniere Kind soul, he tries to cheapen his charitable acts! And for a triolet were you not known to give ?

Ragueneau Rolls Just rolls

Ligniere [*Severely*] Buttered! And the play, you are fond of the play?

Ragueneau It is with me a passion!

Ligniere And you settle for your entrance fee with a pastry currency Come now, among ourselves, what did you have to give today for admittance here?

Ragueneau Four custards eighteen lady fingers [*He looks all around*] Monsieur de Cyrano is not here I wonder at it

Ligniere And why?

Ragueneau Montfleury is billed to play

Ligniere So it is, indeed That ton of man will today entrance us in the part of Phædo Phædo! But what is that to Cyrano?

Ragueneau Have you not heard? He interdicted Montfleury, whom he has taken in aversion, from appearing for one month upon the stage

Ligniere [*Who is at his fourth glass*] Well?

Ragueneau Montfleury is billed to play

Cuigy [*Who has drawn near with his companions*] He cannot be prevented

Ragueneau He cannot? Well, I am here to see!

First Marquis What is this Cyrano?

Cuigy A crack-brain!

Second Marquis Of quality?

Cuigy Enough for daily uses He is a cadet in the Guards [*Pointing out a gentleman who is coming and going about the pit, as if in search of some body*] But his friend Le Bret can tell you [*Calling*] Le Bret! [*LE BRET comes toward them*] You are looking for Bergerac?

Le Bret Yes I am uneasy

Cuigy Is it not a fact that he is a most uncommon fellow?

Le Bret [*Affectionately*] The most exquisite being he is that walks beneath the moon!

Ragueneau Poet!

Cuigy Swordsman!

Brissaille Physicist!

Le Bret Musician!

Ligniere And what an extraordinary aspect he presents!

Ragueneau I will not go so far as to say that I believe our grave Philippe de Champagne will leave us a portrait of him, but, the bizarre, excessive, whimsical fellow that he is would certainly have furnished the late Jacques

Callot with a type of madcap fighter for one of his masques Hat with triple feather, doublet with twice-triple skirt, cloak which his interminable rapier lifts up behind, with pomp, like the insolent tail of a cock, prouder than all the Artabans that Gascony ever bred, he goes about in his stuff Punchinello ruff, airing a nose Ah, gentlemen, what a nose is that! One cannot look upon such a specimen of the nasigera without exclaiming, "No! truly, the man exaggerates" After that, one smiles, one says "He will take it off"

But Monsieur de Bergerac never takes it off at all

Le Bret [*Shaking his head*] He wears it always and cuts down whoever breathes a syllable in comment

Ragueneau [*Proudly*] His blade is half the shears of Fate!

First Marquis [*Shrugging his shoulders*] He will not come!

Ragueneau He will I wager you a chicken a la Ragueneau

First Marquis [*Laughing*] Very well!

[*Murmur of admiration in the house* *ROXANE has appeared in her box She takes a seat in the front, her duenna at the back* *CHRISTIAN, engaged in paying the SWEETMEAT VENDER, does not look*]

Second Marquis [*Uttering a series of small squeals*] Ah, gentlemen, she is horrifically enticing!

First Marquis A strawberry set in a peach, and smiling!

Second Marquis So fresh, that being near her, one might catch cold in his heart!

Christian [*Looks up, sees ROXANE, and, agitated, seizes LIGNIERE by the arm*] That is she!

Ligniere [*Looking*] Ah, that is she!

Christian Yes Tell me at once Oh, I am afraid!

Ligniere [*Sipping his wine slowly*] Magdeleine Robin, surnamed Roxane Subtle Euphuistic

Christian Alack-a-day!

Ligniere Unmarried An orphan A cousin of Cyrano's the one of whom they were talking

[*While he is speaking, a richly dressed nobleman, wearing the order of the Holy Ghost on a blue ribbon across his breast, enters ROXANE'S box, and, without taking a seat, talks with her a moment*]

Christian [*Starting*] That man?

Ligniere [*Who is beginning to be tipsy, winking*] Hé! Hé! Comte de Guiche Enamored of her But married to the niece of Armand de Richelieu Wishes to manage a match between Roxane and a certain sorry lord, one Monsieur de Valvert, vicomte and easy She does not subscribe to his views, but De Guiche is powerful he can persecute to some purpose a simple com moner But I have duly set forth his shady machinations in a song which Ho! he must bear me a grudge! The end was wicked Listen! [*He rises, staggering, and lifting his glass, is about to sing*]

Christian No Good-evening

Ligniere You are going?

Christian To find Monsieur de Valvert

Ligniere Have a care You are the one who will get killed [*Indicating ROXANE by a glance*] Stay Some one is looking

Christian It is true

[*He remains absorbed in the contemplation of ROXANE The pickpockets, seeing his abstracted air, draw nearer to him*]

Lignière Ah, you are going to stay Well, I am going I am thirsty! And I am looked for at all the public-houses! [*Exit unsteadily*]

Le Bret [*Who has made the circuit of the house, returning toward RAGUENEAU, in a tone of relief*] Cyrano is not here

Ragueneau And yet

Le Bret I will trust to Fortune he has not seen the announcement

The Audience Begin! Begin!

One of the Marquises [*Watching DE GUICHE, who comes from ROXANE's box, and crosses the pit, surrounded by obsequious satellites, among whom is the VICOMTE DE VALVERT*] Always a court about him, De Guiche!

Other Marquis Pf! Another Gascon!

First Marquis A Gascon, of the cold and supple sort That sort succeeds Believe me, it will be best to offer him our duty

[*They approach DE GUICHE*]

Second Marquis These admirable ribbons! What color, Comte de Guiche? Should you call it Kiss-me-Sweet or Expiring Fawn?

De Guiche This shade is called Sick Spaniard

First Marquis Appropriately called, for shortly, thanks to your valor, the Spaniard will be sick indeed, in Flanders!

De Guiche I am going upon the stage Are you coming? [*He walks toward the stage, followed by all the MARQUISES and men of quality He turns and calls*] Valvert, come!

Christian [*Who has been listening and watching them, starts on hearing that name*] The vicomte! Ah, in his face in his face I will fling my

[*He puts his hand to his pocket and finds the pickpocket's hand He turns*] Hein?

Pickpocket Ai!

Christian [*Without letting him go*] I was looking for a glove

Pickpocket [*With an abject smile*] And you found a hand [*In a different tone, low and rapid*] Let me go I will tell you a secret

Christian [*Without releasing him*] Well?

Pickpocket Ligniere who has just left you

Christian [*As above*] Yes?

Pickpocket Has not an hour to live A song he made annoyed one of the great, and a hundred men—I am one of them—will be posted tonight

Christian A hundred? By whom?

Pickpocket Honor

Christian [*Shrugging his shoulders*] Oh!

Pickpocket [*With great dignity*] Among rogues!

Christian Where will they be posted?

Pickpocket At the Porte de Nesle, on his way home. Inform him.

Christian [Letting him go] But where can I find him?

Pickpocket Go to all the taverns the Golden Vat, the Pine Apple, the Belt and Bosom, the Twin Torches, the Three Funnels, and in each one leave a scrap of writing warning him

Christian Yes, I will run! Ah, the blackguards! A hundred against one! [*Looks lovingly toward ROXANE*] Leave her! [*Furiously, looking toward VALVERT*] And him! But Ligniere must be prevented [*Exit running*]

[*DE GUICHE, the MARQUISES, all the gentry have disappeared behind the curtain, to place themselves on the stage-seats The pit is crowded There is not an empty seat in the boxes or the gallery*]

The Audience Begin!

A Burgher [*Whose wig goes sailing off at the end of a string held by one of the PAGES in the upper gallery*] My wig!

Screams of Delight He is bald! The pages! Well done! Ha, ha, ha!

The Burgher [*Furious, shaking his fist*] Imp of Satan!

[*Laughter and screams, beginning very loud and decreasing suddenly Dead silence*]

Le Bret [*Astonished*] This sudden hush? [*One of the spectators whispers in his ear*] Ah?

The Spectator I have it from a reliable quarter

Running Murmurs Hush! Has he come? No! Yes, he has! In the box with the grating The cardinal! the cardinal! the cardinal!

One of the Pages What a shame! Now we shall have to behave!

[*Knocking on the stage Complete stillness Pause*]

Voice of one of the Marquises [*Breaking the deep silence, behind the curtain*] Snuff that candle!

Other Marquis [*Thrusting his head out between the curtains*] A chair!

[*A chair is passed from hand to hand, above the heads The MARQUIS takes it and disappears, after kissing his hand repeatedly toward the boxes*]

A Spectator Silence!

[*Once more, the three knocks The curtain opens Tableau The MARQUISES seated at the sides, in attitudes of languid haughtiness The stage setting is the faint-colored bluish sort usual in a pastoral Four small crystal candlebrackets light the stage The violins play softly*]

Le Bret [*To RAGUENEAU, under breath*] Is Montfleury the first to appear?

Ragueneau [*Likewise under breath*] Yes The opening lines are his

Le Bret Cyrano is not here

Ragueneau I have lost my wager

Le Bret Let us be thankful Let us be thankful

[*A bagpipe is heard MONTFLEURY appears upon the stage, enormous, in a conventional shepherd's costume, with a rose-wreathed hat set jauntily on the side of his head, breathing into a beribboned bagpipe*]

The Pit [*Applauding*] Bravo, Montfleury! Montfleury!

Montfleury [*After bowing, proceeds to play the part of PHÉDO*]

Happy the man who, freed from Fashion's fickle sway,
In exile self-prescribed whiles peaceful hours away,
Who when Zephyrus sighs amid the answering trees

A Voice [*From the middle of the pit*] Rogue! Did I not forbid you for one month?

[*Consternation Every one looks around Murmurs*]
Various Voices *Hein?* What? What is the matter?

[*Many in the boxes rise to see*]

Cuigy It is he!

Le Bret [*Alarmed*] Cyrano!

The Voice King of the Obese! Incontinently vanish!

The Whole Audience [*Indignantly*] Oh!

Montfleury But

The Voice You stop to muse upon the matter?

Several Voices [*From the pit and the boxes*] Hush! Enough! Proceed, Montfleury Fear nothing!

Montfleury [*In an unsteady voice*]

Happy the man who freed from Fashion's f—

The Voice [*More threatening than before*] How is this? Shall I be constrained, Man of the Monster Belly, to enforce my regulation regularly?

[*An arm holding a cane leaps above the level of the heads*]

Montfleury [*In a voice growing fainter and fainter*]

Happy the man

[*The cane is wildly flourished*]

The Voice Leave the stage!

The Pit Oh!

Montfleury [*Choking*]

Happy the man who freed

Cyrano [*Appears above the audience, standing upon a chair, his arms folded on his chest, his hat at a combative angle, his moustache on end, his nose terrifying*] Ah! I shall lose my temper!

[*Sensation at sight of him*]

Montfleury [*To the MARQUISES*] Messieurs, I appeal to you!

One of the Marquises [*Languidly*] But go ahead! Play!

Cyrano Fat man, if you attempt it, I will dust the paint off you with this!

The Marquis Enough!

Cyrano Let every little landlord keep silence in his seat, or I will ruffle his ribbons with my cane!

All the Marquises [*Rising*] This is too much! *Montfleury*

Cyrano Let Montfleury go home, or stay, and, having cut his ears off, I will disembowel him!

A Voice But

Cyrano Let him go home, I said!

Other Voice But after all

Cyrano It is not yet done? [*With show of turning up his sleeves*] Very

well, upon that stage, as on a platter trimmed with green, you shall see me carve that mount of brawn

Montfleury [*Calling up his whole dignity*] Monsieur, you cast indignity, in my person, upon the Muse!

Cyrano [*Very civilly*] Monsieur, if that lady, with whom you have naught to do, had the pleasure of beholding you just as you stand, there, like a decorated pot! she could not live, I do protest, but she hurled her buskin at you!

The Pit *Montfleury!* *Montfleury!* Give us Baro's piece!

Cyrano [*To those shouting around him*] I beg you will show some regard for my scabbard it is ready to give up the sword!

The Crowd [*Backing away*] Hey [*The space around him widens*] softly, there!

Cyrano [*To MONTFLEURY*] Go off!

The Crowd [*Closing again, and grumbling*] Oh! Oh!

Cyrano [*Turning suddenly*] Has somebody objections?

[*The crowd again pushes away from him*]

A Voice [*At the back, singing*]

Monsieur de Cyrano, one sees,
Inclines to be tyrannical,
In spite of that tyrannicle
We shall see La Clorise!

The Whole Audience [*Catching up the tune*] La Clorise! La Clorise!

Cyrano Let me hear that song again, and I will do you all to death with my stick!

A Burgher Samson come back!

Cyrano Lend me your jaw, good man!

A Lady [*In one of the boxes*] This is unheard of!

A Man It is scandalous!

A Burgher It is irritating, to say no more

A Page What fun it is!

The Pit Hsss! *Montfleury!* *Cyrano!*

Cyrano Be still!

The Pit [*In uproar*] Hee haw! Baaaaah! Bow wow! Cocka doodledooooo!

Cyrano I will

A Page Meeecow!

Cyrano I order you to hold your tongues! I dare the floor collectively to utter another sound! I challenge you, one and all! I will take down your names Step forward, budding heroes! Each in his turn You shall be given numbers Come, which one of you will open the joust with me? You, monsieur? No! You? No! The first that offers is promised all the mortuary honors due the brave Let all who wish to die hold up their hands! [*Silence*] It is modesty that makes you shrink from the sight of my naked sword? Not a name? Not a hand?—Very good Then I proceed [*Turning toward the stage where MONTFLEURY is waiting in terror*] As I was saying, it is my wish to see

the stage cured of this tumor Otherwise [claps hand to his sword] the
lancet!

Montfleury I

Cyrano [Gets down from his chair, and sits in the space that has become
vacant around him, with the ease of one at home] Thrice will I clap my hands,
O plenilune! At the third clap eclipse!

The Pit [Diverted] Ah!

Cyrano [Clapping his hands] One!

Montfleury I

A Voice [From one of the boxes] Do not go!

The Pit He will stay! He will go!

Montfleury Messieurs, I feel

Cyrano Two!

Montfleury I feel it will perhaps be wiser

Cyrano Three!

[MONTFLEURY disappears, as if through a trap-door Storm of laughter, hissing,
catcalls]

The House Hoo! Hoo! Milksop! Come back!

Cyrano [Beaming, leans back in his chair and crosses his legs] Let him come
back, if he dare!

A Burgher The spokesman of the company!

[BELLEROSE comes forward on the stage and bows]

The Boxes Ah, there comes Bellerose!

Bellerose [With elegant bearing and diction] Noble ladies and gentle-
men

The Pit No! No! Jodelet We want Jodelet!

Jodelet [Comes forward, speaks through his nose] Pack of swine!

The Pit That is right! Well said! Bravo!

Jodelet Don't bravo me! The portly tragedian, whose paunch is your
delight, felt sick!

The Pit He is a poltroon!

Jodelet He was obliged to leave

The Pit Let him come back!

Some No!

Others Yes!

A Youth [To CYRANO] But, when all is said, monsieur, what good grounds
have you for hating Montfleury?

Cyrano [Amiably, sitting as before] Young gosling, I have two, whereof
each, singly, would be ample Primo He is an execrable actor, who bellows,
and with grunts that would disgrace a water carrier launches the verse that
should go forth as if on pinions! Secundo is my secret

The Old Burgher [Behind CYRANO] But without compunction you deprive
us of hearing La Clorise I am determined

Cyrano [Turning his chair around so as to face the old gentleman, re-
spectfully] Venerable mule, old Baro's verses being what they are, I do it with
out compunction, as you say

The Precieuses [In the boxes] Ha! Ho! Our own Baro! My

dear, did you hear that? How can such a thing be said? Ha! Ho!

Cyrano [*Turning his chair so as to face the boxes, gallantly*] Beautiful creatures, do you bloom and shine, be ministers of dreams, your smiles our anodyne Inspire poets, but poems spare to judge!

Bellerose But the money which must be given back at the door!

Cyrano [*Turning his chair to face the stage*] Bellerose, you have said the only intelligent thing that has, as yet, been said! Far from me to wrong by so much as a fringe the worshipful mantle of Thespis [*He rises and flings a bag upon the stage*] Catch! and keep quiet!

The House [*Dazzled*] Ah! Oh!

Jodelet [*Nimbley picking up the bag, weighing it with his hand*] For such a price, you are authorized, monsieur, to come and stop the performance every day!

The House Hoo! Hoo!

Jodelet Should we be hooted in a body!

Bellerose The house must be evacuated!

Jodelet Evacuate it!

[*The audience begins to leave, CYRANO looking on with a satisfied air The crowd, however, becoming interested in the following scene, the exodus is suspended The women in the boxes who were already standing and had put on their wraps, stop to listen and end by resuming their seats*]

Le Biet [*To CYRANO*] What you have done is mad!

A Bore Montfleury! the eminent actor! What a scandal! But the Duc de Candale is his patron! Have you a patron, you?

Cyrano No!

The Bore You have not?

Cyrano No!

The Bore What? You are not protected by some great nobleman under the cover of whose name

Cyrano [*Exasperated*] No, I have told you twice Must I say the same thing thrice? No, I have no protector [*hand on sword*] but this will do

The Bore Then, of course, you will leave town

Cyrano That will depend

The Bore But the Duc de Candale has a long arm

Cyrano Not so long as mine [*pointing to his sword*] pieced out with this!

The Bore But you cannot have the presumption

Cyrano I can, yes

The Bore But

Cyrano And now, face about!

The Bore But

Cyrano Face about, I say or else, tell me why you are looking at my nose

The Bore [*Bewildered*] I

Cyrano [*Advancing upon him*] In what is it unusual?

The Bore [*Backing*] Your worship is mistaken

Cyrano [*Same business as above*] Is it flabby and pendulous, like a proboscis?

The Bore I never said

Cyrano Or hooked like a hawk's beak?

The Bore I

Cyrano Do you discern a mole upon the tip?

The Bore But

Cyrano Or is a fly disporting himself thereon? What is there wonderful about it?

The Bore Oh

Cyrano Is it a freak of nature?

The Bore But I had refrained from casting so much as a glance at it!

Cyrano And why, I pray, should you not look at it?

The Bore I had

Cyrano So it disgusts you?

The Bore Sir

Cyrano Its color strikes you as unwholesome?

The Bore Sir

Cyrano Its shape, unfortunate?

The Bore But far from it!

Cyrano Then wherefore that depreciating air? Perhaps monsieur thinks it a shade too large?

The Bore Indeed not. No, indeed I think it small small,—I should have said, minute!

Cyrano What? How? Charge me with such a ridiculous defect? Small, my nose? Ho!

The Bore Heavens!

Cyrano Enormous, my nose! Contemptible stutterer, snub-nosed and flat headed, be it known to you that I am proud, proud of such an appendage! inasmuch as a great nose is properly the index of an affable, kindly, courteous man, witty, liberal, brave, such as I am! and such as you are for evermore precluded from supposing yourself, deplorable rogue! For the inglorious surface my hand encounters above your ruff, is no less devoid— [*Strikes him*]

The Bore Ah! ah!

Cyrano Of pride, alacrity and sweep, of perception and of gift, of heavenly spark, of sumptuousness, to sum up all, of nose, than that [*turns him around by the shoulders and suits the action to the word*] which stops my boot below your spine!

The Bore [*Running off*] Help! The watch!

Cyrano Warning to the idle who might find entertainment in my organ of smell And if the facetious fellow be of birth, my custom is, before I let him go to chasten him, in front, and higher up, with steel, and not with hide!

De Guiche [*Who has stepped down from the stage with the MARQUISES*] He is becoming tiresome!

Valvert [*Shrugging his shoulders*] It is empty bluster

De Guiche Will no one take him up?

Valvert No one? Wait! I will have one of those shots at him! [*He approaches CYRANO who is watching him, and stops in front of him, in an attitude*

of silly swagger] Your your nose is err Your nose is very large!

Cyrano [*Gravely*] Very

Valvert [*Laughs*] Ha!

Cyrano [*Imperturbable*] Is that all?

Valvert But

Cyrano Ah, no, young man, that is not enough! You might have said, dear me, there are a thousand things varying the tone For instance here you are —Aggressive “I, monsieur, if I had such a nose, nothing would serve but I must cut it off!” Amicable “It must be in your way while drinking, you ought to have a special beaker made!” Descriptive “It is a crag! a peak! a promontory! A promontory, did I say? It is a peninsula!” Inquisitive “What may the office be of that oblong receptacle? Is it an ink-horn or a scissor-case?” Mincing “Do you so dote on birds, you have, fond as a father, been at pains to fit the little darlings with a roost?” Blunt “Tell me, monsieur, you, when you smoke, is it possible you blow the vapor through your nose without a neighbor crying, ‘The chimney is afire?’” Anxious “Go with caution, I beseech, lest your head, dragged over by that weight, should drag you over!” Tender “Have a little sun shade made for it! It might get freckled!” Learned “None but the beast, monsieur, mentioned by Aristophanes, the hippocampelephantocamelos, can have borne beneath his forehead so much cartilage and bone!” Off-hand “What, comrade, is that sort of peg in style? Capital to hang one’s hat upon!” Emphatic “No wind can hope, O lordly nose, to give the whole of you a cold, but the Nor’ Wester!” Dramatic “It is the Red Sea when it bleeds!” Admiring “What a sign for a perfumer’s shop!” Lyrical “Art thou a Triton, and is that thy conch?” Simple “A monument! When is admission free?” Deferent “Suffer, monsieur, that I should pay you my respects that is what I call possessing a house of your own!” Rustic “Hi, boys! Call that a nose? Ye don’t gull me! It’s either a prize carrot or else a stunted gourd!” Military “Level against the cavalry!” Practical “Will you put it up for raffle? Indubitably, sir, it will be the feature of the game!” And finally in parody of weeping Pyramus “Behold, behold the nose that traitorously destroyed the beauty of its master! and is blushing for the same!”—That, my dear sir, or something not unlike, is what you would have said to me, had you the smallest leaven of letters or of wit, but of wit, O most pitiable of objects made by God, you never had a rudiment, and of letters, you have just those that are needed to spell “fool!”—But, had it been otherwise, and had you been possessed of the fertile fancy requisite to shower upon me, here, in this noble company, that volley of sprightly pleasantries, still should you not have delivered yourself of so much as a quarter of the tenth part of the beginning of the first For I let off these good things at myself, and with sufficient zest, but do not suffer another to let them off at me!

De Guiche [*Attempting to lead away the amazed VICOMTE*] Let be, vicomte!

Valvert That insufferable haughty bearing! A clodhopper without without so much as gloves who goes abroad without points or bow knots!

Cyrano My foppery is of the inner man I do not trick myself out like a popinjay, but I am more fastidious, if I am not so showy I would not sally forth, by any chance, not washed quite clean of an affront, my conscience foggy about the eye, my honor crumpled, my nicety black rimmed I walk with all upon me furbished bright I plume myself with independence and straightforwardness It is not a handsome figure, it is my soul, I hold erect as in a brace I go decked with exploits in place of ribbon bows I taper to a point my wit like a moustache And at my passage through the crowd true sayings ring like spurs!

Valvert But, sir

Cyrano I am without gloves? a mighty matter! I had only one left, of a very ancient pair, and even that became a burden to me I left it in somebody's face

Valvert Villain, clod-poll, flat foot, refuse of the earth!

Cyrano [*Taking off his hat and bowing as if the VICOMTE had been introducing himself*] Ah? And mine, Cyrano-Savinien Hercule of Bergerac!

Valvert [*Exasperated*] Buffoon!

Cyrano [*Giving a sudden cry, as if seized with a cramp*] A!

Valvert [*Who had started toward the back, turning*] What is he saying now?

Cyrano [*Screwing his face as if in pain*] It must have leave to stir it has a cramp! It is bad for it to be kept still so long!

Valvert What is the matter?

Cyrano My rapier prickles like a foot asleep!

Valvert [*Drawing*] So be it!

Cyrano I shall give you a charming little hurt!

Valvert [*Contemptuous*] A poet!

Cyrano Yes, a poet, and to such an extent, that while we fence, I will, hop! extempore, compose you a ballade!

Valvert A ballade?

Cyrano I fear you do not know what that is

Valvert But

Cyrano [*As if saying a lesson*] The ballade is composed of three stanzas of eight lines each

Valvert [*Stamps with his feet*] Oh!

Cyrano [*Continuing*] And an envoi of four

Valvert You

Cyrano I will with the same breath fight you and compose one And at the last line, I will hit you

Valvert Indeed you will not!

Cyrano No?

[*Declaiming*]

Ballade of the duel which in Burgundy House
Monsieur de Bergerac fought with a jackanapes

Valvert And what is that, if you please?

Cyrano That is the title

The Audience [At the highest pitch of excitement] Make room! Good sport! Stand aside! Keep still!

[*Tableau* A ring, in the pit, of the interested, the MARQUISES and OFFICERS scattered among the BURGHERS and COMMON PEOPLE The PAGES have climbed on the shoulders of various ones, the better to see All the women are standing in the boxes At the right, DE GUICHE and his attendant gentlemen At left, LE BRET, RAGUENEAU, CUIGY, etc]

Cyrano [Closing his eyes a second] Wait I am settling upon the rhymes There I have them

[In declaiming, he suits the action to the word]

Of my broad felt made lighter,
I cast my mantle broad,
And stand, poet and fighter,
To do and to record
I bow, I draw my sword
En garde! with steel and wit
I ply you at first abord
At the last line, I hit!

[They begin fencing]

You should have been politer,
Where had you best be gored?
The left side or the right—ah?
Or next your azure cord?
Or where the spleen is stored?
Or in the stomach pit?
Come we to quick accord
At the last line, I hit!
You falter, you turn whiter?
You do so to afford
Your foe a rhyme in “iter”?
You thrust at me—I ward—
And balance is restored
Laridon! Look to your spit!
No, you shall not be floored
Before my cue to hit!

[He announces solemnly]

ENVOI

Prince, call upon the Lord!
I skirmish feint a bit
I lunge! I keep my word!

[The VICOMTE staggers, CYRANO bows]

At the last line, I hit!

[Acclamations Applause from the boxes Flowers and handkerchiefs are thrown The OFFICERS surround and congratulate CYRANO RAGUENEAU dances with delight LE BRET is tearfully joyous and at the same time

highly troubled The friends of the VICOMTE support him off the stage]
 The Crowd [In a long shout] Ah!
 A Light-Cavalry Man Superb!
 A Woman Sweet!
 Ragueneau Astounding!
 A Marquis Novel!
 Le Bret Insensate!
 The Crowd [Pressing around CYRANO] Congratulations! Well done!
 Bravo!
 A Woman's Voice He is a hero!
 A Mousquetaire [Striding swiftly toward CYRANO, with outstretched hand]
 Monsieur, will you allow me? It was quite, quite excellently done, and I think
 I know whereof I speak But, as a fact, I expressed my mind before, by making
 a huge noise [He retires]
 Cyrano [To CUIGY] Who may the gentleman be?
 Cuigy D'Artagnan
 Le Bret [To CYRANO, taking his arm] Come, I wish to talk with you
 Cyrano Wait till the crowd has thinned [To BELLEROSE] I may remain?
 Bellerose [Deferentially] Why, certainly!
 [Shouts are heard outside]
 Jodelet [After looking] They are hooting Montfleury
 Bellerose [Solemnly] Sic transit! [In a different tone, to the DOOR-
 KEEPER and the candle snuffer] Sweep and close Leave the lights We shall
 come back, after eating, to rehearse a new farce for tomorrow
 [Exeunt JODELET and BELLEROSE, after bowing very low to CYRANO]
 Doorkeeper [To CYRANO] Monsieur will not be going to dinner?
 Cyrano I? No
 [The DOORKEEPER withdraws]
 Le Bret [To CYRANO] And this, because?
 Cyrano [Proudly] Because [in a different tone, having seen that the
 DOORKEEPER is too far to overhear] I have not a penny!
 Le Bret [Making the motion of flinging a bag] How is this? The bag of
 crowns
 Cyrano Monthly remittance, thou lastedst but a day!
 Le Bret And to keep you the remainder of the month?
 Cyrano Nothing is left!
 Le Bret But then, flinging that bag, what a child's prank!
 Cyrano But what a gesture!
 The Sweetmeat Vender [Coughing behind her little counter] Hm!
 [CYRANO and LE BRET turn toward her She comes timidly forward] Mon
 sieur, to know you have not eaten makes my heart ache [Pointing to the
 sweetmeat-stand] I have there all that is needed [Impulsively] Help
 yourself!
 Cyrano [Taking off his hat] Dear child, despite my Gascon pride, which
 forbids that I should profit at your hand by the most inconsiderable of dainties,
 I fear too much less a denial should grieve you I will accept therefore
 [He goes to the stand and selects] Oh, a trifle! A grape off this [She

proffers the bunch, he takes a single grape | No one! This glass of water
[She starts to pour wine into it, he stops her] | No clear! And half
 a macaroon

[He breaks in two the macaroon and returns half]

Le Bret This comes near being silly!

Sweetmeat Vender Oh, you will take something more!

Cyrano Yes Your hand to kiss

[He kisses the hand she holds out to him, as if it were that of a princess]

Sweetmeat Vender Monsieur, I thank you *[Curtseys]* Good-evening! *[Exit]*

Cyrano *[To LE BRET]* I am listening *[He establishes himself before the stand, sets the macaroon before him]* Dinner! *[Does the same with the glass of water]* Drink! *[And with the grape]* Dessert! *[He sits down]* La! let me begin! I was as hungry as a wolf! *[Eating]* You were saying?

Le Bret That if you listen to none but those great boobies and swashbucklers your judgment will become wholly perverted Inquire, will you, of the sensible, concerning the effect produced today by your prowesses

Cyrano *[Finishing his macaroon]* Enormous!

Le Bret The cardinal

Cyrano *[Beaming]* He was there, the cardinal?

Le Bret Must have found what you did

Cyrano To a degree, original

Le Bret Still

Cyrano He is a poet It cannot be distasteful to him wholly that one should deal confusion to a fellow-poet's play

Le Bret But, seriously, you make too many enemies!

Cyrano *[Biting into the grape]* How many, thereabouts, should you think I made tonight?

Le Bret Eight and forty Not mentioning the women

Cyrano Come, tell them over!

Le Bret Montfleury, the old merchant, De Guiche, the Vicomte, Baro, the whole Academy

Cyrano Enough! You steep me in bliss!

Le Bret But whither will the road you follow lead you? What can your object be?

Cyrano I was wandering aimlessly, too many roads were open too many resolves, too complex, allowed of being taken I took

Le Bret Which?

Cyrano By far the simplest of them all I decided to be, in every matter, always, admirable!

Le Bret *[Shrugging his shoulders]* That will do—But tell me, will you not, the motive—look, the true one!—of your dislike to Montfleury

Cyrano *[Rising]* That old Silenus, who has not seen his knees this many a year, still believes himself a delicate desperate danger to the fair And as he struts and burrs upon the stage, makes sheep's-eyes at them with his moist frog's-eyes And I have hated him oh, properly! since the night he was so daring as to cast his glance on her her, who— Oh, I thought I saw a slug crawl over a flower!

Le Bret [*Amazed*] Hey? What? Is it possible?

Cyrano [*With a bitter laugh*] That I should love? [*In a different tone, seriously*] I love

Le Bret And may one know? You never told me

Cyrano Whom I love? Come, think a little The dream of being beloved, even by the beautiful, is made, to me, an empty dream indeed by this good nose, my forerunner ever by a quarter of an hour Hence, whom should I love? It seems superfluous to tell you! I love it was inevitable! the most beautiful that breathes!

Le Bret The most beautiful?

Cyrano No less, in the whole world! And the most resplendent, and the most delicate of wit, and among the golden-haired [*With overwhelming despair*] Still the superlative!

Le Bret Dear me, what is this fair one?

Cyrano All unawares, a deadly snare, exquisite without concern to be so A snare of nature's own, a musk rose, in which ambush Love lies low Who has seen her smile remembers the ineffable! There is not a thing so common but she turns it into prettiness, and in the merest nod or beck she can make manifest all the attributes of a goddess No, Venus! you cannot step into your iridescent shell, nor, Dian, you, walk through the blossoming groves, as she steps into her chair and walks in Paris!

Le Bret Sapristi! I understand! It is clear!

Cyrano It is pellucid

Le Bret Magdeleine Robin, your cousin?

Cyrano Yes, Roxane

Le Bret But, what could be better? You love her? Tell her so! You covered yourself with glory in her sight a moment since

Cyrano Look well at me, dear friend, and tell me how much hope you think can be justly entertained with this protuberance Oh, I foster no illusions!

Sometimes, indeed, yes, in the violet dusk, I yield, even I! to a dreamy mood I penetrate some garden that lies sweetening the hour With my poor great devil of a nose I sniff the April And as I follow with my eyes some woman passing with some cavalier I think how dear would I hold having to walk beside me, linked like that, slowly, in the soft moonlight, such a one! I kindle—I forget—and then then suddenly I see the shadow of my profile upon the garden-wall!

Le Bret [*Touched*] My friend

Cyrano Friend, I experience a bad half hour sometimes, in feeling so unsightly and alone

Le Bret [*In quick sympathy, taking his hand*] You weep?

Cyrano Ah, God forbid! That? Never! No, that would be unsightly to excess! That a tear should course the whole length of this nose! Never, so long as I am accountable, shall the divine loveliness of tears be implicated with so much gross ugliness! Mark me well, nothing is so holy as are tears, nothing! and never shall it be that, rousing mirth through me, a single one of them shall seem ridiculous!

Le Bret Come, do not despond! Love is a lottery

Cyrano [*Shaking his head*] No! I love Cleopatra do I resemble Cæsar?
I worship Berenice do I put you in mind of Titus?

Le Bret But your courage and your wit!—The little girl who but a moment ago bestowed on you that very modest meal, her eyes, you must have seen as much, did not exactly hate you!

Cyrano [*Impressed*] That is true!

Le Bret You see? So, then!—But Roxane herself, in following your duel, went lily pale

Cyrano Lily pale?

Le Bret Her mind, her heart as well, are struck with wonder! Be bold, speak to her, in order that she may

Cyrano Laugh in my face! No, there is but one thing upon earth I fear It is that

Doorkeeper [*Admitting the DUENNA to CYRANO*] Monsieur, you are inquired for

Cyrano [*Seeing the DUENNA*] Ah, my God! her duenna!

The Duenna [*With a great curtsey*] Somebody wishes to know of her valorous cousin where one may, in private, see him

Cyrano [*Upset*] See me?

The Duenna [*With curtsey*] See you There are things for your ear

Cyrano There are?

The Duenna [*Other curtsey*] Things

Cyrano [*Staggering*] Ah, my God!

The Duenna Somebody intends, tomorrow, at the earliest roses of the dawn, to hear Mass at Saint Roch

Cyrano [*Upholds himself by leaning on LE BRET*] Ah, my God!

The Duenna That over, where might one step in a moment, have a little talk?

Cyrano [*Losing his senses*] Where? I But Ah, my God!

The Duenna Expedition, if you please

Cyrano I am casting about

The Duenna Where?

Cyrano At at at Ragueneau's the pastrycook's

The Duenna He lodges?

Cyrano In In Rue Ah, my God! my God! St Honoré

The Duenna [*Retiring*] We will be there Do not fail At seven

Cyrano I will not fail [*Exit DUENNA*]

Cyrano [*Falling on LE BRET's neck*] To me from her a meeting!

Le Bret Well, your gloom is dispelled?

Cyrano Ah, to whatever end it may be, she is aware of my existence!

Le Bret And now you will be calm?

Cyrano [*Beside himself*] Now, I shall be fulminating and frenetical! I want an army all complete to put to rout! I have ten hearts and twenty arms I cannot now be suited with felling dwarfs to earth [*At the top of his lungs*] Giants are what I want!

[*During the last lines, on the stage at the back, shadowy shapes of players have*

been moving about The rehearsal has begun, the fiddlers have resumed their places]

A Voice [From the stage] Hey! Psst! Over there! A little lower We are trying to rehearse!

Cyrano [Laughing] We are going!

[He goes toward the back]

[Through the street door, enter CUGY, BRISSAILLE, several OFFICERS supporting

LI GNIÈRE in a state of complete intoxication]

Cugy Cyrano!

Cyrano What is this?

*Cugy A *turdus vinaticus* we are bringing you*

Cyrano [Recognizing him] Ligniere! Hey, what has happened to you?

Cugy He is looking for you

Brissaille He cannot go home

Cyrano Why?

Ligniere [In a thick voice, showing him a bit of crumpled paper] This note bids me beware A hundred men against me on account of lampoon grave danger threatening me Porte de Nesle must pass it to get home Let me come and sleep under your roof

Cyrano A hundred, did you say?—You shall sleep at home!

Ligniere [Frightened] But

Cyrano [In a terrible voice, pointing to the lighted lantern which the DOORKEEPER stands swinging as he listens to this scene] Take that lantern [LIGNIÈRE hurriedly takes it] and walk! I swear to tuck you in your bed tonight myself [To the OFFICERS] You, follow at a distance You may look on!

Cugy But a hundred men

Cyrano Are not one man too many for my mood tonight!

[The players, in their several costumes, have stepped down from the stage and come nearer]

Le Bret But why take under your especial care

Cyrano Still Le Bret is not satisfied!

Le Bret That most commonplace of sots?

Cyrano [Slapping LIGNIÈRE on the shoulder] Because this sot, this cask of muscatel, this hoghead of rosolio, did once upon a time a wholly pretty thing On leaving Mass, having seen her whom he loved take holy-water, as the rite prescribes, he whom the sight of water puts to flight, ran to the holy-water bowl, and stooping over, drank it dry

An Actress [In the costume of SOUBRETTE] Tiens, that was nice!

Cyrano Was it not, Soubrette?

The Soubrette [To the others] But why are they, a hundred, all against one poor poet?

Cyrano Let us start! [To the OFFICERS] And you, gentlemen, when you see me attack, whatever you may suppose to be my danger, do not stir to second me!

Another of the Actresses [Jumping from the stage] Oh, I will not miss seeing this!

Cyrano Come!

Another Actress [*Likewise jumping from the stage, to an elderly actor*]
Cassandre, will you not come?

Cyrano Come, all of you! The Doctor, Isabel, Leander, all! and you shall lend, charming fantastic swarm, an air of Italian farce to the Spanish drama in view. Yes, you shall be a tinkling heard above a roar, like bells about a tambourine!

All the Women [*In great glee*] Bravo! Hurry! A mantle!
A hood!

Jodelet Let us go!

Cyrano [*To the fiddlers*] You will favor us with a tune, messieurs the violinists!

[*The fiddlers fall into the train. The lighted candles which furnished the foot lights are seized and distributed. The procession becomes a torchlight procession.*]

Cyrano Bravo! Officers, beauty in fancy dress, and, twenty steps ahead [*He takes the position he describes*] I, by myself, under the feather stuck, with her own hand, by Glory, in my hat! Proud as a Scipio trebly Nasica!—It is understood? Formal interdiction to interfere with me!—We are ready? One! Two! Three! Doorkeeper, open the door!

[*The DOORKEEPER opens wide the folding door. A picturesque corner of Old Paris appears, bathed in moonlight.*]

Cyrano Ah! Paris floats in dim nocturnal mist The sloping blueish roofs are washed with moonlight A setting, exquisite indeed, offers itself for the scene about to be enacted Yonder, under silvery vapor wreaths, like a mysterious magic mirror, glimmers the Seine And you shall see what you shall see!

All To the Porte de Nesle!

Cyrano [*Standing on the threshold*] To the Porte de Nesle! [*Before crossing it, he turns to the SOUBRETTE*] Were you not asking, mademoiselle, why upon that solitary rhymster a hundred men were set? [*He draws his sword, and tranquilly*] Because it was well known he is a friend of mine! [*Exit*]

[*To the sound of the violins, by the flickering light of the candles, the procession—LIGNIERE staggering at the head, the ACTRESSES arm in arm with the OFFICERS, the players capering behind,—follows out into the night.*]

ACT TWO THE COOKSHOP OF POETS

RAGUENEAU'S shop, vast kitchen at the corner of Rue St Honoré and Rue de l'Arbre-Sec, which can be seen at the back, through the glass door, gray in the early dawn

At the left, in front, a counter overhung by a wrought iron canopy from which geese, ducks, white peacocks are hanging. In large china jars, tall nosegays composed of the simpler flowers, mainly sunflowers. On the same side, in the middle distance, an enormous fireplace, in front of which, between

huge andirons, each of which supports a small iron pot, roasting meats drip into appropriate pans

At the right, door in the front wing In the middle distance, a staircase leading to a loft, the interior of which is seen through open shutters, a spread table lighted by a small Flemish candelabrum, shows it to be an eating-room A wooden gallery continuing the stairway, suggests other similar rooms to which it may lead

In the centre of the shop, an iron hoop—which can be lowered by means of a rope,—to which large roasts are hooked

In the shadow, under the stairway, ovens are glowing Copper molds and sauce-pans are shining, spits turning, hams swinging, pastry pyramids showing fair It is the early beginning of the workday Bussling of hurried scullions, portly cooks and young cook's-assistants, swarming of caps decorated with hen feathers and guinea-fowl wings Wicker crates and broad sheets of tin are brought in loaded with brioches and tarts

There are tables covered with meats and cakes, others, surrounded by chairs, await customers In a corner, a smaller table, littered with papers At the rise of the curtain, RAGUENEAU is discovered seated at this table, writing with an inspired air, and counting upon his fingers

First Pastrycook [Bringing in a tall molded pudding] Nougat of fruit!

Second Pastrycook [Bringing in the dish he names] Custard!

Third Pastrycook [Bringing in a fowl roasted in its feathers] Peacock!

Fourth Pastrycook [Bringing in a tray of cakes] Mince-pies!

Fifth Pastrycook [Bringing in a deep earthen dish] Beef stew!

Ragueneau [Laying down his pen, and looking up] Daybreak already plates with silver the copper pans! Time, Ragueneau, to smother within thee the singing divinity! The hour of the lute will come anon—now is that of the ladle! [He rises, speaking to one of the cooks] You, sir, be so good as to lengthen this gravy,—it is too thick!

The Cook How much?

Ragueneau Three feet [Goes farther]

The Cook What does he mean?

First Pastrycook Let me have the tart!

Second Pastrycook The dumpling!

Ragueneau [Standing before the fireplace] Spread thy wings, Muse, and fly further, that thy lovely eyes may not be reddened at the sordid kitchen fire! [To one of the cooks, pointing at some small loaves of bread] You have improperly placed the cleft in those loaves, the cæsura belongs in the middle,—between the hemistichs! [To another of the cooks, pointing at an unfinished pastry] This pastry palace requires a roof! [To a young cook's apprentice, who, seated upon the floor, is putting fowls on a spit] And you, on that long spit, arrange, my son, in pleasing alternation, the modest pullet and the splendid turkey-cock,—even as our wise Malherbe alternated of old the greater with the lesser lines, and so with roasted fowls compose a poem!

Another Apprentice [Coming forward with a platter covered by a napkin] Master, in your honor, see what I have baked I hope you are pleased with it!

Ragueneau [*Ecstatic*] A lyre!

The Apprentice Of pie-crust!

Ragueneau [*Touched*] With candied fruits!

The Apprentice And the strings, see,—of spun sugar!

Ragueneau [*Giving him money*] Go, drink my health! [*Catching sight of Lise who is entering*] Hush! My wife! Move on, and hide that money [*To Lise, showing her the lyre, with a constrained air*] Fine, is it not?

Lise Ridiculous! [*She sets a pile of wrapping-paper on the counter*]

Ragueneau Paper bags? Good Thanks [*He examines them*] Heavens! My beloved books! The masterpieces of my friends,—dismembered,—torn!—to fashion paper bags for penny pies!—Ah, the abominable case is re-enacted of Orpheus and the Mænads!

Lise [*Drily*] And have I not an unquestionable right to make what use I can of the sole payment ever got from your paltry scribblers of uneven lines?

Ragueneau Pismire! Forbear to insult those divine, melodious crickets!

Lise Before frequenting that low crew, my friend, you did not use to call me a Mænad,—no, nor yet a pismire!

Ragueneau Put poems to such a use!

Lise To that use and no other!

Ragueneau If with poems you do this, I should like to know, Madame, what you do with prose!

[*Two children have come into the shop*]

Ragueneau What can I do for you, little ones?

First Child Three patties

Ragueneau [*Waiting on them*] There you are! Beautifully browned, and piping hot

Second Child Please, will you wrap them for us?

Ragueneau [*Starting, aside*] There goes one of my bags! [*To the children*] You want them wrapped, do you? [*He takes one of the paper bags, and as he is about to put in the patties, reads*] "No otherwise, Ulysses, from Penelope departing " Not this one! [*He lays it aside and takes another At the moment of putting in the patties, he reads*] "Phœbus of the aureate locks " Not that one! [*Same business*]

Lise [*Out of patience*] Well, what are you waiting for?

Ragueneau Here we are Here we are Here we are [*He takes a third bag and resigns himself*] The sonnet to Phyllis! It is hard, all the same

Lise It is lucky you made up your mind [*Shrugging her shoulders*] Nicodemus!

[*She climbs on a chair and arranges dishes on a sideboard*]

Ragueneau [*Taking advantage of her back being turned, calls back the children who had already reached the door*] Psst! Children! Give me back the sonnet to Phyllis, and you shall have six patties instead of three! [*The children give back the paper-bag, joyfully take the patties and exeunt RAGUENEAU smooths out the crumpled paper and reads declaiming*] "Phyllis!"

Upon that charming name, a grease spot! "Phyllis!"

[*Enter CYRANO brusquely*]

Cyrano What time is it?

Ragueneau [*Bowing with eager deference*] Six o'clock

Cyrano [*With emotion*] In an hour! [*He comes and goes in the shop*]

Ragueneau [*Following him*] Bravo! I, too, was witness

Cyrano Of what?

Ragueneau Your fight

Cyrano Which?

Ragueneau At the Hotel de Bourgogne

Cyrano [*With disdain*] Ah, the duel!

Ragueneau [*Admiringly*] Yes,—the duel in rhyme

Lise He can talk of nothing else

Cyrano Let him! It does no harm

Ragueneau [*Thrusting with a spit he has seized*] "*At the last line, I hit!*"
"At the last line, I hit!"—How fine that is! [*With growing enthusiasm*] "*At the last line, I*"—

Cyrano What time, *Ragueneau*?

Ragueneau [*Remaining fixed in the attitude of thrusting, while he looks at the clock*] Five minutes past six—"I hit!" [*He recovers from his duelling posture*] Oh, to be able to make a ballade!

Lise [*To CYRANO, who in passing her counter has absent-mindedly shaken hands with her*] What ails your hand?

Cyrano Nothing. A scratch

Ragueneau You have been exposed to some danger?

Cyrano None whatever

Lise [*Shaking her finger at him*] I fear that is a fib!

Cyrano From the swelling of my nose? The fib in that case must have been good sized [*In a different tone*] I am expecting some one. You will leave us alone in here

Ragueneau But how can I contrive it? My poets shortly will be coming

Lise [*Ironically*] For breakfast!

Cyrano When I sign to you, you will clear the place of them—What time is it?

Ragueneau It is ten minutes past six

Cyrano [*Seating himself nervously at RAGUENEAU'S table and helping himself to paper*] A pen?

Ragueneau [*Taking one from behind his ear, and offering it*] A swan's quill

A Mousquetaire [*With enormous moustachios, enters, in a stentorian voice*]
 Good-morning!

[*LISE goes hurriedly to him, toward the back*]

Cyrano [*Turning*] What is it?

Ragueneau A friend of my wife's,—a warrior,—terrible, from his own report

Cyrano [*Taking up the pen again, and waving RAGUENEAU away*] Hush!

[*To himself*] Write to her, fold the letter, hand it to her,
 and make my escape [*Throwing down the pen*] Coward! But may I perish if I have the courage to speak to her, to say a single word

[*To RAGUENEAU*] What time is it?

Ragueneau A quarter past six

Cyrano [*Beating his breast*] A single word of all I carry here! . . . Whereas

in writing [He takes up the pen again] Come, let us write it then, in very deed, the love-letter I have written in thought so many times, I have but to lay my soul beside my paper, and copy! [He writes]

[Beyond the glass door, shadowy, lank, hesitating, shabby forms are seen moving] [Enter the POETS, clad in black, with hanging hose, sadly mud-splashed]

Lise [Coming forward, to RAGUENEAU] Here they come, your scarecrows!

First Poet [Entering, to RAGUENEAU] Brother in art!

Second Poet [Shaking both RAGUENEAU's hands] Dear fellow-bard

Third Poet Eagle of pastrycooks [sniffs the air], your eyrie smells divine!

Fourth Poet Phœbus turned baker!

Fifth Poet Apollo master-cook!

Ragueneau [Surrounded, embraced, shaken by the hand] How at his ease a man feels at once with them!

First Poet The reason we are late, is the crowd at the Porte de Nesle!

Second Poet Eight ugly ruffians, ripped open with the sword, lie weltering on the pavement

Cyrano [Raising his hand a second] Eight? I thought there were only seven [Goes on with his letter]

Ragueneau [To CYRANO] Do you happen to know who is the hero of this event?

Cyrano [Negligently] I? No

Lise [To the MOUSQUETAIRE] Do you?

The Mousquetaire [Turning up the ends of his moustache] Possibly!

Cyrano [Writing, from time to time he is heard murmuring a word or two]

"I love you"

First Poet A single man, we were told, put a whole gang to flight!

Second Poet Oh, it was a rare sight! The ground was littered with pikes, and cudgels

Cyrano [Writing] "Your eyes"

Third Poet Hats were strewn as far as the Goldsmiths' square!

First Poet Sapristi! He must have been a madman of mettle

Cyrano [As above] "your lips"

First Poet An infuriate giant, the doer of that deed!

Cyrano [Same business] "but when I see you, I come near to swooning with a tender dread"

Second Poet [Snapping up a tart] What have you lately written, Ragueneau?

Cyrano [Same business] "who loves you devotedly" [In the act of signing the letter, he stops, rises, and tucks it inside his doublet] No need to sign it I deliver it myself

Ragueneau [To SECOND POET] I have rhymed a recipe

Third Poet [Establishing himself beside a tray of cream puffs] Let us hear this recipe!

Fourth Poet [Examining a brioche of which he has possessed himself] It should not wear its cap so saucily on one side it scarcely looks well! [Bites off the top]

First Poet See, the spicecake there, ogling a susceptible poet with eyes of almond under citron brows! [He takes the spicecake]

Second Poet We are listening!

Third Poet [*Slightly squeezing a cream puff between his fingers*] This puff
creams at the mouth I water!

Second Poet [*Taking a bite out of the large pastry lyre*] For once the Lyre
will have filled my stomach!

Ragueneau [*Who has made ready to recite, has coughed, adjusted his cap,
struck an attitude*] A recipe in rhyme!

Second Poet [*To FIRST POET, nudging him*] Is it breakfast, with you?

First Poet [*To SECOND POET*] And with you, is it dinner?

Ragueneau How Almond Cheese Cakes should be made

Briskly beat to lightness due,
Eggs, a few,
With the eggs so beaten, beat —
Nicely strained for this same use,—
Lemon-juice,
Adding milk of almonds, sweet

With fine pastry dough, rolled flat,
After that,
Line each little scalloped mold,
Round the sides, light-fingered, spread
Marmalade,
Pour the liquid eggy gold,

Into each delicious pit,
Prison it
In the oven,—and, bye and bye,
Almond cheese-cake will in gay
Blond array
Bless your nostril and your eye!

The Poets [*Their mouths full*] Exquisite! Delicious!

One of the Poets [*Choking*] Humph!

[*They go toward the back, eating* CYRANO, *who has been watching them, ap-
proaches* RAGUENEAU]

Cyrano While you recite your works to them, have you a notion how they
stuff?

Ragueneau [*Low, with a smile*] Yes, I see them without looking, lest
they should be abashed I get a double pleasure thus from saying my verses
over I satisfy a harmless weakness of which I stand convicted, at the same
time as giving those who have not fed a needed chance to feed!

Cyrano [*Slapping him on the shoulder*] You, I like you! [*RAGUENEAU
joins his friends* CYRANO *looks after him, then, somewhat sharply*] Hey, Lise!
[*LISE, absorbed in tender conversation with the MOUSQUETAIRE, starts and comes
forward toward* CYRANO] Is that captain laying siege to you?

Lise [*Offended*] My eyes, sir, have ever held in respect those who meant hurt
to my character

Cyrano For eyes so resolute I thought yours looked a little languishing!

Lise [*Choking with anger*] But

Cyrano [*Bluntly*] I like your husband Wherefore, Madame Lise, I say he shall not be so horned!

Lise But

Cyrano [*Raising his voice so as to be heard by the MOUSQUETAIRE*] A word to the wise! [*He bows to the MOUSQUETAIRE, and after looking at the clock, goes to the door at the back and stands in watch*]

Lise [*To the MOUSQUETAIRE, who has simply returned CYRANO's bow*] Really

I am astonished at you Defy him to his face!

The Mousquetaire To his face, indeed! to his face! [*He quickly moves off LISE follows him*]

Cyrano [*From the door at the back, signalling to RAGUENEAU that he should clear the room*] Pst!

Ragueneau [*Urging the POETS toward the door at the night*] We shall be much more comfortable in there

Cyrano [*Impatiently*] Pst! Pst!

Ragueneau [*Driving along the POETS*] I want to read you a little thing of mine

First Poet [*Despairingly, his mouth full*] But the provisions

Second Poet Shall not be parted from us!

[*They follow RAGUENEAU in procession, after making a raid on the eatables*]

Cyrano If I feel that there is so much as a glimmer of hope I will out with my letter!

[*ROXANE, masked, appears behind the glass door, followed by the DUENNA*]

Cyrano [*Instantly opening the door*] Welcome! [*Approaching the DUENNA*] Madame, a word with you!

The Duenna A dozen

Cyrano Are you fond of sweets?

The Duenna To the point of indigestion!

Cyrano [*Snatching some paper bags off the counter*] Good Here are two sonnets of Benserade's

The Duenna Pooh!

Cyrano Which I fill for you with grated almond drops

The Duenna [*With a different expression*] Ha!

Cyrano Do you look with favor upon the cake they call a trifle?

The Duenna I affect it out of measure, when it has whipped cream inside

Cyrano Six shall be yours, thrown in with a poem by Saint-Amant And in these verses of Chapelain I place this wedge of fruit-cake, light by the side of them Oh! And do you like tarts little jam ones fresh?

The Duenna I dream of them at night!

Cyrano [*Loading her arms with crammed paper bags*] Do me the favor to go and eat these in the street

The Duenna But

Cyrano [*Pushing her out*] And do not come back till you have finished! [*He closes the door upon her, comes forward toward ROXANE, and stands, bare*]

headed, at a respectful distance] Blessed forevermore among all hours the hour in which, remembering that so lowly a being still draws breath, you were so gracious as to come to tell me to tell me?

Roxane [*Who has removed her mask*] First of all, that I thank you For that churl, that coxcomb yesterday, whom you taught manners with your sword, is the one whom a great nobleman, who fancies himself in love with me

Cyrano De Guiche?

Roxane [*Dropping her eyes*] Has tried to force upon me as a husband

Cyrano Honorary? [*Bowing*] It appears, then, that I fought, and I am glad of it, not for my graceless nose but your thrice-beautiful eyes

Roxane Further than that I wished But before I can make the confession I have in mind to make, I must find in you once more the almost brother, with whom as a child I used to play, in the park—do you remember?—by the lake!

Cyrano I have not forgotten Yes you came every summer to Bergerac

Roxane You used to fashion lances out of reeds

Cyrano The silk of the tasselled corn furnished hair for your doll

Roxane It was the time of long delightful games

Cyrano And somewhat sour berries

Roxane The time when you did everything I bade you!

Cyrano Roxane, wearing short frocks, was known as Magdeleine

Roxane Was I pretty in those days?

Cyrano You were not ill looking

Roxane Sometimes, in your venturesome climbings, you used to hurt yourself You would come running to me, your hand bleeding And, playing at being your mamma, I would harden my voice and say [*She takes his hand*] "Will you never keep out of mischief?" [*She stops short, amazed*] Oh, it is too much! Here you have done it again! [*CYRANO tries to draw back his hand*] No! Let me look at it! Aren't you ashamed? A great boy like you!

How did this happen, and where?

Cyrano Oh, fun near the Porte de Nesle

Roxane [*Sitting down at a table and dipping her handkerchief into a glass of water*] Let me have it

Cyrano [*Sitting down, too*] So prettily, so cheeringly maternal!

Roxane And tell me, while I wash this naughty blood away with how many were you fighting?

Cyrano Oh, not quite a hundred

Roxane Tell me about it

Cyrano No What does it matter? You tell me, you what you were going to tell me before, and did not dare

Roxane [*Without releasing his hand*] I do dare, now I have breathed in courage with the perfume of the past Oh, yes, now I dare Here it is There is some one whom I love

Cyrano Ah!

Roxane Oh, he does not know it

Cyrano Ah!

Roxane As yet

Cyrano Ah!

Roxane But if he does not know it, he soon will

Cyrano Ah!

Roxane A poor boy who until now has loved me timidly, from a distance, without daring to speak

Cyrano Ah!

Roxane No, leave me your hand It is hot, this will cool it But I have read his heart in his face

Cyrano Ah!

Roxane [*Completing the bandaging of his hand with her small pocket-handkerchief*] And, cousin, is it not a strange coincidence—that he should serve exactly in your regiment!

Cyrano Ah!

Roxane [*Laughing*] Yes He is a cadet, in the same company!

Cyrano Ah!

Roxane He bears plain on his forehead the stamp of wit, of genius! He is proud, noble, young, brave, handsome

Cyrano [*Rising, pale*] Handsome!

Roxane What what is the matter?

Cyrano With me? Nothing! It is it is [*Showing his hand, smiling*] You know! It smarts a little

Roxane In short, I love him I must tell you, however, that I have never seen him save at the play

Cyrano Then you have never spoken to each other?

Roxane Only with our eyes

Cyrano But, then how can you know?

Roxane Oh, under the lindens of Place Royale, people will talk A trust worthy gossip told me many things!

Cyrano A cadet, did you say?

Roxane A cadet, in your company

Cyrano His name?

Roxane Baron Christian de Neuville

Cyrano What? He is not in the cadets

Roxane He is! He certainly is, since morning Captain Carbon de Castel-Jaloux

Cyrano And quickly, quickly, she throws away her heart! But my poor little girl

The Duenna [*Opening the door at the back*] Monsieur de Bergerac, I have eaten them, every one!

Cyrano Now read the poetry printed upon the bags! [*The DUENNA disappears*] My poor child, you who can endure none but the choicest language, who savor eloquence and wit, if he should be a barbarian!

Roxane No! no! He has hair like one of D'Urfé's heroes!

Cyrano If he had on proof as homely a wit as he has pretty hair!

Roxane No! No! I can see at a single glance, his utterances are fine, pointed

Cyrano Ah, yes! A man's utterances are invariably like his moustache!
Still, if he *were* a ninny?

Roxane [*Stamping with her foot*] I should die, there!

Cyrano [*After a time*] You bade me come here that you might tell me this?
I scarcely see the appropriateness, Madame

Roxane Ah, it was because some one yesterday let death into my soul by
telling me that in your company you are all Gascons, all!

Cyrano And that we pick a quarrel with every impudent fledgling, not
Gascon, admitted by favor to our thoroughbred Gascon ranks? That is what
you heard?

Roxane Yes, and you can imagine how distracted I am for him!

Cyrano [*In his teeth*] You well may be!

Roxane But I thought, yesterday, when you towered up, great and invincible,
giving his due to that miscreant, standing your ground against those catiffs, I
thought, "Were he but willing, he of whom all are in awe"

Cyrano Very well, I will protect your little baron

Roxane Ah, you will you will protect him for me? I have always
felt for you the tenderest regard!

Cyrano Yes, yes

Roxane You will be his friend?

Cyrano I will!

Roxane And never shall he have to fight a duel?

Cyrano I swear it

Roxane Oh, I quite love you! Now I must go [*She hurriedly resumes
her mask, throws a veil over her head, says absent-mindedly*] But you have not
yet told me about last night's encounter It must have been amazing! Tell
him to write to me [*She kisses her hand to him*] I love you dearly!

Cyrano Yes, yes

Roxane A hundred men against you? Well, adieu We are fast friends

Cyrano Yes, yes

Roxane Tell him to write me! A hundred men! You shall tell me an-
other time I must not linger now A hundred men! What a heroic thing
to do!

Cyrano [*Bowing*] Oh, I have done better since!

[*Exit ROXANE CYRANO stands motionless, staring at the ground Silence The
door at the right opens RAGUENEAU thrusts in his head*]

Ragueneau May we come back?

Cyrano [*Without moving*] Yes

[*RAGUENEAU beckons, his friends come in again At the same time, in the
doorway at the back, appears CARBON DE CASTEL-JALOUX, costume of a
Captain of the Guards On seeing CYRANO, he gesticulates exaggeratedly by
way of signal to some one out of sight*]

Carbon de Castel-Jaloux He is here!

Cyrano [*Looking up*] Captain!

Carbon de Castel-Jaloux [*Exultant*] Hero! We know all! . . . About thirty
of my cadets are out there!

Cyrano [*Drawing back*] But

Carbon de Castel-Jaloux [Trying to lead him off] Come! You are in request!

Cyrano No!

Carbon de Castel-Jaloux They are drinking across the way, at the Cross of the Hilt

Cyrano I

Carbon de Castel-Jaloux [Going to the door and shouting toward the street corner, in a voice of thunder] The hero refuses He is not in the humor!

A Voice [Outside] Ah, sandious!

[Tumult outside, noise of clanking swords and of boots drawing nearer]

Carbon de Castel-Jaloux [Rubbing his hands] Here they come, across the street

The Cadets [Entering the cookshop] Mille dious! Capdedious! Mordious! Pocapdedious!

Ragueneau [Backing in alarm] Messieurs, are you all natives of Gascony?

The Cadets All!

One of the Cadets [To CYRANO] Bravo!

Cyrano Baron!

Other Cadet [Shaking both CYRANO's hands] Vivat!

Cyrano Baron!

Third Cadet Let me hug you to my heart!

Cyrano Baron!

Several Gascons Let us hug him!

Cyrano [Not knowing which one to answer] Baron! baron! your pardon!

Ragueneau Messieurs, are you all barons?

The Cadets All!

Ragueneau Are they truly?

First Cadet Our coats of arms piled up would dwindle in the clouds!

Le Bret [Entering, running to CYRANO] They are looking for you! A crowd, gone mad as March, led by those who were with you last night

Cyrano [Alarmed] You never told them where to find me?

Le Bret [Rubbing his hands] I did

A Bugher [Entering, followed by a number of others] Monsieur, the Marais is coming in a body!

[The street outside has filled with people Sedan-chairs, coaches stop before the door]

Le Bret [Smiling, low to CYRANO] And Roxane?

Cyrano [Quickly] Be quiet!

The Crowd [Outside] Cyrano!

[A rabble bursts into the cookshop Confusion Shouting]

Ragueneau [Standing upon a table] My shop is invaded! They are breaking everything! It is glorious!

People [Pressing round CYRANO] My friend my friend

Cyrano I had not so many friends yesterday!

Le Bret This is success!

A Young Marquis [Running toward CYRANO, with outstretched hands] If you knew, my dear fellow

Cyrano Dear? Fellow? Where was it we stood sentinel together?
Other Marquis I wish to present you, sir, to several ladies, who are outside in my coach

Cyrano [*Coldly*] But you, to me, by whom will you first be presented?

Le Bret [*Astonished*] But what is the matter with you?

Cyrano Be still!

A Man of Letters [*With an inkhorn*] Will you kindly favor me with the details of

Cyrano No

Le Bret [*Nudging him*] That is Theophrastus Renaudot, the inventor of the gazette

Cyrano Enough!

Le Bret A sheet close packed with various information! It is an idea, they say, likely to take firm root and flourish!

A Poet [*Coming forward*] Monsieur

Cyrano Another!

The Poet I am anxious to make a pentacrostic on your name

Somebody Else [*Likewise approaching CYRANO*] Monsieur

Cyrano Enough, I say!

[*At the gesture of impatience which CYRANO cannot repress, the crowd draws away*]

[*DE GUICHE appears, escorted by officers, among them CUIGY, BRISSAILLE, those who followed CYRANO at the end of the first act CUIGY hurries toward CYRANO*]

Cuigy [*To CYRANO*] Monsieur de Guiche! [*Murmurs Every one draws back*] He comes at the request of the Marshal de Gaussion

De Guiche [*Bowing to CYRANO*] Who wishes to express his admiration for your latest exploit, the fame of which has reached him

The Crowd Bravo!

Cyrano [*Bowing*] The Marshal is qualified to judge of courage

De Guiche He would scarcely have believed the report, had these gentle men not been able to swear they had seen the deed performed

Cuigy With our own eyes!

Le Bret [*Low to CYRANO, who wears an abstracted air*] But

Cyrano Be silent!

Le Bret You appear to be suffering

Cyrano [*Starting, and straightening himself*] Before these people?

[*His moustache bristles, he expands his chest*] I suffering? You shall see!

De Guiche [*In whose ear CUIGY has been whispering*] But this is by no means the first gallant achievement marking your career You serve in the madcap Gascon company, do you not?

Cyrano In the cadets, yes

One of the Cadets [*In a great voice*] Among his countrymen!

De Guiche [*Considering the GASCONS, in line behind CYRANO*] Ah, ha!—All these gentlemen, then, of the formidable aspect, are the famous

Carbon de Castel-Jaloux. *Cyrano!*

Cyrano Captain?

Carbon de Castel-Jaloux My company, I believe, is here in total Be so obliging as to present it to the Count

Cyrano [Taking a step toward DE GUICHE, and pointing at the CADETS]

They are the Gascony Cadets
Of Carbon de Castel-Jaloux,
Famed fighters, liars, desperates,
They are the Gascony Cadets!
All, better-born than pickpockets,
Talk couchant, rampant, pendent, too!
They are the Gascony Cadets
Of Carbon de Castel-Jaloux!

Cat-whiskered, eyed like falconets,
Wolf toothed and heron-legged, they hew
The rabble down that snarls and threats
Cat-whiskered, eyed like falconets,
Great pomp of plume hides and offsets
Holes in those hats they wear askew
Cat-whiskered, eyed like falconets,
They drive the snarling mob, and hew!

The mildest of their sobriquets
Are Crack-my-crown and Run-me-through!
Mad drunk on glory Gascon gets!
These boasters of soft sobriquets
Wherever rapier rapier whets
Are met in punctual rendezvous
The mildest of their sobriquets
Are Crack my-crown and Run-me-through!

They are the Gascony Cadets
That give the jealous spouse his due!
Lean forth, adorable coquettes,
They are the Gascony Cadets,
With plumes and scarfs and aigulets!
The husband gray may well look blue
They are the Gascony Cadets
That give the jealous spouse his due!

De Guiche [Nonchalantly seated in an armchair which RAGUENEAU has hurriedly brought for him] A gentleman provides himself today, by way of luxury, with a poet May I look upon you as mine?

Cyrano No, your lordship, as nobody's

De Guiche My uncle Richelieu yesterday found your spontaneity diverting I shall be pleased to be of use to you with him

Le Bret [Dazzled] Great God!

De Guiche I cannot think I am wrong in supposing that you have rhymed a tragedy?

Le Bret [*Whispering to CYRANO*] My boy, your Agrippina will be played!
De Guiche Take it to him

Cyrano [*Tempted and pleased*] Really

De Guiche He has taste in such matters He will no more than, here and there, alter a word, recast a passage

Cyrano [*Whose face has instantly darkened*] Not to be considered, monsieur! My blood runs cold at the thought of a single comma added or suppressed

De Guiche On the other hand, my dear sir, when a verse finds favor with him, he pays for it handsomely

Cyrano He scarcely can pay me as I pay myself, when I have achieved a verse to my liking, by singing it over to myself!

De Guiche You are proud

Cyrano You have observed it?

One of the Cadets [*Coming in with a number of disreputable, draggled, tattered hats threaded on his sword*] Look, Cyrano! at the remarkable feathered game we secured this morning near the Porte de Nesle! The hats of the fugitives!

Carbon de Castel-Jaloux *Spolia optima!*

All [*Laughing*] Ha! Ha! Ha!

Cuigy The one who planned that military action, my word! must be proud of it today!

Brissaille Is it known who did it?

De Guiche I— [*The laughter stops short*] They had instructions to chastise—a matter one does not attend to in person—a drunken scribbler

[*Constrained silence*]

The Cadet [*Under breath, to CYRANO, indicating the hats*] What can we do with them? They are oily Make them into a hotch pot?

Cyrano [*Taking the sword with the hats, and bowing, as he shakes them off at DE GUICHE's feet*] Monsieur, if you should care to return them to your friends?

De Guiche [*Rises, and in a curt tone*] My chair and bearers, at once [*To CYRANO, violently*] As for you, sir

A Voice [*In the street, shouting*] The chairmen of Monseigneur the Comte de Guiche!

De Guiche [*Who has recovered control over himself, with a smile*] Have you read Don Quixote?

Cyrano I have And at the name of that divine madman, I uncover . .

De Guiche My advice to you is to ponder

A Charman [*Appearing at the back*] The chair is at the door!

De Guiche The chapter of the windmills

Cyrano [*Bowing*] Chapter thirteen

De Guiche For when a man attacks them, it often happens . .

Cyrano I have attacked, am I to infer, a thing that veers with every wind?

De Guiche That one of their far-reaching canvas arms pitches him down into the mud!

Cyrano Or up among the stars!

[*Exit DE GUICHE* *He is seen getting into his chair* *The gentlemen withdraw whispering* *LE BRET goes to the door with them* *The crowd leaves* *The CADETS remain seated at the right and left at tables where food and drink is brought to them*]

Cyrano [*Bowing with a derisive air to those who leave without daring to take leave of him*] Gentlemen gentlemen gentlemen

Le Bret [*Coming forward, greatly distressed, lifting his hands to Heaven*] Oh, in what a pretty pair of shoes

Cyrano Oh, you! I expect you to grumble!

Le Bret But yourself, you will agree with me that invariably to cut the throat of opportunity becomes an exaggeration!

Cyrano Yes I agree I do exaggerate

Le Bret [*Triumphant*] You see, you admit it!

Cyrano But for the sake of principle, and of example, as well, I think it a good thing to exaggerate as I do!

Le Bret Could you but leave apart, once in a while, your mousquetaire of a soul, fortune, undoubtedly, fame

Cyrano And what should a man do? Seek some grandee, take him for patron, and like the obscure creeper clasping a tree-trunk, and licking the bark of that which props it up, attain to height by craft instead of strength? No, I thank you Dedicate, as they all do, poems to financiers? Wear motley in the humble hope of seeing the lips of a minister distend for once in a smile not ominous of ill? No, I thank you Eat every day a toad? Be threadbare at the belly with grovelling? Have his skin dirty soonest at the knees? Practice feats of dorsal elasticity? No, I thank you With one hand stroke the goat while with the other he waters the cabbage? Make gifts of senna that counter-gifts of rhubarb may accrue, and indefatigably swing his censer in some beard? No, I thank you Push himself from lap to lap, become a little great man in a great little circle, propel his ship with madrigals for oars and in his sails the sighs of the elderly ladies? No, I thank you Get the good editor Sercy to print his verses at proper expense? No, I thank you Contrive to be nominated Pope in conclaves held by imbeciles in wineshops? No, I thank you Work to construct a name upon the basis of a sonnet, instead of constructing other sonnets? No, I thank you Discover talent in tyros, and in them alone? Stand in terror of what gazettes may please to say, and say to himself, "At whatever cost, may I figure in the *Paris Mercury*!" No, I thank you Calculate, cringe, peak, prefer making a call to a poem,—petition, solicit, apply? No, I thank you! No, I thank you! No, I thank you! But sing, dream, laugh, loaf, be single, be free, have eyes that look squarely, a voice with a ring, wear, if he chooses, his hat hindside afore, for a yes, for a no, fight a duel or turn a ditty! Work, without concern of fortune or of glory, to accomplish the heart's desired journey to the moon! Put forth nothing that has not its spring in the very heart, yet, modest, say to himself, "Old man, be satisfied with blossoms, fruits, yea, leaves alone, so they be gathered in your garden and not another man's!" Then, if it

happen that to some small extent he triumph, be obliged to render of the glory, to Cæsar, not one jot, but honestly appropriate it all In short, scorning to be the parasite, the creeper, if even failing to be the oak, rise, not perchance to a great height, but rise alone!

Le Bret Alone? Good! but not one against all! How the devil did you contract the mania that possesses you for making enemies, always, everywhere?

Cyrano By seeing you make friends, and smile to those same flocks of friends with a mouth that takes for model an old purse! I wish not to be troubled to return bows in the street, and I exclaim with glee, "An enemy the more!"

Le Bret This is mental aberration!

Cyrano I do not dispute it I am so framed To displease is my pleasure I love that one should hate me Dear friend, if you but knew how much better a man walks under the exciting fire of hostile eyes, and how amused he may become over the spots on his doublet, spattered by Envy and Cowardice! You, the facile friendship wherewith you surround yourself, resembles those wide Italian collars, loose and easy, with a perforated pattern, in which the neck looks like a woman's They are more comfortable, but of less high effect, for the brow not held in proud position by any constraint from them, falls to nodding this way and that But for me every day Hatred starches and flutes the ruff whose stiffness holds the head well in place Every new enemy is another plait in it, adding compulsion, but adding, as well, a ray for, similar in every point to the Spanish ruff, Hatred is a bondage, but is a halo, too!

Le Bret [After a pause, slipping his arm through CYRANO'S] To the hearing of all be proud and bitter, but to me, below breath, say simply that she does not love you!

Cyrano [Sharply] Not a word!

[CHRISTIAN has come in and mingled with the CADETS, they ignore him, he has finally gone to a little table by himself, where LISE waits on him]

One of the Cadets [Seated at a table at the back, glass in hand] Hey, Cyrano! [CYRANO turns toward him] Your story!

Cyrano Presently!

[He goes toward the back on LE BRET'S arm They talk low]

The Cadet [Rising and coming toward the front] The account of your fight! It will be the best lesson [stopping in front of the table at which CHRISTIAN is sitting] for this timorous novice!

Christian [Looking up] Novice?

Other Cadet Yes, sickly product of the North!

Christian Sickly?

First Cadet [Impressively] Monsieur de Neuville, it is a good deed to warn you that there is a thing no more to be mentioned in our company than rope in the house of the hanged!

Christian And what is it?

Other Cadet [In a terrifying voice] Look at me! [Three times, darkly, he places his finger upon his nose] You have understood?

Christian Ah, it is the

Other Cadet Silence! Never must you so much as breathe that word, or [He points toward CYRANO at the back talking with LE BRET] You will have him, over there, to deal with!

Other Cadet [*Who, while CHRISTIAN was turned toward the first, has noiselessly seated himself on the table behind him*] Two persons were lately cut off in their pride by him for talking through their noses. He thought it personal.

Other Cadet [*In a cavernous voice, as he rises from under the table where he had slipped on all fours*] Not the remotest allusion, ever, to the fatal cartilage, unless you fancy an early grave!

Other Cadet A word will do the business! What did I say? A word?

A simple gesture! Make use of your pocket handkerchief, you will shortly have use for your shroud!

[*Silence* All around CHRISTIAN watch him, with folded arms. He rises and goes to CARBON DE CASTEL-JALOUX, who, in conversation with an officer, affects to notice nothing.]

Christian Captain!

Carbon [*Turning and looking him rather contemptuously up and down*] Monsieur?

Christian What is the proper course for a man when he finds gentlemen of the South too boastful?

Carbon de Castel-Jaloux He must prove to them that one can be of the North, yet brave [*He turns his back upon him*]

Christian I am much obliged.

First Cadet [*To CYRANO*] And now, the tale of your adventure!

All Yes, yes, now let us hear!

Cyrano [*Coming forward among them*] My adventure? [*All draw their stools nearer, and sit around him, with craned necks* CHRISTIAN sits astride a chair] Well, then, I was marching to meet them. The moon up in the skies was shining like a silver watch, when suddenly I know not what careful watch-maker having wrapped it in a cottony cloud, there occurred the blackest imaginable night, and, the streets being nowise lighted,—*mordious!*—you could see no further than

Christian Your nose

[*Silence* Every one slowly gets up, all look with terror at CYRANO. He has stopped short, amazed. Pause.]

Cyrano Who is that man?

One of the Cadets [*Low*] He joined this morning.

Cyrano [*Taking a step toward CHRISTIAN*] This morning?

Carbon de Castel-Jaloux [*Low*] His name is Baron de Neuville.

Cyrano [*Stopping short*] Ah, very well [*He turns pale, then red, gives evidence of another impulse to throw himself upon CHRISTIAN*] I [*He conquers it and says in a stifled voice*] Very well [*He takes up his tale*] As I was saying [*with a burst of rage*] *Mordious!* [*He continues in a natural tone*] one could not see in the very least [*Consternation* All resume their seats, staring at one another] And I was walking along, reflecting that for a very insignificant rogue I was probably about to offend some great prince who would bear me a lasting grudge, that, in brief, I was about to thrust my

Christian Nose

[*All get up* CHRISTIAN has tilted his chair and is rocking on the hind legs.]

Cyrano [*Choking*] Finger between the tree and the bark, for the aforesaid prince might be of sufficient power to trip me and throw me

Christian On my nose

Cyrano [*Wipes the sweat from his brow*] But, said I, "Gascony forward! Never falter when duty prompts! Forward, *Cyrano*!" and, saying this, I advance—when suddenly, in the darkness, I barely avoid a blow

Christian Upon the nose

Cyrano I ward it and thereupon find myself

Christian Nose to nose

Cyrano [*Springing toward him*] *Ventie-Saint-Gris!* [*All the GASCONS rush forward, to see, CYRANO, on reaching CHRISTIAN, controls himself and proceeds*] with a hundred drunken brawlers, smelling

Christian To the nose's limit

Cyrano [*Deathly pale, and smiling*] of garlic and of grease I leap forward, head lowered

Christian Nose to the wind!

Cyrano And I charge them I knock two breathless and run a third through the body One lets off at me *Paf!* and I retort

Christian *Pif!*

Cyrano [*Exploding*] Death and damnation! Go,—all of you!

[*All the CADETS make for the door*]

First Cadet The tiger is roused at last!

Cyrano All! and leave me with this man

Second Cadet *Bigre!* When we see him again, it will be in the shape of mince-meat!

Ragueneau Mince-meat?

Other Cadet In one of your pies

Ragueneau I feel myself grow white and flabby as a table napkin!

Carbon de Castel-Jaloux Let us go!

Other Cadet Not a smudge of him will be left!

Other Cadet What these walls are about to behold gives me gooseflesh to think upon!

Other Cadet [*Closing the door at the right*] Ghastly! Ghastly!
[*All have left, by the back or the sides, a few up the stairway CYRANO and*

CHRISTIAN remain face to face, and look at each other a moment]

Cyrano Embrace me!

Christian Monsieur

Cyrano Brave fellow

Christian But what does this

Cyrano Very brave fellow I wish you to

Christian Will you tell me?

Cyrano Embrace me, I am her brother

Christian Whose?

Cyrano Hers!

Christian What do you mean?

Cyrano *Roxane's!*

Christian [*Running to him*] Heavens! You, her brother?

Cyrano Or the same thing her first cousin

Christian And she has

Cyrano Told me everything!

Christian Does she love me?

Cyrano Perhaps!

Christian [*Seizing his hands*] How happy I am, monsieur, to make your acquaintance!

Cyrano That is what I call a sudden sentiment!

Christian Forgive me!

Cyrano [*Looking at him, laying his hand upon his shoulder*] It is true that he is handsome, the rascal!

Christian If you but knew, monsieur, how greatly I admire you!

Cyrano But all those noses which you

Christian I take them back!

Cyrano Roxane expects a letter tonight

Christian Alas!

Cyrano What is the matter?

Christian I am lost if I cease to be dumb!

Cyrano How is that?

Christian Alas! I am such a dunce that I could kill myself for shame!

Cyrano But no no You are surely not a dunce, if you believe you are! Besides, you scarcely attacked me like a dunce

Christian Oh, it is easy to find words in mounting to the assault! Indeed, I own to a certain cheap military readiness, but when I am before women, I have not a word to say Yet their eyes, when I pass by, express a kindness toward me

Cyrano And do their hearts not express the same when you stop beside them?

Christian No! for I am of those—I recognize it, and am dismayed!—who do not know how to talk of love

Cyrano *Tiens!* It seems to me that if Nature had taken more pains with my shape, I should have been of those who do know how to talk of it

Christian Oh, to be able to express things gracefully!

Cyrano Oh, to be a graceful little figure of a passing mousquetaire!

Christian Roxane is a *précieuse*, there is no chance but that I shall be a disillusion to Roxane!

Cyrano [*Looking at CHRISTIAN*] If I had, to express my soul, such an interpreter!

Christian [*Desperately*] I ought to have eloquence!

Cyrano [*Abruptly*] Eloquence I will lend you! And you, to me, shall lend all-conquering physical charm and between us we will compose a hero of romance!

Christian What?

Cyrano Should you be able to say, as your own, things which I day by day would teach you?

Christian You are suggesting?

Cyrano Roxane shall not have disillusion! Tell me, shall we win her heart,

we two as one? will you submit to feel, transmitted from my leather doublet into your doublet stitched with silk, the soul I wish to share?

Christian But, Cyrano!

Cyrano Christian, will you?

Christian You frighten me!

Cyrano Since you fear, left to yourself, to chill her heart, will you consent,—and soon it will take fire, I vouch for it!—to contribute your lips to my phrases?

Christian Your eyes shine!

Cyrano Will you?

Christian What, would it please you so much?

Cyrano [*With rapture*] It would [*remembering, and confining himself to expressing an artistic pleasure*] amuse me! It is an experiment fit surely to tempt a poet Will you complete me, and let me in exchange complete you? We will walk side by side you in full light, I in your shadow I will be wit to you you, to me, shall be good looks!

Christian But the letter, which should be sent to her without delay? Never shall I be able

Cyrano [*Taking from his doublet the letter written in the first part of the act*] The letter? Here it is!

Christian How?

Cyrano It only wants the address

Christian I

Cyrano You can send it without uneasiness It is a good letter

Christian You had?

Cyrano You shall never find us—poets!—without epistles in our pockets to the Chlorises of our imagining! For we are those same that have for mistress a dream blown into the bubble of a name! Take,—you shall convert this feigning into earnest, I was sending forth at random these confessions and laments, you shall make the wandering birds to settle Take it! You shall see I was as eloquent as if I had been sincere! Take, and have done!

Christian But will it not need to be altered in any part? Written without object, will it fit Roxane?

Cyrano Like a glove!

Christian But

Cyrano Trust to the blindness of love and vanity! Roxane will never question that it was written for her

Christian Ah, my friend! [*He throws himself into CYRANO's arms They stand embraced*]

One of the Cadets [*Opening the door a very little*] Nothing more The stillness of death I dare not look [*He thrusts in his head*] What is this?

All the Cadets [*Entering and seeing CYRANO and CHRISTIAN locked in each other's arms*] Ah! Oh!

One of the Cadets This passes bounds!

[*Consternation*]

The Mousquetaire [*Impudent*] *Ouais!*

Carbon de Castel-Jaloux Our demon is waxen mild as an apostle, smitten upon one nostril, he turns the other also!

The Mousquetaire It is in order now to speak of his nose, is it? [*Calling LISE, with a swaggering air*] Hey, Lise! now listen and look [*Pointedly sniffing the air*] Oh, oh, it is surprising! what an odor! [*Going to CYRANO*] But monsieur must have smelled it, too? Can you tell me what it is, so plain in the air?

Cyrano [*Beating him*] Why, sundry blows!

[*Joyful antics of the CADETS in beholding CYRANO himself again*]

ACT THREE ROXANE'S KISS

A small square in the old Marais Old-fashioned houses Narrow streets seen in perspective At the right, ROXANE's house and the wall of her garden, above which spreading tree-tops Over the house-door, a balcony and window A bench beside the doorstep

The wall is overclimbered by ivy, the balcony wreathed with jasmine By means of the bench and projecting stones in the wall, the balcony can easily be scaled

On the opposite side, old house in the same style of architecture, brick and stone, with entrance-door The door-knocker is swaddled in linen

At the rise of the curtain, the DUENNA is seated on the bench The window on ROXANE's balcony is wide open

RAGUENEAU, in a sort of livery, stands near the DUENNA, he is finishing the tale of his misfortunes, drying his eyes

Ragueneau And then, she eloped with a mousquetaire! Ruined, forsaken, I was hanging myself I had already taken leave of earth, when Monsieur de Bergerac happening along, unhangd me, and proposed me to his cousin as her steward

The Duenna But how did you fall into such disaster?

Ragueneau Lise was fond of soldiers, I, of poets! Mars ate up all left over by Apollo Under those circumstances, you conceive, the pantry soon was bare

The Duenna [*Rising and calling toward the open window*] Roxane, are you ready? They are waiting for us!

Roxane's Voice [*Through the window*] I am putting on my mantle!

The Duenna [*To RAGUENEAU, pointing at the door opposite*] It is over there, opposite, we are expected At Clomire's She holds a meeting in her little place A disquisition upon the Softer Sentiments is to be read

Ragueneau Upon the Softer Sentiments?

The Duenna [*Coyly*] Yes! [*Calling toward the window*] Roxane, you must make haste, or we shall miss the disquisition upon the Softer Sentiments!

Roxane's Voice I am coming!

[*A sound of string-instruments is heard, drawing nearer*]

Cyrano's Voice [*Singing in the wings*] La! la! la! la! la!

The Duenna [*Surprised*] We are to have music?

Cyrano [*Enters, followed by two PAGES with theorbos*] I tell you it is a demi semi-quaver! you demi-semi-noddle!

First Page [*Ironically*] Monsieur knows then about quavers, semi and demi?

Cyrano I know music, as do all Gassendi's disciples!

The Page [*Playing and singing*] La! la!

Cyrano [*Snatching the theorbo from him and continuing the musical phrase*] I can carry on the melody La, la, la, la,

Roxane [*Appearing on the balcony*] It is you?

Cyrano [*Singing upon the tune he is continuing*] I, indeed, who salute your lilies and present my respects to your ro o-oses!

Roxane I am coming down [*She leaves the balcony*]

The Duenna [*Pointing at the PAGES*] What is the meaning of these two virtuosi?

Cyrano A wager I won, from D'Assoucy We were disputing upon a question of grammar Yes! No! Yes! No! Suddenly pointing at these two tall knaves, expert at clawing strings, by whom he constantly goes attended, he said, "I wager a day long of music!" He lost Until therefore the next rise of the sun, I shall have dangling after me these archlute players, harmonious witnesses of all I do! At first I liked it very well, but now it palls a little [*To the musicians*] Hey! Go, from me to Montfleury, and play him a pavane! [*The PAGES go toward the back* *To the DUENNA*] I have come to inquire of Roxane, as I do every evening [*To the PAGES who are leaving*] Play a long time and out of tune! [*To the DUENNA*] whether in the friend of her soul she can still detect no fault?

Roxane [*Coming out of the house*] Ah, how beautiful he is, what wit he has, how deeply I love him!

Cyrano [*Smiling*] Christian has so much wit?

Roxane Cousin, more than yourself!

Cyrano I grant you

Roxane There is not one alive, I truly believe, more apt at turning those pretty nothings which yet are everything Sometimes he is of an absent mood, his muse is wool-gathering, then, suddenly, he will say the most enchanting things!

Cyrano [*Incredulous*] Come!

Roxane Oh, it is too bad! Men are all alike, narrow, narrow because he is handsome, he cannot possibly be witty!

Cyrano So he talks of the heart in acceptable fashion?

Roxane Talks, cousin, is feeble He dissertates!

Cyrano And writes?

Roxane Still better! Listen now to this [*Declaiming*] "*The more of my heart you steal from me, the more heart I have!*" [*Triumphantly to CYRANO*] Well?

Cyrano Pooh!

Roxane And to this "*Since you have stolen my heart, and since I must suffer, to suffer with send me your own!*"

Cyrano Now he has too much heart, now he has not enough, just what does he want, in the matter of quantity?

Roxane You vex me! You are eaten up with jealousy

Cyrano [*Starting*] *Hein?*

Roxane Author's jealousy! And this, could anything be more exquisitely tender? "*Unanimously, believe it, my heart cries out to you, and if kisses could be sent in writing Love, you should read my letter with your lips*"

Cyrano [*In spite of himself smiling with satisfaction*] Ha! Ha! Those particular lines seem to me ho! ho! [*remembering himself, disdainfully*] puny, pretty

Roxane This, then

Cyrano [*Delighted*] You know his letters by heart?

Roxane All!

Cyrano It is flattering, one cannot deny

Roxane In this art of expressing love he is a master!

Cyrano [*Modest*] Oh, a master!

Roxane [*Peremptory*] A master!

Cyrano As you please, then a master!

The Duenna [*Who had gone toward the back, coming quickly forward*] Monsieur de Guiche! [*To CYRANO, pushing him toward the house*] Go in! It is perhaps better that he should not see you here! it might put him on the scent

Roxane [*To CYRANO*] Yes, of my dear secret! He loves me, he is powerful, he must not find out! He might cut in sunder our loves with an axe!

Cyrano [*Going into the house*] Very well, very well

[*DE GUICHE appears*]

Roxane [*To DE GUICHE, with a curtsey*] I was leaving the house

De Guiche I have come to bid you farewell

Roxane You are going away?

De Guiche To war

Roxane Ah!

De Guiche I have my orders Arras is besieged

Roxane Ah! It is besieged?

De Guiche Yes I see that my departure does not greatly affect you

Roxane Oh!

De Guiche As for me, I own it wrings my heart Shall I see you again? When? You know that I am made commander-in-general?

Roxane [*Uninterested*] I congratulate you

De Guiche Of the Guards

Roxane [*Starting*] Ah, of the Guards?

De Guiche Among whom your cousin serves, the man of the boasts and tirades I shall have opportunity in plenty to retaliate upon him down there

Roxane [*Suffocating*] What? The Guards are going down there

De Guiche Surely It is my regiment

Roxane [*Falls sitting upon the bench, aside*] Christian!

De Guiche What is it troubles you?

Roxane [*Greatly moved*] This departure grieves me mortally When one cares for a person to know him away at the war!

De Guiche [*Surprised and charmed*] For the first time you utter a kind and feeling word, when I am leaving!

Roxane [*In a different tone, fanning herself*] So you are thinking of revenge upon my cousin?

De Guiche [*Smiling*] You side with him?

Roxane No against him

De Guiche Do you see much of him?

Roxane Very little

De Guiche He is everywhere to be met with one of the cadets [*trying to remember*] that Neu villen viller

Roxane A tall man?

De Guiche Light-haired

Roxane Red-haired

De Guiche Good-looking

Roxane Pooh!

De Guiche But a fool!

Roxane He looks like one [*In a different tone*] Your vengeance upon Cyrano is then to place him within reach of shot, which is the thing of all he loves! A miserable vengeance! I know, I do, what would more seriously concern him!

De Guiche And that is?

Roxane Why that the regiment should march, and leave him behind, with his beloved cadets, arms folded, the whole war through, in Paris! That is the only way to cast down a man like him You wish to punish him? Deprive him of danger

De Guiche A woman! A woman! None but a woman could devise a vengeance of the sort!

Roxane His friends will gnaw their fists, and he his very soul, with chagrin at not being under fire, and you will be abundantly avenged!

De Guiche [*Coming nearer*] Then you do love me a little? [*ROXANE smiles*] I wish to see in this fact of your espousing my grudge a proof of affection,

Roxane

Roxane You may!

De Guiche [*Showing several folded papers*] I have here upon me the orders to be transmitted at once to each of the companies except [*He takes one from among the others*] This one! the company of the cadets [*He puts it in his pocket*] This, I will keep [*Laughing*] Ah, ah, ah! Cyrano! his belligerent humor! So you sometimes play tricks upon people, you?

Roxane Sometimes

De Guiche [*Very near her*] I love you to distraction! This evening listen, it is true that I must be gone But to go when I feel that it is a matter for your caring! Listen! There is, not far from here, in Rue Orléans, a convent founded by the Capuchins Father Athanasius A layman may not enter But the good fathers I fear no difficulty with them! They will hide me up their sleeve their sleeve is wide They are the Capuchins that serve Richelieu at home Fearing the uncle, they proportionately fear the nephew

I shall be thought to have left I will come to you masked Let me delay by a single day, wayward enchantress!

Roxane But if it should transpire your fame

De Guiche Bah!

Roxane But the siege Arras!

De Guiche Must wait! Allow me, I beg

Roxane No!

De Guiche I beseech!

Roxane [*Tenderly*] No! Love itself bids me forbid you!

De Guiche Ah!

Roxane You must go! [*Aside*] Christian will stay! [*Aloud*] For my sake, be heroic Antony!

De Guiche Ah, heavenly word upon your lips! Then you love the one who

Roxane Who shall have made me tremble for his sake

De Guiche [*In a transport of joy*] Ah, I will go! [*He kisses her hand*] Are you satisfied with me?

Roxane My friend, I am

[*Exit DE GUICHE*]

The Duenna [*Dropping a mocking curtsey toward his back*] My friend, we are!

Roxane [*To the DUENNA*] Not a word of what I have done Cyrano would never forgive me for defrauding him of his war! [*She calls toward the house*] Cousin! [*CYRANO comes out*] We are going to Clomire's [*She indicates the house opposite*] Alcandre has engaged to speak, and so has Lysimon

The Duenna [*Putting her little finger to her ear*] Yes, but my little finger tells me that we shall be too late to hear them!

Cyrano [*To ROXANE*] Of all things do not miss the trained monkeys!

[*They have reached CLOMIRE's door*]

The Duenna See! See! they have muffled the door-knocker! [*To the door-knocker*] You have been gagged, that your voice should not disturb the beautiful lecture, little brutal disturber! [*She lifts it with infinite care and knocks softly*]

Roxane [*Seeing the door open*] Come! [*From the threshold to CYRANO*] If Christian should come, as probably he will, say he must wait!

Cyrano [*Hurriedly, as she is about to disappear*] Ah! [*She turns*] Upon what shall you, according to your custom, question him today?

Roxane Upon

Cyrano [*Eagerly*] Upon?

Roxane But you will be silent

Cyrano As that wall!

Roxane Upon nothing! I will say Forward! Free rein! No curb! Improvise! Talk of love! Be magnificent!

Cyrano [*Smiling*] Good

Roxane Hush!

Cyrano Hush!

Roxane Not a word! [*She goes in and closes the door*]

Cyrano [*Bowing, when the door is closed*] A thousand thanks!
 [The door opens again and ROXANE looks out]

Roxane He might prepare his speeches

Cyrano Ah, no! the devil, no!

Both [*Together*] Hush!

[The door closes]

Cyrano [*Calling*] Christian! [*Enter CHRISTIAN*] I know all that we need to Now make ready your memory This is your chance to cover yourself with glory Let us lose no time Do not look sullen, like that Quick! Let us go to your lodgings and I will rehearse you

Christian No!

Cyrano What?

Christian No, I will await Roxane here

Cyrano What insanity possesses you? Come quickly and learn

Christian No, I tell you! I am weary of borrowing my letters, my words of playing a part, and living in constant fear It was very well at first, but now I feel that she loves me I thank you heartily I am no longer afraid I will speak for myself

Cyrano Ouais!

Christian And what tells you that I shall not know how? I am not such an utter blockhead, after all! You shall see! Your lessons have not been altogether wasted I can shift to speak without your aid! And, that failing, by Heaven! I shall still know enough to take her in my arms! [*Catching sight of ROXANE who is coming out from CLOMIRE's*] She is coming! Cyrano, no, do not leave me!

Cyrano [*Bowing to him*] I will not meddle, monsieur [*He disappears behind the garden wall*]

Roxane [*Coming from CLOMIRE's house with a number of people from whom she is taking leave Curtseys and farewells*] Barthénoide! Alcandre! Grémione!

The Duenna [*Comically desperate*] We missed the disquisition upon the Softer Sentiments! [*She goes into ROXANE's house*]

Roxane [*Still taking leave of this one and that*] Urimédonte! Good-bye! [*All bow to ROXANE, to one another, separate and go off by the various streets*]

ROXANE sees CHRISTIAN

Roxane You are here! [*She goes to him*] Evening is closing round Wait! They have all gone The air is so mild Not a passer in sight Let us sit here Talk! I will listen

Christian [*Sits beside her, on the bench Silence*] I love you

Roxane [*Closing her eyes*] Yes Talk to me of love

Christian I love you

Roxane Yes That is the theme Play variations upon it

Christian I love

Roxane Variations!

Christian I love you so much

Roxane I do not doubt it What further?

Christian And further I should be so happy if you loved me! Tell me, Roxane, that you love me

Roxane [*Pouting*] You proffer cider to me when I was hoping for champagne! Now tell me a little *how* you love me

Christian Why very, very much

Roxane Oh! unravel, disentangle your sentiments!

Christian Your throat! I want to kiss it!

Roxane Christian!

Christian I love you!

Roxane [*Attempting to rise*] Again!

Christian [*Hastily, holding her back*] No, I do not love you!

Roxane [*Sitting down again*] That is fortunate!

Christian I adore you!

Roxane [*Rising and moving away*] Oh!

Christian Yes, love makes me into a fool!

Roxane [*Drily*] And I am displeased at it! as I should be displeased at your no longer being handsome

Christian But

Roxane Go, and rally your routed eloquence!

Christian I

Roxane You love me I have heard it Good-evening [*She goes toward the house*]

Christian No, no, not yet! I wish to tell you

Roxane [*Pushing open the door to go in*] That you adore me Yes, I know No! No! Go away! Go! Go!

Christian But I

[*She closes the door in his face*]

Cyrano [*Who has been on the scene a moment, unnoticed*] Unmistakably a success

Christian Help me!

Cyrano No, sir, no

Christian I will go kill myself if I am not taken back into favor at once at once!

Cyrano And how can I how, the devil? make you learn on the spot

Christian [*Seizing him by the arm*] Oh, there! Look! See!

[*Light has appeared in the balcony window*]

Cyrano [*With emotion*] Her window!

Christian Oh, I shall die!

Cyrano Not so loud!

Christian [*In a whisper*] I shall die!

Cyrano It is a dark night

Christian Well?

Cyrano All may be mended But you do not deserve There! stand there, miserable boy! in front of the balcony! I will stand under it and prompt you

Christian But

Cyrano Do as I bid you!

The Pages [*Reappearing at the back, to CYRANO*] Hey!

Cyrano Hush! [*He signs to them to lower their voices*]

First Page [*In a lower voice*] We have finished serenading Montfleury!

Cyrano [*Low, quickly*] Go and stand out of sight One at this street corner, the other at that, and if any one comes near, play!

Second Page What sort of tune, Monsieur the Gassendist?

Cyrano Merry if it be a woman, mournful if it be a man [*The PAGES disappear, one at each street corner To CHRISTIAN*] Call her!

Christian Roxane!

Cyrano [*Picking up pebbles and throwing them at the window-pane*] Wait! A few pebbles

Roxane [*Opening the window*] Who is calling me?

Christian It is I

Roxane Who is I?

Christian Christian!

Roxane [*Disdainfully*] Oh, you!

Christian I wish to speak with you

Cyrano [*Under the balcony, to CHRISTIAN*] Speak low!

Roxane No, your conversation is too common You may go home!

Christian In mercy!

Roxane No you do not love me any more!

Christian [*Whom CYRANO is prompting*] You accuse me just Heaven! of loving you no more when I can love you no more!

Roxane [*Who was about to close her window, stopping*] Ah, that is a little better!

Christian [*Same business*] To what a size has Love grown in my sigh-rocked soul which the cruel cherub has chosen for his cradle!

Roxane [*Stepping nearer to the edge of the balcony*] That is distinctly better! But, since he is so cruel, this Cupid, you were unwise not to smother him in his cradle!

Christian [*Same business*] I tried to, but, Madame, the attempt was futile This new-born Love is a little Hercules

Roxane Much, much better!

Christian [*Same business*] Who found it merest baby-play to strangle the serpents twain, Pride and Mistrust

Roxane [*Leaning her elbows on the balcony-rail*] Ah, that is very good indeed! But why do you speak so slowly and stintedly? Has your imagination gout in its wings?

Cyrano [*Drawing CHRISTIAN under the balcony, and taking his place*] Hush! It is becoming too difficult!

Roxane Tonight your words come faltering! Why is it?

Cyrano [*Talking low like CHRISTIAN*] Because of the dark They have to grope to find your ear

Roxane My words do not find the same difficulty

Cyrano They reach their point at once? Of course they do! That is because

I catch them with my heart My heart, you see, is very large, your ear particularly small Besides, your words drop that goes quickly, mine have to climb and that takes longer!

Roxane They have been climbing more nimbly, however, in the last few minutes

Cyrano They are becoming used to this gymnastic feat!

Roxane It is true that I am talking with you from a very mountain top!

Cyrano It is sure that a hard word dropped from such a height upon my heart would shatter it!

Roxane [*With the motion of leaving*] I will come down

Cyrano [*Quickly*] Do not!

Roxane [*Pointing at the bench at the foot of the balcony*] Then do you get up on the seat!

Cyrano [*Drawing away in terror*] No!

Roxane How do you mean no?

Cyrano [*With ever-increasing emotion*] Let us profit a little by this chance of talking softly together without seeing each other

Roxane Without seeing each other?

Cyrano Yes, to my mind, delectable! Each guesses at the other, and no more You discern but the trailing blackness of a mantle, and I a dawn-gray glimmer which is a summer gown I am a shadow merely, a pearly phantom are you! You can never know what these moments are to me! If ever I was eloquent

Roxane You were!

Cyrano My words never till now surged from my very heart

Roxane And why?

Cyrano Because, till now, they must strain to reach you through

Roxane What?

Cyrano Why, the bewildering emotion a man feels who sees you, and whom you look upon! But this evening, it seems to me that I am speaking to you for the first time!

Roxane It is true that your voice is altogether different

Cyrano [*Coming nearer, feverishly*] Yes, altogether different, because, protected by the dark, I dare at last to be myself I dare [*He stops, and distractedly*] What was I saying? I do not know All this forgive my incoherence! is so delicious is so new to me!

Roxane So new?

Cyrano [*In extreme confusion, still trying to mend his expressions*] So new yes, new, to be sincere, the fear of being mocked always constrains my heart

Roxane Mocked for what?

Cyrano Why, for its impulses, its flights! Yes, my heart always cowers behind the defence of my wit I set forth to capture a star and then, for dread of laughter, I stop and pick a flower of rhetoric!

Roxane That sort of flower has its pleasing points

Cyrano But yet, tonight, let us scorn it!

Roxane Never before have you spoken as you are speaking! .

Cyrano Ah, if far from Cupid-darts and quivers, we might seek a place of somewhat fresher things! If instead of drinking, flat sip by sip, from a chiselled golden thimble, drops distilled and dulcified, we might try the sensation of quenching the thirst of our souls by stooping to the level of the great river, and setting our lips to the stream!

Roxane But yet, wit fancy delicate conceits

Cyrano I gave my fancy leave to frame conceits, before, to make you linger, but now it would be an affront to this balm breathing night, to Nature and the hour, to talk like characters in a pastoral performed at Court! Let us give Heaven leave, looking at us with all its earnest stars, to strip us of disguise and artifice I fear, oh, fear! lest in our mistaken alchemy sentiment should be subtilized to evaporation, lest the life of the heart should waste in these empty pastimes, and the final refinement of the fine be the undoing of the refined!

Roxane But yet, wit, aptness, ingenuity

Cyrano I hate them in love! Criminal, when one loves, to prolong overmuch that paltry thrust and parry! The moment, however, comes inevitably,—and I pity those for whom it never comes!—in which, we apprehending the noble depth of the love we harbor, a shallow word hurts us to utter!

Roxane If if, then, that moment has come for us two, what words will you say to me?

Cyrano All those, all those, all those that come to me! Not in formal nose gay order, I will throw them you in a wild sheaf! I love you choke with love, I love you, dear My brain reels, I can bear no more, it is too much

Your name is in my heart the golden clapper in a bell, and as I know no rest, Roxane, always the heart is shaken, and ever rings your name! Of you, I remember all, all have I loved! Last year, one day, the twelfth of May, in going out at morning you changed the fashion of your hair I have taken the light of your hair for my light, and as having stared too long at the sun, on everything one sees a scarlet wheel, on everything when I come from my chosen light, my dazzled eyes set swimming golden blots!

Roxane [*In a voice unsteady with emotion*] Yes this is love

Cyrano Ah, verily! The feeling which invades me, terrible and jealous, is love with all its mournful frenzy! It is love, yet self forgetting more than the wont of love! Ah, for your happiness now readily would I give mine, though you should never know it, might I but, from a distance, sometimes, hear the happy laughter bought by my sacrifice! Every glance of yours breeds in me new strength, new valor! Are you beginning to understand? Tell me, do you grasp my love's measure? Does some little part of my soul make itself felt of you there in the darkness? Oh, what is happening to me this evening is too sweet, too deeply dear! I tell you all these things, and you listen to me, you! Not in my least modest hoping did I ever hope so much! I have now only to die! It is because of words of mine that she is trembling among the dusky branches! For you are trembling, like a flower among leaves! Yes, you tremble, for whether you will or no, I have felt the worshipped trembling of your hand all along this thrilled and blissful jasmine-bough! [*He madly kisses the end of a pendent bough*]

Roxane Yes, I tremble and weep and love you and am yours!
For you have carried me away away!

Cyrano Then, let death come! I have moved you, I! There is but one thing more I ask

Christian [*Under the balcony*] A kiss!

Roxane [*Drawing hastily back*] What?

Cyrano Oh!

Roxane You ask?

Cyrano Yes I [*To CHRISTIAN*] You are in too great haste!

Christian Since she is so moved, I must take advantage of it!

Cyrano [*To ROXANE*] I Yes, it is true I asked but, merciful heavens! I knew at once that I had been too bold

Roxane [*A shade disappointed*] You insist no more than so?

Cyrano Indeed, I insist without insisting! Yes! yes! but your modesty shrinks! I insist, but yet the kiss I begged refuse it me!

Christian [*To CYRANO, pulling at his mantle*] Why?

Cyrano Hush, Christian!

Roxane [*Bending over the balcony-rail*] What are you whispering?

Cyrano Reproaches to myself for having gone too far, I was saying "Hush, Christian!" [*The theorbos are heard playing*] Your pardon! a second!

Some one is coming!

[*ROXANE closes the window CYRANO listens to the theorbos, one of which plays a lively and the other a lugubrious tune*]

Cyrano A dance? A dirge? What do they mean? Is it a man or a woman? Ah, it is a monk!

[*Enter a CAPUCHIN MONK, who goes from house to house, with a lantern, examining the doors*]

Cyrano [*To the CAPUCHIN*] What are you looking for, Diogenes?

The Capuchin I am looking for the house of Madame

Christian He is in the way!

The Capuchin Magdeleine Robin

Cyrano [*Pointing up one of the streets*] This way! straight ahead go straight ahead

The Capuchin I thank you I will say ten Aves for your peace [*Exit*]

Cyrano My good wishes speed your cowl! [*He comes forward toward CHRISTIAN*]

Christian Insist upon the kiss!

Cyrano No, I will not!

Christian Sooner or later

Cyrano It is true! It must come, the moment of inebriation when your lips shall imperiously be impelled toward each other, because the one is fledged with youthful gold and the other is so soft a pink! [*To himself*] I had rather it should be because

[*Sound of the window reopening, CHRISTIAN hides under the balcony*]

Roxane [*Stepping forward on the balcony*] Are you there? We were speaking of of of a

Cyrano Kiss The word is sweet Why does your fair lip stop at it? If the

mere word burns it, what will be of the thing itself? Do not make it into a fearful matter, and then fear! Did you not a moment ago insensibly leave playfulness behind and slip without trepidation from a smile to a sigh, from a sigh to a tear? Slip but a little further in the same blessed direction from a tear to a kiss there is scarcely a dividing shiver!

Roxane Say no more!

Cyrano A kiss! When all is said, what is a kiss? An oath of allegiance taken in closer proximity, a promise more precise, a seal on a confession, a rose-red dot upon the letter *i* in loving, a secret which elects the mouth for ear, an instant of eternity murmuring like a bee, balmy communion with a flavor of flowers, a fashion of inhaling each other's heart, ard of tasting, on the brink of the lips, each other's soul!

Roxane Say no more no more!

Cyrano A kiss, Madame, is a thing so noble that the Queen of France, on the most fortunate of lords, bestowed one, did the queen herself!

Roxane If that be so

Cyrano [*With increasing fervor*] Like Buckingham I have suffered in long silence, like him I worship a queen, like him I am sorrowful and unchanging

Roxane Like him you enthrall through the eyes the heart that follows you!

Cyrano [*To himself, sobered*] True, I am handsome I had forgotten!

Roxane Come then and gather it, the supreme flower

Cyrano [*Pushing CHRISTIAN toward the balcony*] Go!

Roxane tasting of the heart

Cyrano Go!

Roxane murmuring like a bee

Cyrano Go!

Christian [*Hesitating*] But now I feel as if I ought not!

Roxane making Eternity an instant

Cyrano [*Pushing CHRISTIAN*] Scale the balcony, you donkey!

[*CHRISTIAN springs toward the balcony, and climbs by means of the bench, the vine, the posts and balusters*]

Christian Ah, Roxane! [*He clasps her to him, and bends over her lips*]

Cyrano Ha! What a turn of the screw to my heart! Kiss, banquet of Love at which I am Lazarus, a crumb drops from your table even to me, here in the shade Yes, in my outstretched heart a little falls, as I feel that upon the lip pressing her lip Roxane kisses the words spoken by me!

[*The theorbos are heard*] A merry tune a mournful one The monk! [*He goes through the pretence of arriving on the spot at a run, as if from a distance calling*] Ho, there!

Roxane What is it?

Cyrano It is I I was passing this way Is Christian there?

Christian [*Astonished*] Cyrano!

Roxane Good-evening, cousin!

Cyrano Cousin, good-evening!

Roxane I will come down

[*ROXANE disappears in the house*]

[CAPUCHIN *re-enters at the back*]

Christian [Seeing him] Oh, again! [He follows ROXANE]

The Capuchin It is here she lives, I am certain Magdeleine Robin

Cyrano You said Ro lin

The Capuchin No, bin, b, i, n, bin!

Roxane [Appearing upon the threshold, followed by RAGUENEAU carrying a lantern, and CHRISTIAN] What is it?

The Capuchin A letter

Christian What?

The Capuchin [To ROXANE] Oh, the contents can be only of a sacred character! It is from a worthy nobleman who

Roxane [To CHRISTIAN] It is from De Guiche!

Christian He dares to ?

Roxane Oh, he will not trouble me much longer! [Opening the letter] I love you, and if [By the light of RAGUENEAU's lantern she reads, aside, low] *Mademoiselle* The drums are beating My regiment is buckling on its corselet It is about to leave I am thought to have left already, but lag behind I am disobeying you I am in the convent here I am coming to you, and send you word by a friar, silly as a sheep, who has no suspicion of the import of this letter You smiled too sweetly upon me an hour ago I must see you smile again Provide to be alone, and deign graciously to receive the audacious worshipper, forgiven already, I can but hope, who signs himself your—etc

[To the CAPUCHIN] Father, this is what the letter tells me Listen [All draw nearer, she reads aloud] *Mademoiselle* The wishes of the cardinal may not be disregarded, however hard compliance with them prove I have there fore chosen as bearer of this letter a most reverend, holy, and sagacious Capuchin, it is our wish that he should at once, in your own dwelling, pronounce the nuptial blessing over you Christian must secretly become your husband I send him to you You dislike him Bow to Heaven's will in resignation, and be sure that it will bless your zeal, and sure, likewise, mademoiselle, of the respect of him who is and will be ever your most humble and etc

The Capuchin [Beaming] The worthy gentleman! I know it! You remember that I said so The contents of that letter can be only of a sacred character!

Roxane [Low, to CHRISTIAN] I am a fluent reader, am I not?

Christian Hm!

Roxane [With feigned despair] Ah it is horrible!

The Capuchin [Who has turned the light of his lantern upon CYRANO] You are the one?

Christian No, I am

The Capuchin [Turning the light upon him, and as if his good looks aroused suspicion] But

Roxane [Quickly] Postscript You will bestow upon the convent two hundred and fifty crowns

The Capuchin The worthy, worthy gentleman! [To ROXANE] Be reconciled!

Roxane [With the expression of a martyr] I will endeavor! [While RAGUE

NEAU opens the door for the CAPUCHIN, whom CHRISTIAN is showing into the house, ROXANE says low to CYRANO] De Guiche is coming! Keep him here! Do not let him enter until

Cyrano I understand! [*To the CAPUCHIN*] How long will it take to marry them?

The Capuchin A quarter of an hour

Cyrano [*Pushing all toward the house*] Go in! I shall be here!

Roxane [*To CHRISTIAN*] Come!

[*They go in*]

Cyrano How can I detain De Guiche for a quarter of an hour? [*He jumps upon the bench, climbs the wall toward the balcony rail*] So! I climb up here! I know what I will do! [*The theorbos play a melancholy tune*] Ho, it is a man! [*The tune quavers lugubriously*] Ho, ho, this time there is no mistake! [*He is on the balcony, he pulls the brim of his hat over his eyes, takes off his sword, wraps his cloak about him, and bends over the balcony rail*] No, it is not too far! [*He climbs over the balcony-rail, and reaching for a long bough that projects beyond the garden wall, holds on to it with both hands, ready to let himself drop*] I shall make a slight commotion in the atmosphere!

De Guiche [*Enters masked, groping in the dark*] What can that thrice-damned Capuchin be about?

Cyrano The devil! if he should recognize my voice? [*Letting go with one hand he makes show of turning a key*] Cric! crac! [*Solemnly*] Cyrano, resume the accent of Bergerac!

De Guiche [*Looking at ROXANE's house*] Yes, that is it I can scarcely see This mask bothers my eyes!

[*He is about to enter ROXANE's house, CYRANO swings from the balcony, holding on to the bough, which bends and lets him down between the door and DE GUICHE. He intentionally drops very heavily, to give the effect of dropping from a great height, and lies flattened upon the ground, motionless, as if stunned*]

De Guiche What is it? [*When he looks up, the bough has swung into place, he sees nothing but the sky*] Where did this man drop from?

Cyrano [*Rising to a sitting posture*] From the moon!

De Guiche From the ?

Cyrano [*In a dreamy voice*] What time is it?

De Guiche Is he mad?

Cyrano What time? What country? What day? What season?

De Guiche But

Cyrano I am dazed!

De Guiche Monsieur

Cyrano I have dropped from the moon like a bomb!

De Guiche [*Impatiently*] What are you babbling about?

Cyrano [*Rising, in a terrible voice*] I tell you I have dropped from the moon!

De Guiche [*Backing a step*] Very well You have dropped from the moon!

He is perhaps a lunatic!

Cyrano [*Walking up close to him*] Not metaphorically, mind that!

De Guiche But

Cyrano A hundred years ago, or else a minute,—for I have no conception how long I have been falling,—I was up there, in that saffron-colored ball!

De Guiche [*Shrugging his shoulders*] You were Now let me pass!

Cyrano [*Standing in his way*] Where am I? Be frank with me! Keep nothing from me! In what region, among what people, have I been shot like an aerolite?

De Guiche I wish to pass!

Cyrano While falling I could not choose my way, and have no notion where I have fallen! Is it upon a moon, or is it upon an earth, I have been dragged by my posterior weight?

De Guiche I tell you, sir

Cyrano [*With a scream of terror at which DE GUICHE starts backward a step*] Great God! In this country men's faces are soot black!

De Guiche [*Lifting his hand to his face*] What does he mean?

Cyrano [*Still terrified*] Am I in Algeria? Are you a native?

De Guiche [*Who has felt his mask*] Ah, my mask!

Cyrano [*Pretending to be easier*] So I am in Venice! Or am I in Genoa?

De Guiche [*Attempting to pass*] A lady is expecting me!

Cyrano [*Completely reassured*] Ah, then I am in Paris

De Guiche [*Smiling in spite of himself*] The rogue is not far from amusing!

Cyrano Ah, you are laughing!

De Guiche I laugh but intend to pass!

Cyrano [*Beaming*] To think I should strike Paris! [*Quite at his ease, laughing, brushing himself, bowing*] I arrived—pray, pardon my appearance!—by the last whirlwind I am rather unpresentable—Travel, you know! My eyes are still full of star-dust My spurs are clogged with bristles off a planet [*Appearing to pick something off his sleeve*] See, on my sleeve, a comet's hair! [*He makes a feint of blowing it away*]

De Guiche [*Beside himself*] Sir

Cyrano [*As DE GUICHE is about to pass, stretching out his leg as if to show something on it, thereby stopping him*] Embedded in my calf, I have brought back one of the Great Bear's teeth and as, falling too near the Trident, I strained aside to clear one of its prongs, I landed sitting in Libra, yes, one of the scales! and now my weight is registered up there! [*Quickly preventing DE GUICHE from passing, and taking hold of a button on his doublet*] And if, monsieur, you should take my nose between your fingers and compress it milk would result!

De Guiche What are you saying? Milk?

Cyrano Of the Milky Way

De Guiche Go to the devil!

Cyrano No! I am sent from Heaven, literally [*Folding his arms*] Will you believe—I discovered it in passing—that Sirius at night puts on a night-cap? [*Confidentially*] The lesser Bear is too little yet to bite [*Laughing*] I tumbled plump through Lyra, and snapped a string! [*Magnificent*] But

I intend setting all this down in a book, and the golden stars I have brought back caught in my shaggy mantle, when the book is printed, will be seen serving as asterisks!

De Guiche I have stood this long enough! I want

Cyrano I know perfectly what you want!

De Guiche Man

Cyrano You want to know, from me, at first hand, what the moon is made of, and whether that monumental pumpkin is inhabited?

De Guiche [*Shouting*] Not in the very least! I want

Cyrano To know how I got there? I got there by a method of my own invention

De Guiche [*Discouraged*] He is mad! stark!

Cyrano [*Disdainfully*] Do not imagine that I resorted to anything so absurd as Regiomontanus's eagle, or anything so lacking in enterprise as Archytas's pigeon!

De Guiche The madman is erudite

Cyrano I drew up nothing that had ever been thought of before! [*DE GUICHE has succeeded in getting past CYRANO, and is nearing ROXANE's door, CYRANO follows him, ready to buttonhole him*] I invented no less than six ways of storming the blue fort of Heaven!

De Guiche [*Turning around*] Six, did you say?

Cyrano [*Volubly*] One way was to stand naked in the sunshine, in a harness thickly studded with glass phials, each filled with morning dew. The sun in drawing up the dew, you see, could not have helped drawing me up too!

De Guiche [*Surprised, taking a step toward CYRANO*] True. That is one!

Cyrano [*Taking a step backward, with a view to drawing DE GUICHE away from the door*] Or else, I could have let the wind into a cedar coffer, then rarefied the imprisoned element by means of cunningly adjusted burning glasses, and soared up with it!

De Guiche [*Taking another step toward CYRANO*] Two!

Cyrano [*Backing*] Or else, mechanic as well as artificer, I could have fashioned a giant grasshopper, with steel joints, which, impelled by successive explosions of saltpeter, would have hopped with me to the azure meadows where graze the starry flocks!

De Guiche [*Unconsciously following CYRANO, and counting on his fingers*] That makes three!

Cyrano Since smoke by its nature ascends, I could have blown into an appropriate globe a sufficient quantity to ascend with me!

De Guiche [*As above, more and more astomished*] Four!

Cyrano Since Phœbe, the moon-goddess, when she is at wane, is greedy, O beeves! of your marrow, with that marrow have besmeared myself!

De Guiche [*Amazed*] Five!

Cyrano [*Who while talking has backed, followed by DE GUICHE, to the further side of the square, near a bench*] Or else, I could have placed myself upon an iron plate, have taken a magnet of suitable size, and thrown it in the air! That way is a very good one! The magnet flies upward, the iron instantly

after, the magnet no sooner overtaken than you fling it up again The rest is clear! You can go upward indefinitely

De Guiche Six! But here are six excellent methods! Which of the six, my dear sir, did you select?

Cyrano A seventh!

De Guiche Did you, indeed? And what was that?

Cyrano I give you a hundred guesses!

De Guiche No!

Cyrano [*Imitating the noise of the surf, and making great mysterious gestures*] Hoo ish! hoo ish!

De Guiche Well! What is that?

Cyrano Cannot you guess?

De Guiche No!

Cyrano The tide! At the hour in which the moon attracts the deep, I lay down upon the sands, after a sea bath and, my head being drawn up first,—the reason of this, you see, that the hair will hold a quantity of water in its mop!—I rose in the air, straight, beautifully straight, like an angel I rose

I rose softly without an effort when, suddenly, I felt a shock Then

De Guiche [*Lured on by curiosity, taking a seat on the bench*] Well, then?

Cyrano Then [*Resuming his natural voice*] The time is up, monsieur, and I release you They are married

De Guiche [*Getting to his feet with a leap*] I am dreaming or drunk! That voice! [*The door of ROXANE's house opens, lackeys appear carrying lighted candelabra CYRANO removes his hat*] And that nose! *Cyrano!*

Cyrano [*Bowing*] *Cyrano* They have exchanged rings within the quarter of the hour

De Guiche Who have? [*He turns round Tableau Behind the lackey stand ROXANE and CHRISTIAN holding hands The CAPUCHIN follows them smiling RAGUENEAU holds high a flambeau The DUENNA closes the procession, bewildered, in her bedgown*] Heavens! [*To ROXANE*] You! [*Recognizing CHRISTIAN with amazement*] He? [*Bowing to ROXANE*] Your astuteness compels my admiration! [*To CYRANO*] My compliments to you, ingenious inventor of flying machines Your experiences would have beguiled a saint on the threshold of Paradise! Make a note of them They can be used again, with profit, in a book!

Cyrano [*Bowing*] I will confidently follow your advice

The Capuchin [*To DE GUICHE, pointing at the lovers, and wagging his great white beard with satisfaction*] A beautiful couple, my son, brought together by you!

De Guiche [*Eyeing him frigidly*] As you say! [*To ROXANE*] And now proceed, Madame, to take leave of your husband

Roxane What?

De Guiche [*To CHRISTIAN*] The regiment is on the point of starting You are to join it!

Roxane To go to war?

De Guiche Of course!

Roxane But the cadets are not going!

De Guiche They are! [*Taking out the paper which he had put in his pocket*] Here is the order [*To CHRISTIAN*] I beg you will take it to the Captain, baron, yourself

Roxane [*Throwing herself in CHRISTIAN's arms*] Christian!

De Guiche [*To CYRANO, with a malignant laugh*] The wedding night is somewhat far as yet!

Cyrano [*Aside*] He thinks that he is giving me great pain!

Christian [*To ROXANE*] Oh, once more, dear! Once more!

Cyrano Be reasonable Come! Enough!

Christian [*Still clasping ROXANE*] Oh, it is hard to leave her You cannot know

Cyrano [*Trying to draw him away*] I know

[*Drums are heard in the distance sounding a march*]

De Guiche [*At the back*] The regiment is on its way!

Roxane [*To CYRANO, while she clings to CHRISTIAN whom he is trying to draw away*] Oh! I entrust him to your care! Promise that under no circumstance shall his life be placed in danger!

Cyrano I will endeavor but obviously cannot promise

Roxane [*Same business*] Promise that he will be careful of himself!

Cyrano I will do my best, but

Roxane [*As above*] That during this terrible siege he shall not take harm from the cold!

Cyrano I will try, but

Roxane [*As above*] That he will be true to me!

Cyrano Of course, but yet, you see

Roxane [*As above*] That he will write to me often!

Cyrano [*Stopping*] Ah, that I promise freely!

ACT FOUR THE GASCONY CADETS

The post occupied at the siege of Arras by the company of CARBON DE CASTEL-JALOUX At the back, across the whole stage, sloping earthwork Beyond this is seen a plain stretching to the horizon, the country is covered with constructions relating to the siege In the distance, against the sky, the outlines of the walls and roofs of Arras Tents, scattered arms, drums, etc It is shortly before sunrise The East is yellow Sentinels at even intervals Camp-fires The GASCONY CADETS lie asleep, rolled in their cloaks CARBON DE CASTEL-JALOUX and LE BRET are watching All are very pale and gaunt CHRISTIAN lies sleeping among the others, in his military cape, in the foreground, his face lighted by one of the camp-fires Silence

Le Bret It is dreadful!

Carbon Yes Nothing left

Le Bret Mordious!

Carbon [Warning him by a gesture to speak lower] Curse in a whisper!
You will wake them! [To the CADETS] Hush! Go to sleep! [To LE BRET]
Who sleeps, dines

Le Bret Who lies awake, misses two good things What a situation!
[A few shots are heard in the distance]

Carbon The devil take their popping! They will wake my young ones!
[To the CADETS who lift their heads] Go to sleep!

[The CADETS lie down again Other shots are heard, nearer]

One of the Cadets [Stirring] The devil! Again?

Carbon It is nothing It is Cyrano getting home

[The heads which had started up, go down again]

A Sentinel [Outside] *Ventrebleu!* Who goes there?

Cyrano's Voice Bergerac!

The Sentinel [Upon the embankment] *Ventrebleu!* Who goes there?

Cyrano [Appearing at the top of the embankment] Bergerac, blockhead!
[He comes down LE BRET goes to him, uneasy]

Le Bret Ah, thank God!

Cyrano [Warning him by a sign to wake no one] Hush!

Le Bret Wounded?

Cyrano Do you not know that it has become a habit with them to miss me?

Le Bret To me, it seems a little excessive that you should, every morning,
for the sake of taking a letter, risk

Cyrano [Stopping in front of CHRISTIAN] I promised that he would write
often [He looks at CHRISTIAN] He sleeps He has grown pale If the poor
little girl could know that he is starving But handsome as ever!

Le Bret Go at once and sleep

Cyrano *Le Bret*, do not grumble! Learn this I nightly cross the Spanish
lines at a point where I know beforehand every one will be drunk

Le Bret You ought some time to bring us back some victuals!

Cyrano I must be lightly burdened to flit through! But I know that
there will be events before the evening The French, unless I am much mis-
taken, will eat or die

Le Bret Oh, tell us!

Cyrano No, I am not certain You will see!

Carbon What a shameful reversal of the order of things, that the besieger
should be starved!

Le Bret Alas! never was more complicated siege than this of Arras We
besiege Arras, and, caught in a trap, are ourselves besieged by the Cardinal-
prince of Spain

Cyrano Some one now ought to come and besiege him

Le Bret I am not joking!

Cyrano Oh, oh!

Le Bret To think, ungrateful boy, that every day you risk a life precious
as yours, solely to carry [CYRANO goes toward one of the tents] Where
are you going?

Cyrano I am going to write another

[He lifts the canvas flap, and disappears in the tent Davoreak has brightened]

Rosy flush The city of Arras at the horizon catches a golden light The report of a cannon is heard, followed at once by a drum call, very far away, at the left Other drums beat, nearer The drum calls answer one another, come nearer, come very near, and go off, decreasing, dying in the distance, toward the right, having made the circuit of the camp Noise of general awakening Voices of officers in the distance]

Carbon [*With a sigh*] *The réveillé* Ah, me! [*The CADETS stir in their cloaks, stretch*] An end to the succulent slumbers! I know but too well what their first word will be!

One of the Cadets [*Sitting up*] I am famished!

Other Cadet I believe I am dying!

All Oh!

Carbon Get up!

Third Cadet I cannot go a step!

Fourth Cadet I have not strength to stir!

First Cadet [*Looking at himself in a bit of armor*] My tongue is coated it must be the weather that is indigestible!

Other Cadet Any one who wants them, can have all my titles of nobility for a Chester cheese or part of one!

Other Cadet If my stomach does not have something put into it to take up the attention of my gastric juice, I shall retire into my tent before long like Achilles!

Other Cadet Yes, they ought to provide us with bread!

Carbon [*Going to the tent into which CYRANO has retired low*] *Cyrano*!

Other Cadets We cannot stand this much longer!

Carbon [*As above, at the door of the tent*] To the rescue, *Cyrano*! You who succeed so well always in cheering them, come and make them pluck up spirits!

Second Cadet [*Falling upon FIRST CADET who is chewing something*] What are you chewing, man?

First Cadet A bit of gun-tow fried in axle-grease using a burganet as frying pan The suburbs of Arras are not precisely rich in game

Other Cadet [*Entering*] I have been hunting!

Other Cadet [*The same*] I have been fishing!

All [*Rising and falling upon the newcomers*] What?—what did you catch?—A pheasant?—A carp?—Quick! quick! Let us see!

The Huntsman A sparrow!

The Angler A gudgeon!

All [*Exasperated*] Enough of this! Let us revolt!

Carbon To the rescue, *Cyrano*!

[*It is now broad daylight*]

Cyrano [*Coming out of the tent, tranquil, a pen behind his ear, a book in his hand*] What is the matter? [*Silence To FIRST CADET*] Why do you go off like that, with that slouching gait?

The Cadet I have something away down in my heels which inconveniences me

Cyrano And what is that?

The Cadet My stomach

Cyrano That is where mine is, too

The Cadet Then you too must be inconvenienced

Cyrano No The size of the hollow within me merely increases my sense of my size

Second Cadet I happen to have teeth, long ones!

Cyrano The better will you bite in good time!

Third Cadet I reverberate like a drum!

Cyrano You will be of use to sound the charge!

Other Cadet I have a buzzing in my ears!

Cyrano A mistake Empty belly, no ears You hear no buzzing

Other Cadet Ah, a trifling article to eat and a little oil upon it!

Cyrano [*Taking off the CADET's morion and placing it in his hand*] That is seasoned

Other Cadet What is there we could devour?

Cyrano [*Tossing him the book he has been holding*] Try the Iliad!

Other Cadet The minister, in Paris, makes his four meals a day!

Cyrano You feel it remiss in him not to send you a bit of partridge?

The same Why should he not? And some wine!

Cyrano Richelieu, some Burgundy, if you please?

The same He might, by one of his Capuchins!

Cyrano By his Eminence, perhaps, in sober gray?

Other Cadet No ogre was ever so hungry!

Cyrano You may have your fill yet of humble pie!

First Cadet [*Shrugging his shoulders*] Forever jests! puns! mots!

Cyrano *Le mot* forever, indeed! And I would wish to die, on a fine evening, under a rose-flushed sky, delivering myself of a good *mot* in a good cause!

Ah, yes, the best were indeed, far from fever-bed and potion, pierced with the only noble weapon, by an adversary worthy of oneself, to fall upon a glorious field, the point of a sword through his heart, the point of a jest on his lips!

All [*In a wail*] I am hungry!

Cyrano [*Folding his arms*] God ha' mercy! can you think of nothing but eating? Come here, Bertrandou the fifer, once the shepherd! Take from the double case one of your fifes breathe into it, play to this pack of guzzlers and of gluttons our homely melodies, of haunting rhythm, every note of which appeals like a little sister, through whose every strain are heard strains of beloved voices mild melodies whose slowness brings to mind the slowness of the smoke upcurling from our native hamlet hearths melodies that seem to speak to a man in his native dialect! [*The old fifer sits down and makes ready his fife*] Today let the fife, martial unwillingly, be reminded, while your fingers upon its slender stem flutter like birds in a delicate minuet, that before being ebony it was reed, surprise itself by what you make it sing, let it feel restored to it the soul of its youth, rustic and peaceable! [*The old man begins playing langue d'oc tunes*] Listen, Gascons! It is no more, beneath his fingers, the shrill fife of the camp, but the soft flute of the woodland! It is no more, between his lips, the whistling note of battle, but the

lowly lay of goatherds leading their flocks to feed! Hark! It sings
 of the valley, the heath, the forest! of the little shepherd, sunburned
 under his crimson cap! the green delight of evening on the river!
 Hark Gascons all! It sings of Gascony!

[*Every head has drooped, all eyes have grown dreamy, tears are furtively
 brushed away with a sleeve, the hem of a cloak*]

Carbon [*To CYRANO, low*] You are making them weep!

Cyrano With homesickness! a nobler pain than hunger not phys-
 ical mental! I am glad the seat of their suffering should have removed
 that the gripe should now afflict their hearts!

Carbon But you weaken them, making them weep!

Cyrano [*Beckoning to a drummer*] Never fear! The hero in their veins is
 quickly roused It is enough to [*He signs to the drummer, who begins
 drumming*]

All [*Starting to their feet and snatching up their arms*] Hein? What?
 What is it?

Cyrano [*Smiling*] You see? The sound of the drum was enough!
 Farewell dreams, regrets, old homestead, love What comes with the fife,
 with the drum may go

One of the Cadets [*Looking off at the back*] Ah! ah! Here comes
 Monsieur de Guiche!

All the Cadets [*Grumbling*] Hoo

Cyrano [*Smiling*] Flattering murmur

One of the Cadets He bores us!

Other Cadet Showing himself off, with his broad point collar on top of
 his armor!

Other Cadet As if lace were worn with steel!

First Cadet Convenient, if you have a boil on your neck to cover

Second Cadet There is another courtier for you!

Other Cadet His uncle's own nephew!

Carbon He is a Gascon, nevertheless!

First Cadet Not genuine! Never trust him For a Gascon, look you,
 must be something of a madman nothing is so deadly to deal with as a
 Gascon who is completely rational!

Le Bret He is pale!

Other Cadet He is hungry, as hungry as any poor devil of us! But his
 corselet being freely embellished with gilt studs, his stomach-ache is radiant
 in the sun!

Cyrano [*Eagerly*] Let us not appear to suffer, either! You, your card, your
 pipes, your dice [*All briskly set themselves to playing with cards and
 dice, on the heads of drums, on stools, on cloaks spread over the ground They
 light long tobacco pipes*] And I will be reading Descartes

[*He walks to and fro, forward and backward, reading a small book which he
 has taken from his pocket Tableau*]

[*Enter DE GUICHE Every one appears absorbed and satisfied DE GUICHE is
 very pale He goes toward CARBON*]

De Guiche [To CARBON] Ah, good-morning [They look at each other attentively *Aside, with satisfaction*] He is pale as plaster

Carbon [Same business] His eyes are all that is left of him

De Guiche [Looking at the CADETS] So here are the wrongheaded rascals?

Yes, gentlemen, it is reported to me on every side that I am your scoff and derision, that the cadets, highland nobility, Béarn clodhoppers, Périgord baronets cannot express sufficient contempt for their colonel, call me intriguer, courtier, find it irksome to their taste that I should wear, with my cuirass, a collar of Genoese point, and never cease to air their wondering indignation that a man should be a Gascon without being a vagabond! [*Silence The CADETS continue smoking and playing*] Shall I have you punished by your captain? I do not like to

Carbon Did you otherwise, however, I am free, and punish only

De Guiche Ah?

Carbon My company is paid by myself, belongs to me I obey no orders but such as relate to war

De Guiche Ah, is it so? Enough, then I will treat your taunts with simple scorn My fashion of deporting myself under fire is well known You are not unaware of the manner in which yesterday, at Bapaume, I forced back the columns of the Comte de Bucquoi, gathering my men together to plunge forward like an avalanche, three times I charged him

Cyrano [Without lifting his nose from his book] And your white scarf?

De Guiche [Surprised and self-satisfied] You heard of that circumstance?

In fact, it happened that as I was wheeling about to collect my men for the third charge, I was caught in a stream of fugitives which bore me onward to the edge of the enemy I was in danger of being captured and cut off with an arquebus, when I had the presence of mind to untie and let slip to the ground the white scarf which proclaimed my military grade Thus was I enabled, undistinguished, to withdraw from among the Spaniards, and there upon returning with my reinspired men, to defeat them Well? What do you say to the incident?

[The CADETS have appeared not to be listening, at this point, however, hands with cards and dice-boxes remain suspended in the air, no pipe-smoke is ejected, all expresses expectation]

Cyrano That never would Henry the Fourth, however great the number of his opponents, have consented to diminish his presence by the size of his white plume

[Silent joy Cards fall, dice rattle, smoke upwreathes]

De Guiche The trick was successful, however!

[As before, expectation suspends gambling and smoking]

Cyrano Very likely But one should not resign the honor of being a target [Cards, dice, smoke, fall, rattle, and upwreath, as before, in expression of increasing glee] Had I been at hand when you allowed your scarf to drop—the quality of our courage, monsieur, shows different in this,—I would have picked it up and worn it

De Guiche Ah, yes,—more of your Gascon bragging!

Cyrano Bragging? Lend me the scarf I engage to mount, ahead of all, to the assault, wearing it crosswise upon my breast!

De Guiche A Gascon's offer, that too! You know that the scarf was left in the enemy's camp, by the banks of the Scarpe, where bullets since then have hailed whence no one can bring it back!

Cyrano [*Taking a white scarf from his pocket and handing it to DE GUICHE*] Here it is

[*Silence* The CADETS smother their laughter behind cards and in dice-boxes DE GUICHE turns around, looks at them, instantly they become grave, one of them, with an air of unconcern, whistles the tune played earlier by the fifer]

De Guiche [*Taking the scarf*] I thank you I shall be able with this shred of white to make a signal which I was hesitating to make [*He goes to the top of the bank and waves the scarf*]

All What now? What is this?

The Sentinel [*At the top of the bank*] A man over there running off

De Guiche [*Coming forward again*] It is a supposed Spanish spy He is very useful to us The information he carries to the enemy is that which I give him,—so that their decisions are influenced by us

Cyrano He is a scoundrel!

De Guiche [*Coolly tying on his scarf*] He is a convenience We were saying? Ah, I was about to tell you Last night, having resolved upon a desperate stroke to obtain supplies, the Marshal secretly set out for Dourlens The royal sutlers are encamped there He expects to join them by way of the tilled fields, but, to provide against interference, he took with him troops in such number that, certainly, if we were now attacked, the enemy would find easy work Half of the army is absent from the camp

Carbon If the Spaniards knew that, it might be serious But they do not know

De Guiche They do And are going to attack us

Carbon Ah!

De Guiche My pretended spy came to warn me of their intention He said, moreover I can direct the attack At what point shall it be? I will lead them to suppose it the least strong, and they will centre their efforts against it I answered Very well Go from the camp Look down the line Let them attack at the point I signal from

Carbon [*To the CADETS*] Gentlemen, get ready!

[*All get up Noise of swords and belts being buckled on*]

De Guiche They will be here in an hour

First Cadet Oh! if there is a whole hour!

[*All sit down again, and go on with their games*]

De Guiche [*To CARBON*] The main object is to gain time The Marshal is on his way back

Carbon And to gain time?

De Guiche You will be so obliging as to keep them busy killing you

Cyrano Ah, this is your revenge!

De Guiche I will not pretend that if I had been fond of you, I would have thus singled out you and yours, but, as your bravery is unquestionably beyond that of others, I am serving my King at the same time as my inclination

Cyrano Suffer me, monsieur, to express my gratitude

De Guiche I know that you affect fighting one against a hundred You will not complain of lacking opportunity [*He goes toward the back with CARBON*]

Cyrano [*To the CADETS*] We shall now be able, gentlemen, to add to the Gascon escutcheon, which bears, as it is, six chevrons, or and azure, the chevron that was wanting to complete it,—blood red!

[*DE GUICHE at the back speaks low with CARBON Orders are given All is made ready to repel an attack CYRANO goes toward CHRISTIAN, who stands motionless, with folded arms*]

Cyrano [*Laying his hand on CHRISTIAN's shoulder*] Christian?

Christian [*Shaking his head*] Roxane!

Cyrano Ah me!

Christian I wish I might at least put my whole heart's last blessing in a beautiful letter!

Cyrano I mistrusted that it would come today [*he takes a letter from his doublet*] and I have written your farewells

Christian Let me see!

Cyrano You wish to see it?

Christian [*Taking the letter*] Yes! [*He opens the letter, begins to read, stops short*] Ah?

Cyrano What?

Christian That little round blister?

Cyrano [*Hurriedly taking back the letter, and looking at it with an artless air*] A blister?

Christian It is a tear!

Cyrano It looks like one, does it not? A poet, you see, is sometimes caught in his own snare,—that is what constitutes the interest, the charm! This letter, you must know, is very touching In writing it I apparently made myself shed tears

Christian Shed tears?

Cyrano Yes, because well, to die is not terrible at all but never to see her again, never! that, you know, is horrible beyond all thinking And, things having taken the turn they have, I shall not see her [*CHRISTIAN looks at him*] we shall not see her [*hastily*] you will not see her

Christian [*Snatching the letter from him*] Give me the letter! [*Noise in the distance*]

Voice of a Sentinel Ventrebleu, who goes there?

[*Shots Noise of voices, tinkling of bells*]

Carbon What is it?

'The Sentinel [*On the top of the bank*] A coach! [*All run to see*]

[*Noisy exclamations*] What?—In the camp?—It is driving into the camp!—It comes from the direction of the enemy! The devil! Fire upon it!—No! the

coachman is shouting something!—What does he say?—He shouts Service of the King!

De Guiche What? Service of the King?

[*All come down from the bank and fall into order*]

Carbon Hats off, all!

De Guiche [*At the corner*] Service of the King! Stand back, low rabble, and give it room to turn around with a handsome sweep!

[*The coach comes in at a trot It is covered with mud and dust The curtains are drawn Two lackeys behind It comes to a standstill*]

Carbon [*Shouting*] Salute!

[*Drums roll All the CADETS uncover*]

De Guiche Let down the steps!

[*Two men hurry forward The coach door opens*]

Roxane [*Stepping from the carriage*] Good-morning!

[*At the sound of a feminine voice, all the men, in the act of bowing low, straighten themselves Consternation*]

De Guiche Service of the King! You?

Roxane Of the only King! of Love!

Cyrano Ah, great God!

Christian [*Rushing to her*] You! Why are you here?

Roxane This siege lasted too long!

Christian Why have you come?

Roxane I will tell you!

Cyrano [*Who at the sound of her voice has started, then stood motionless without venturing to look her way*] God! can I trust myself to look at her?

De Guiche You cannot remain here

Roxane But I can,—I can, indeed! Will you favor me with a drum? [*She seats herself upon a drum brought forward for her*] There! I thank you! [*She laughs*] They fired upon my carriage [*Proudly*] A patrol!—It does look rather as if it were made out of a pumpkin, does it not? like Cinderella's coach! and the footmen made out of rats! [*Blowing a kiss to CHRISTIAN*] How do you do? [*Looking at them all*] You do not look overjoyed! Arras is a long way from Paris, do you know it? [*Catching sight of CYRANO*] Cousin, delighted!

Cyrano [*Coming toward her*] But how did you?

Roxane How did I find the army? Dear me, cousin, that was simple I followed straight along the line of devastation Ah, I should never have believed in such horrors had I not seen them! Gentlemen, if that is the service of your King, I like mine better!

Cyrano But this is mad! By what way did you come?

Roxane Way? I drove through the Spaniards' camp

First Cadet Ah, what will keep lovely woman from her way!

De Guiche But how did you contrive to get through their lines?

Le Bret That must have been difficult

Roxane No, not very I simply drove through them, in my coach, at a trot. If a hidalgo, with arrogant front, showed likely to stop us, I put my face at

the window, wearing my sweetest smile, and, those gentlemen being,—let the French not grudge my saying so!—the most gallant in the world, I passed!

Carbon Such a smile is a passport, certainly! But you must have been not unfrequently bidden to stand and deliver where you were going?

Roxane Not unfrequently, you are right Whereupon I would say, "I am going to see my lover!" At once, the fiercest looking Spaniard of them all would gravely close my carriage door, and, with a gesture the King might emulate, motion aside the musket-barrels levelled at me, and, superb at once for grace and haughtiness, bringing his spurs together, and lifting his plumed hat, bow low and say, "Pass, señorita, pass!"

Christian But, Roxane

Roxane I said, "My lover!" yes, forgive me!—You see, if I had said, "My husband!" they would never have let me by!

Christian But

Roxane What troubles you?

De Guiche You must leave at once

Roxane I?

Cyrano At once!

Le Bret As fast as you can

Christian Yes, you must

Roxane But why?

Christian [*Embarrassed*] Because

Cyrano [*Embarrassed, too*] In three-quarters of an hour

De Guiche [*The same*] Or an hour

Carbon [*The same*] You had much better

Le Bret [*The same*] You might

Roxane I shall remain You are going to fight

All Oh, no! No!

Roxane He is my husband! [*She throws herself in CHRISTIAN'S arms*] Let me be killed with you!

Christian How your eyes shine!

Roxane I will tell you why they shine!

De Guiche [*Desperately*] It is a post of horrible probabilities!

Roxane [*Turning toward him*] What—of horrible?

Cyrano In proof of which he appointed us to it!

Roxane Ah, you wish me made a widow?

De Guiche I swear to you

Roxane No! Now I have lost all regard Now I will surely not go . . . Besides, I think it fun!

Cyrano What? The précieuse contained a heroine?

Roxane Monsieur de Bergerac, I am a cousin of yours!

One of the Cadets Never think but that we will take good care of you!

Roxane [*More and more excited*] I am sure you will, my friends!

Other Cadet The whole camp smells of iris!

Roxane By good fortune I put on a hat that will look well in battle! [*Glanc-*

ing toward DE GUICHE] But perhaps it is time the Count should go—The battle might begin

De Guiche Ah, it is intolerable!—I am going to inspect my guns, and coming back—You still have time think better of it!

Roxane Never!

[*Exit DE GUICHE*]

Christian [*Imploring*] *Roxane*!

Roxane No!

First Cadet She is going to stay!

All [*Hurrying about, pushing one another, snatching things from one another*] A comb!—Soap!—My jacket is torn, a needle!—A ribbon!—Lend me your pocket mirror—My cuffs!—Curling-irons!—A razor!

Roxane [*To CYRANO, who is still pleading with her*] No! Nothing shall prevail upon me to stir from this spot!

Carbon [*After having, like the others, tightened his belt, dusted himself brushed his hat, straightened his feather, pulled down his cuffs, approaches ROXANE, and ceremoniously*] It is, perhaps, proper, since you are going to stay, that I should present to you a few of the gentlemen about to have the honor of dying in your presence [*ROXANE bows, and stands waiting, with her arm through CHRISTIAN'S*] *Baron Peyrescous de Colignac*!

The Cadet [*Bowing*] *Madame*!

Carbon [*Continuing to present the CADETS*] *Baron de Casterac de Cahuzac, —Vidame de Malignouyre Estressac Lesbas d'Escarabiot,—Chevalier d'Antignac Juzet,—Baron Hillot de Blagnac Saléchan de Castel Crabioules*

Roxane But how many names have you apiece?

Baron Hillot Innumerable!

Carbon [*To ROXANE*] Open your hand with the handkerchief!

Roxane [*Opens her hand, the handkerchief drops*] Why?

[*The whole company starts forward to pick it up*]

Carbon [*Instantly catching it*] My company had no flag! Now, my word, it will have the prettiest one in the army!

Roxane [*Smiling*] It is rather small

Carbon [*Fastening the handkerchief on the staff of his captain's spear*] But it is lace!

One of the Cadets [*To the others*] I could die without a murmur, having looked upon that beautiful face, if I had so much as a walnut inside me!

Carbon [*Who has overheard, indignant*] Shame! to talk of food when an exquisite woman

Roxane But the air of the camp is searching, and I myself am hungry Patues, jellied meat, light wine are what I should like best! Will you kindly bring me some? [*Consternation*]

One of the Cadets Bring you some?

Other Cadet And where, great God, shall we get them?

Roxane [*Quietly*] In my coach

All What?

Roxane But there is much to be done, carving and boning and serving Look more closely at my coachman, gentlemen, and you will recognize a precious individual the sauces, if we wish, can be warmed over

The Cadets [*Springing toward the coach*] It is Ragueneau! [*Cheers*] Oh! Oh!

Roxane [*Watching them*] Poor fellows!

Cyrano [*Kissing her hand*] Kind fairy!

Ragueneau [*Standing upon the box-seat like a vender at a public fair*] Gentlemen! [*Enthusiasm*]

The Cadets Bravo! Bravo!

Ragueneau How should the Spaniards, when so much beauty passed, suspect the repast? [*Applause*]

Cyrano [*Low to CHRISTIAN*] Hm! Hm! Christian!

Ragueneau Absorbed in gallantry, no heed took they [*he takes a dish from the box-seat*] of galantine!

[*Applause The galantine is passed from hand to hand*]

Cyrano [*Low to CHRISTIAN*] A word with you

Ragueneau Venus kept their eyes fixed upon herself, while Diana slipped past with the [*he brandishes a joint*] game!

[*Enthusiasm The joint is seized by twenty hands at once*]

Cyrano [*Low to CHRISTIAN*] I must speak with you

Roxane [*To the CADETS who come forward, their arms full of provisions*] Spread it all upon the ground!

[*Assisted by the two imperturbable footmen who were on the back of the coach, she arranges everything on the grass*]

Roxane [*To CHRISTIAN, whom CYRANO is trying to draw aside*] Make your self useful, sir!

[*CHRISTIAN comes and helps her CYRANO gives evidence of uneasiness*]

Ragueneau A truffled peacock!

First Cadet [*Radiant, comes forward cutting off a large slice of ham*] Praise the pigs, we shall not go to our last fight with nothing in our b [*correcting himself at sight of ROXANE*] hm stomachs!

Ragueneau [*Flinging the carriage cushions*] The cushions are stuffed with snipe!

[*Tumult The cushions are ripped open Laughter Joy*]

Ragueneau [*Flinging bottles of red wine*] Molten ruby! [*Bottles of white wine*] Fluid topaz!

Roxane [*Throwing a folded tablecloth to CYRANO*] Unfold the cloth Hey! be nimble!

Ragueneau [*Waving one of the coach lanterns*] Each lantern is a little larder!

Cyrano [*Low to CHRISTIAN, while together they spread the cloth*] I must speak with you before you speak with her

Ragueneau The handle of my whip, behold, is a sausage!

Roxane [*Pouring wine, dispensing it*] Since we are the ones to be killed, morbleu, we will not fret ourselves about the rest of the army! Everything for the Gascons! And if De Guiche comes, nobody must invite him! [*Going from one to the other*] Gently! You have time You must not eat so fast! There, drink What are you crying about?

First Cadet It is too good!

Roxane Hush! White wine or red?—Bread for Monsieur de Carbon!—A knife!—Pass your plate!—You prefer crust?—A little more?—Let me help you—Champagne?—A wing?—

Cyrano [*Following ROXANE, his hands full of dishes, helping her*] I adore her!

Roxane [*Going to CHRISTIAN*] What will you take?

Christian Nothing!

Roxane Oh, but you must take something! This biscuit—in a little Muscatel—just a little?

Christian [*Trying to keep her from going*] Tell me what made you come?

Roxane I owe myself to those poor fellows Be patient By and by

Le Bret [*Who had gone toward the back to pass a loaf of bread on the end of a pike to the SENTINEL upon the earthwork*] De Guiche!

Cyrano Presto! Vanish basket, flagon, platter and pan! Hurry! Let us look as if nothing were! [*To RAGUENEAU*] Take a flying leap on to your box!—Is everything hidden?

[*In a wink, all the tables have been pushed into the tents, or hidden under clothes, cloaks, hats*]

[*Enter DE GUICHE, hurriedly, he stops short, sniffing the air Silence*]

De Guiche What a good smell!

One of the Cadets [*Singing, with effect of mental abstraction*] To lo lo lo

De Guiche [*Stopping and looking at him closely*] What is the matter with you—you, there? You are red as a crab

The Cadet I? Nothing It is just my blood We are going to fight it tells

Other Cadet Poom poom poom

De Guiche [*Turning*] What is this?

The Cadet [*Slightly intoxicated*] Nothing A song just a little song

De Guiche You look in good spirits, my boy!

The Cadet Danger affects me that way!

De Guiche [*Calling CARBON DE CASTEL-JALOUX to give an order*] Captain, I [*He stops at sight of his face*] Peste! You look in good spirits, too

Carbon [*Flushed, holding a bottle behind him, with an evasive gesture*] Oh!

De Guiche I had a cannon left over, which I have ordered them to place [*he points in the wing*] there, in that corner, and which your men can use, if necessary

One of the Cadets [*Swaying from one foot to the other*] Charming attention!

Other Cadet [*Smiling sugarily*] Our thanks for your gracious thoughtfulness!

De Guiche Have they gone mad? [*Drily*] As you are not accustomed to handling a cannon, look out for its kicking

First Cadet Ah, pfft!

De Guiche [*Going toward him, furious*] But

The Cadet A cannon knows better than to kick a Gascon!

De Guiche [Seizing him by the arm and shaking him] You are all tipsy on what?

The Cadet [Magnificently] The smell of powder!

De Guiche [Shrugs his shoulders, pushes aside the CADET, and goes rapidly toward ROXANE] Quick, Madame! what have you condescended to decide?

Roxane I remain

De Guiche Retire, I beseech you!

Roxane No

De Guiche If you are determined, then Let me have a musket!

Carbon What do you mean?

De Guiche I, too, will remain

Cyrano At last, monsieur, an instance of pure and simple bravery!

First Cadet Might you be a Gascon, lace collar notwithstanding?

De Guiche I do not leave a woman in danger

Second Cadet [To FIRST CADET] Look here! I think he might be given something to eat!

[All the food reappears, as if by magic]

De Guiche [His eyes brightening] PROVISIONS?

Third Cadet Under every waistcoat!

De Guiche [Mastering himself, haughtily] Do you imagine that I will eat your leavings?

Cyrano [Bowing] You are improving!

De Guiche [Proudly, falling at the last of the sentence into a slightly Gascon accent] I will fight before I eat!

First Cadet [Exultant] Fight! Eat! He spoke with an accent!

De Guiche [Laughing] I did?

The Cadet He is one of us!

[All fall to dancing]

Carbon [Who a moment before disappeared behind the earthworks, reappearing at the top] I have placed my pikemen. They are a determined troop

[He points at a line of pikes projecting above the bank]

De Guiche [To ROXANE, bowing] Will you accept my hand and pass them in review?

[She takes his hand, they go toward the bank. Everyone uncovers and follows]

Christian [Going to CYRANO, quickly] Speak! Be quick!

[As ROXANE appears at the top of the bank, the pikes disappear, lowered in a salute, and a cheer goes up, ROXANE bows]

Pikemen [Outside] Vivat!

Christian What did you want to tell me?

Cyrano In case Roxane

Christian Well?

Cyrano Should speak to you of the letters

Christian Yes, the letters. I know!

Cyrano Do not commit the blunder of appearing surprised . . .

Christian At what?

Cyrano I must tell you! It is quite simple, and merely comes into my mind today because I see her You have

Christian Hurry!

Cyrano You you have written to her oftener than you suppose

Christian Oh, have I?

Cyrano Yes It was my business, you see I had undertaken to interpret your passion, and sometimes I wrote without having told you I should write

Christian Ah?

Cyrano It is very simple

Christian But how did you succeed since we have been so closely surrounded,
in ?

Cyrano Oh, before daybreak I could cross the lines

Christian [*Folding his arms*] Ah, that is very simple, too? And how many times a week have I been writing? Twice? Three times? Four?

Cyrano More

Christian Every day?

Cyrano Yes, every day twice

Christian [*Violently*] And you cared so much about it that you were willing to brave death

Cyrano [*Seeing ROXANE, who returns*] Be still Not before her!
[*He goes quickly into his tent CADETS come and go at the back CARBON and DE GUICHE give orders*]

Roxane [*Running to CHRISTIAN*] And now, Christian

Christian [*Taking her hands*] And now, you shall tell me why, over these fearful roads, through these ranks of rough soldiery, you risked your dear self to join me?

Roxane Because of the letters!

Christian The ? What did you say?

Roxane It is through your fault that I have been exposed to such and so many dangers It is your letters that have gone to my head! Ah, think how many you have written me in a month, each one more beautiful

Christian What? Because of a few little love letters

Roxane Say nothing! You cannot understand! Listen The truth is that I took to idolizing you one evening, when below my window, in a voice I did not know before, your soul began to reveal itself Think then what the effect should be of your letters, which have been like your voice heard constantly for one month, your voice of that evening, so tender, caressing You must bear it as you can, I have come to you! Prudent Penelope would not have stayed at home with her eternal tapestry, if Ulysses, her lord, had written as you write but, impulsive as Helen, have tossed aside her yarns, and flown to join him!

Christian But

Roxane I read them, I re-read them, in reading I grew faint I became your own indeed! Each fluttering leaf was like a petal of your soul wafted to me In every word of those letters, love is felt as a flame would be felt,—love, compelling, sincere, profound

Christian Ah, sincere, profound? You say that it can be felt, Roxane?

Roxane He asks me!

Christian And so you came?

Roxane I came—oh, Christian, my own, my master! If I were to kneel at your feet you would lift me, I know It is my soul therefore which kneels, and never can you lift it from that posture!—I came to implore your pardon—as it is fitting, for we are both perhaps about to die!—your pardon for having done you the wrong, at first, in my shallowness, of loving you for mere looking!

Christian [*In alarm*] Ah, Roxane!

Roxane Later, dear one, grown less shallow—similar to a bird which flutters before it can fly,—your gallant exterior appealing to me still, but your soul appealing equally, I loved you for both!

Christian And now?

Roxane Now at last yourself are vanquished by yourself I love you for your soul alone

Christian [*Drawing away*] Ah, Roxane!

Roxane Rejoice! For to be loved for that wherewith we are clothed so fleetingly must put a noble heart to torture Your dear thought at last casts your dear face in shadow the harmonious lineaments whereby at first you pleased me, I do not see them, now my eyes are open!

Christian Oh!

Roxane You question your own triumph?

Christian [*Sorrowfully*] Roxane!

Roxane I understand, you cannot conceive of such a love in me?

Christian I do not wish to be loved like that! I wish to be loved quite simply

Roxane For that which other women till now have loved in you? Ah, let yourself be loved in a better way

Christian No I was happier before!

Roxane Ah, you do not understand! It is now that I love you most, that I truly love you It is that which makes you, you—can you not grasp it?—that I worship And did you no longer walk our earth like a young martial Apollo

Christian Say no more!

Roxane Still would I love you! Yes, though a blight should have fallen upon your face and form

Christian Do not say it!

Roxane But I do say it, I do!

Christian What? If I were ugly, distinctly, offensively?

Roxane If you were ugly, dear, I swear it!

Christian God!

Roxane And you are glad, profoundly glad?

Christian [*In a smothered voice*] Yes

Roxane What is it?

Christian [*Pushing her gently away*] Nothing I have a word or two to say to some one your leave, for a second

Roxane But

Christian [*Pointing at a group of CADETS at the back*] In my selfish love, I have kept you from those poor brothers Go, smile on them a little, before they die, dear go!

Roxane [*Moved*] Dear *Christian*!
[*She goes toward the GASCONS at the back, they respectfully gather around her*]

Christian [*Calling toward CYRANO's tent*] *Cyrano*!

Cyrano [*Appears, armed for battle*] What is it? How pale you are!

Christian She does not love me any more!

Cyrano What do you mean?

Christian She loves you

Cyrano No!

Christian She only loves my soul!

Cyrano No!

Christian Yes! Therefore it is you she loves and you love her

Cyrano I

Christian I know it!

Cyrano It is true

Christian To madness!

Cyrano More

Christian Tell her, then

Cyrano No!

Christian Why not?

Cyrano Look at me!

Christian She would love me grown ugly

Cyrano She told you so?

Christian With the utmost frankness!

Cyrano Ah! I am glad she should have told you that! But, believe me, believe me, place no faith in such a mad asseveration! Dear God, I am glad such a thought should have come to her, and that she should have spoken it,—but believe me, do not take her at her word. Never cease to be the handsome fellow you are. She would not forgive me!

Christian That is what I wish to discover

Cyrano No! no!

Christian Let her choose between us! You shall tell her everything

Cyrano No. No. I refuse the ordeal!

Christian Shall I stand in the way of your happiness because my outside is not so much amiss?

Cyrano And I? shall I destroy yours, because, thanks to the hazard that sets us upon earth, I have the gift of expressing what you perhaps feel?

Christian You shall tell her everything!

Cyrano He persists in tempting me. It is a mistake and cruel!

Christian I am weary of carrying about, in my own self, a rival!

Cyrano *Christian*!

Christian Our marriage contracted without witnesses can be annulled if we survive!

Cyrano He persists!

Christian Yes I will be loved for my sole self, or not at all!—I am going to see what they are about Look! I will walk to the end of the line and back Tell her, and let her pronounce between us

Cyrano She will pronounce for you

Christian I can but hope she will! [*Calling*] *Roxane*!

Cyrano No! No!

Roxane [*Coming forward*] What is it?

Christian Cyrano has something to tell you something important!

[*ROXANE goes hurriedly to CYRANO Exit CHRISTIAN*]

Roxane Something important?

Cyrano [*Distracted*] He is gone! [*To ROXANE*] Nothing whatever! He attaches—but you must know him of old!—he attaches importance to trifles

Roxane [*Quickly*] He did not believe what I told him a moment ago?
I saw that he did not believe

Cyrano [*Taking her hand*] But did you in very truth tell him the truth?

Roxane Yes Yes I should love him even [*She hesitates a second*]

Cyrano [*Smiling sadly*] You do not like to say it before me?

Roxane But

Cyrano I shall not mind! Even if he were ugly?

Roxane Yes Ugly [*Musket shots outside*] They are firing!

Cyrano [*Ardently*] Dreadfully ugly?

Roxane Dreadfully

Cyrano Disfigured?

Roxane Disfigured!

Cyrano Grotesque?

Roxane Nothing could make him grotesque to me

Cyrano You would love him still?

Roxane I believe that I should love him more if that were possible!

Cyrano [*Losing his head, aside*] My God, perhaps she means it perhaps it is true and that way is happiness [*To ROXANE*] I Roxane listen!

Le Bret [*Comes in hurriedly, calls softly*] *Cyrano*!

Cyrano [*Turning*] *Hein*?

Le Bret Hush! [*He whispers a few words to CYRANO*]

Cyrano [*Letting ROXANE's hand drop, with a cry*] Ah!

Roxane What ails you?

Cyrano [*To himself, in consternation*] It is finished!

[*Musket reports*]

Roxane What is it? What is happening? Who is firing?

[*She goes to the back to look off*]

Cyrano It is finished My lips are sealed forevermore!
[*CADETS come in, attempting to conceal something they carry among them, they surround it, preventing ROXANE's seeing it*]

Roxane What has happened?

Cyrano [*Quickly stopping her as she starts toward them*] Nothing!

Roxane These men? .

- Cyrano* [*Drawing her away*] Pay no attention to them!
- Roxane* But what were you about to say to me before?
- Cyrano* What was I about to say? Oh, nothing! Nothing what
ever, I assure you [*Solemnly*] I swear that Christian's spirit, that his soul, were
[*in terror, correcting himself*] are the greatest that
- Roxane* Were? [*With a great cry*] Ah!
[*Runs to the group of CADETS, and thrusts them aside*]
- Cyrano* It is finished!
- Roxane* [*Seeing CHRISTIAN stretched out in his cloak*] Christian!
- Le Bret* [*To CYRANO*] At the enemy's first shot!
- [*ROXANE throws herself on CHRISTIAN's body Musket reports Clashing of
swords Tramping Drums*]
- Carbon* [*Sword in hand*] The attack! To your muskets!
[*Followed by the CADETS he goes to the further side of the earthworks*]
- Roxane* Christian!
- Carbon's Voice* [*Beyond the earthworks*] Make haste!
- Roxane* Christian!
- Carbon* Fall into line!
- Roxane* Christian!
- Carbon* Measure match!
[*RAGUENEAU has come running in with water in a steel cap*]
- Christian* [*In a dying voice*] Roxane!
- Cyrano* [*Quick, low in CHRISTIAN's ear while ROXANE, distracted, dips into
he water a fragment of linen torn from her breast to bind his wound*] I have
old her everything! You are still the one she loves!
[*CHRISTIAN closes his eyes*]
- Roxane* What, dear love?
- Carbon* Muzzle high!
- Roxane* [*To CYRANO*] He is not dead?
- Carbon* Open charge with teeth!
- Roxane* I feel his cheek grow cold against my own!
- Carbon* Take aim!
- Roxane* A letter on his breast [*She opens it*] To me!
- Cyrano* [*Aside*] My letter!
- Carbon* Fire!
[*Musket shots Cries Roar of battle*]
- Cyrano* [*Trying to free his hand which ROXANE clasps kneeling*] But, Rox-
ane, they are fighting
- Roxane* [*Clinging*] No! Stay with me a little! He is dead You are
the only one that truly knew him [*She cries subduedly*] Was he not an
exquisite being, an exceptional, marvellous being?
- Cyrano* [*Standing bareheaded*] Yes, Roxane
- Roxane* A poet without his peer, one verily to reverence?
- Cyrano* Yes, Roxane
- Roxane* A sublime spirit?
- Cyrano* Yes, Roxane

Roxane A profound heart, such as the profane could never have understood
a soul as noble as it was charming?

Cyrano [*Firmly*] Yes, *Roxane*

Roxane [*Throwing herself on CHRISTIAN's body*] And he is dead!

Cyrano [*Aside, drawing his sword*] And I have now only to die, since, without knowing it, she mourns my death in his!

[*Trumpets in the distance*]

De Guiche [*Reappears on the top of the bank, bareheaded, his forehead bloody, in a thundering voice*] The signal they promised! The flourish of trumpets! The French are entering the camp with supplies! Stand fast a little longer!

Roxane Upon his letter blood, tears!

A Voice [*Outside, shouting*] Surrender!

Voices of the Cadets No!

Ragueneau [*Who from the top of the coach is watching the battle beyond the bank*] The conflict rages hotter!

Cyrano [*To DE GUICHE pointing at ROXANE*] Take her away! I am going to charge

Roxane [*Kissing the letter, in a dying voice*] His blood! his tears!

Ragueneau [*Leaping from the coach and running to ROXANE*] She is fainting!

De Guiche [*At the top of the bank, to the CADETS, madly*] Stand fast!

Voice [*Outside*] Surrender!

Voices of the Cadets No!

Cyrano [*To DE GUICHE*] Your courage none will question [*Pointing at ROXANE*] Fly for the sake of saving her!

De Guiche [*Runs to ROXANE and lifts her in his arms*] So be it! But we shall win the day if you can hold out a little longer

Cyrano We can [*To ROXANE, whom DE GUICHE, helped by RAGUENEAU, is carrying off insensible*] Good-bye, *Roxane*!

[*Tumult. Cries. CADETS reappear, wounded, and fall upon the stage. CYRANO, dashing forward to join the combatants, is stopped on the crest of the bank by CARBON covered with blood*]

Carbon We are losing ground I have got two halberd wounds

Cyrano [*Yelling to the GASCONS*] Steadfast! Never give them an inch!

Brave boys! [*To CARBON*] Fear nothing! I have various deaths to avenge Christian's and all my hopes! [*They come down. CYRANO brandishes the spear at the head of which ROXANE's handkerchief is fastened*] Float free, little cob web flag, embroidered with her initials! [*He drives the spear staff into the earth, shouts to the CADETS*] Fall on them, boys! Crush them! [*To the fifer*] Fifer, play!

[*The fifer plays. Some of the wounded get to their feet again. Some of the CADETS, coming down the bank, group themselves around CYRANO and the little flag. The coach, filled and covered with men, bristles with muskets and becomes a redoubt*]

One of the Cadets [*Appears upon the top of the bank backing while he fights, he cries*] They are coming up the slope!

[*Falls dead*]

Cyrano We will welcome them!
[Above the bank suddenly rises a formidable array of enemies The great banners of the Imperial Army appear]
 Cyrano Fire!

[General discharge]

Cry *[Among the hostile ranks]* Fire!
[Shots returned CADETS drop on every side]
 A Spanish Officer *[Taking off his hat]* What are these men, so determined all to be killed?

Cyrano *[Declaiming, as he stands in the midst of flying bullets]*

*They are the Gascony Cadets
 Of Carbon de Castel Jaloux,
 Famed fighters, liars, desperates*

[He leaps forward, followed by a handful of survivors]

They are the Gascony Cadets!

[The rest is lost in the confusion of battle]

ACT FIVE CYRANO'S GAZETTE

Fifteen years later, 1655 The park belonging to the convent of the Sisters of the Cross, in Paris

Superb shade-trees At the left, the house, several doors opening on to broad terrace with steps In the centre of the stage, huge trees standing alone in a clear oval space At the right, first wing, a semicircular stone seat, surrounded by large box-trees

All along the back of the stage, an avenue of chestnut-trees, which leads, at the right, fourth wing, to the door of a chapel seen through trees Through the double row of trees overarching the avenue are seen lawns, other avenues, clumps of trees, the further recesses of the park, the sky

The chapel opens by a small side-door into a colonnade, overrun by a scarlet creeper, the colonnade comes forward and is lost to sight behind the box-trees at the right

It is autumn The leaves are turning above the still fresh grass Dark patches of evergreens, box and yew Under each tree a mat of yellow leaves Fallen leaves litter the whole stage, crackle underfoot, lie thick on the terrace and the seats

Between the seat at the right and the tree in the centre, a large embroidery frame, in front of which a small chair Baskets full of wools, in skeins and balls On the frame, a piece of tapestry, partly done

At the rise of the curtain, nuns come and go in the park, a few are seated on the stone seat around an older nun, leaves are falling

Sister Martha *[To MOTHER MARGARET]* Sister Claire, after putting on her cap, went back to the mirror, to see herself again

Mother Margaret *[To SISTER CLAIRE]* It was unbecoming, my child

Sister Claire But Sister Martha, today, after finishing her portion, went back to the tart for a plum I saw her!

Mother Margaret [To SISTER MARTHA] My child, it was ill done

Sister Claire I merely glanced!

Sister Martha The plum was about so big!

Mother Margaret This evening when Monsieur Cyrano comes, I will tell him

Sister Claire [Alarmed] No! He will laugh at us!

Sister Martha He will say that nuns are very vain!

Sister Claire And very greedy!

Mother Margaret And really very good

Sister Claire Mother Margaret, is it not true that he has come here every Saturday in the last ten years?

Mother Margaret Longer! Ever since his cousin brought among our linen coifs her coif of crape, the worldly symbol of her mourning, which settled like a sable bird amidst our flock of white some fourteen years ago

Sister Martha He, alone, since she took her abode in our cloister, has art to dispel her never lessening sorrow

All the Nuns He is so droll!—It is merry when he comes!—He teases us!—He is delightful!—We are greatly attached to him!—We are making Angelica paste to offer him!

Sister Martha He is not, however, a very good Catholic!

Sister Claire We will convert him

The Nuns We will! We will!

Mother Margaret I forbid your renewing that attempt, my children Do not trouble him he might not come so often!

Sister Martha But God!

Mother Margaret Set your hearts at rest God must know him of old!

Sister Martha But every Saturday, when he comes, he says to me as soon as he sees me, "Sister, I ate meat, yesterday!"

Mother Margaret Ah, that is what he says? Well, when he last said it, he had eaten nothing for two days

Sister Martha Mother!

Mother Margaret He is poor

Sister Martha Who told you?

Mother Margaret Monsieur Le Bret

Sister Martha Does no one offer him assistance?

Mother Margaret No, he would take offence

[In one of the avenues at the back appears ROYANE, in black, wearing a widow's coif and long mourning veil, DE GUICHE, markedly older, magnificently dressed, walks beside her They go very slowly MOTHER MARGARET gets up]

Mother Margaret Come, we must go within Madame Magdeleine is walking in the park with a visitor

Sister Martha [Low to SISTER CLAIRE] Is not that the Marshal-duke de Grammont?

Sister Claire [Looking] I think it is!

Sister Martha He has not been to see her in many months!

The Nuns He is much engaged!—The Court!—The Camp!—

Sister Claire Cares of this world!

[*Exeunt DE GUICHE and ROXANE come forward silently, and stop near the embroidery frame A pause*]

De Guiche And so you live here, uselessly fair, always in mourning?

Roxane Always

De Guiche As faithful as of old?

Roxane As faithful

De Guiche [After a time] Have you forgiven me?

Roxane Since I am here

De Guiche And he was really such a rare being?

Roxane To understand, one must have known him!

De Guiche Ah, one must have known him! Perhaps I did not know him well enough And his last letter, still and always, against your heart?

Roxane I wear it on this velvet, as a more holy scapular

De Guiche Even dead, you love him?

Roxane It seems to me sometimes he is but half dead, that our hearts have not been severed, that his love still wraps me round, no less than ever living!

De Guiche [After another silence] Does Cyrano come here to see you?

Roxane Yes, often That faithful friend fulfils for me the office of gazette His visits are regular He comes when the weather is fine, his armchair is brought out under the trees I wait for him here with my work, the hour strikes, on the last stroke, I hear—I do not even turn to see who comes!—his cane upon the steps, he takes his seat, he rallies me upon my never-ending tapestry, he tells off the events of the week, and [LE BRET appears on the steps] Ah, Le Bret! [LE BRET comes down the steps] How does your friend?

Le Bret Ill

The Duke Oh!

Roxane He exaggerates!

Le Bret All is come to pass as I foretold neglect! poverty! his writings ever breeding him new enemies! Fraud he attacks in every embodiment usurpers, pious pretenders, plagiarists, asses in lions' skins all! He attacks all!

Roxane No one, however, but stands in profound respect of his sword They will never succeed in silencing him

De Guiche [Shaking his head] Who knows?

Le Bret What I fear is not the aggression of man, what I fear is loneliness and want and winter creeping upon him like stealthy wolves in his miserable attic, they are the insidious foes that will have him by the throat at last!

Every day he tightens his belt by an eyelet, his poor great nose is pinched, and turned the fallow of old ivory, the worn black serge you see him in is the only coat he has!

De Guiche Ah, there is one who did not succeed! Nevertheless, do not pity him too much

Le Bret [With a bitter smile] Marshal!

De Guiche Do not pity him too much he signed no bonds with the world, he has lived free in his thought as in his actions

Le Bret [As above] Duke

De Guiche [Haughtily] I know, yes I have everything, he has nothing . . .

But I should like to shake hands with him [*Bowing to ROXANE*] Good-bye

Roxane I will go with you to the door

[*DE GUICHE bows to LE BRET and goes with ROXANE toward the terrace steps*]

De Guiche [*Stopping while she goes up the steps*] Yes, sometimes I envy him You see, when a man has succeeded too well in life, he is not unlikely to feel—dear me! without having committed any very serious wrong!—a multitudinous disgust of himself, the sum of which does not constitute a real remorse, but an obscure uneasiness, and a ducal mantle, while it sweeps up the stairs of greatness, may trail in its furry lining a rustling of sere illusions and regrets, as, when you slowly climb toward those doors, your black gown trails the withered leaves

Roxane [*Ironical*] Are you not unusually pensive?

De Guiche Ah, yes! [*As he is about to leave, abruptly*] *Monsieur LE BRET* [*To ROXANE*] Will you allow me? A word [*He goes to LE BRET, and lowering his voice*] It is true that no one will dare overtly to attack your friend, but many have him in particular disrelish, and some one was saying to me yester day, at the Queen's, "It seems not unlikely that this Cyrano will meet with an accident"

Le Bret Ah?

De Guiche Yes Let him keep indoors Let him be cautious

Le Bret [*Lifting his arms toward Heaven*] Cautious! He is coming here I will warn him Warn him! Yes, but

Roxane [*Who has been standing at the head of the steps, to a nun who comes toward her*] What is it?

The Nun Ragueneau begs to see you, Madame

Roxane Let him come in [*To DE GUICHE and LE BRET*] He comes to plead distress Having determined one day to be an author, he became in turn precentor

Le Bret Bath-house keeper

Roxane Actor

Le Bret Beadle

Roxane Barber

Le Bret Arch lute teacher

Roxane I wonder what he is now!

Ragueneau [*Entering precipitately*] Ah, Madame! [*He sees LE BRET*] Monsieur!

Roxane [*Smiling*] Begin telling your misfortunes to Le Bret I am coming back

Ragueneau But, Madame

[*ROXANE leaves without listening, with the DUKE RAGUENEAU goes to LE BRET*]

Ragueneau It is better so Since you are here, I had liefer not tell her! Less than half an hour ago, I was going to see your friend I was not thirty feet from his door, when I saw him come out I hurried to catch up with him He was about to turn the corner I started to run, when from a window below which he was passing—was it pure mischance? It may have been!—a lackey drops a block of wood

Le Bret Ah, the cowards! *Cyrano!*

Ragueneau I reach the spot, and find him

Le Bret Horrible!

Ragueneau Our friend, monsieur, our poet, stretched upon the ground, with a great hole in his head!

Le Bret He is dead?

Ragueneau No, but God have mercy! I carried him to his lodging Ah, his lodging! You should see that lodging of his!

Le Bret Is he in pain?

Ragueneau No, monsieur, he is unconscious

Le Bret Has a doctor seen him?

Ragueneau One came out of good nature

Le Bret My poor, poor Cyrano! We must not tell Roxane outright And the doctor?

Ragueneau He talked I hardly grasped of fever cerebral inflammation! Ah, if you should see him, with his head done up in cloths! Let us hurry No one is there to tend him And he might die if he attempted to get up!

Le Bret [*Dragging RAGUENEAU off at the right*] This way Come, it is shorter through the chapel

Roxane [*Appearing at the head of the steps, catching sight of LE BRET hurrying off through the colonnade which leads to the chapel side-door*] Monsieur Le Bret! [*LE BRET and RAGUENEAU make then escape without answering*] Le Bret not turning back when he is called? Poor Ragueneau must be in some new trouble! [*She comes down the steps*] How beautiful

how beautiful, this golden-hazy waning day of September at its wane! My sorrowful mood, which the exuberant gladness of April offends, autumn, the dreamy and subdued, lures on to smile [*She sits down at her embroidery frame Two NUNS come from the house bringing a large armchair which they place under the tree*] Ah, here comes the classic armchair in which my old friend always sits!

Sister Martha The best in the convent parlor

Roxane I thank you, sister [*The NUNS withdraw*] He will be here in a moment [*She adjusts the embroidery frame before her*] There! The clock is striking My woofs! The clock has struck? I wonder at this!

Is it possible that for the first time he is late? It must be that the sister who keeps the door my thimble? ah, here it is! is detaining him to exhort him to repentance [*A pause*] She exhorts him at some length!

He cannot be much longer A withered leaf! [*She brushes away the dead leaf which has dropped on the embroidery*] Surely nothing could keep

My scissors? in my workbag! could keep him from coming!

A Nun [*Appearing at the head of the steps*] Monsieur de Bergerac!

Roxane [*Without turning round*] What was I saying? [*She begins to embroider CYRANO appears, exceedingly pale, his hat drawn down over his eyes The NUN who has shown him into the garden, withdraws He comes down the steps very slowly, with evident difficulty to keep on his feet, leaning heavily on his cane ROXANE proceeds with her sewing*] Ah, these dull soft shades! How shall I match them? [*To CYRANO, in a tone of friendly chiding*] After fourteen years, for the first time you are late!

Cyrano [*Who has reached the armchair and seated himself, in a jolly voice*

which contrasts with his face] Yes, it seems incredible! I am savage at it I was detained, spite of all I could do!

Roxane By?

Cyrano A somewhat inopportune call

Roxane [*Absent minded, sewing*] Ah, yes some troublesome fellow!

Cyrano Cousin, it was a troublesome Madam

Roxane You excused yourself?

Cyrano Yes I said, "Your pardon, but this is Saturday, on which day I am due in a certain dwelling On no account do I ever fail Come back in an hour!"

Roxane [*Lightly*] Well, she will have to wait some time to see you I shall not let you go before evening

Cyrano Perhaps I shall have to go a little earlier

[*He closes his eyes and is silent a moment* SISTER MARTHA is seen crossing the park from the chapel to the terrace ROXANE sees her and beckons to her by a slight motion of her head]

Roxane [*To CYRANO*] Are you not going to tease Sister Martha today?

Cyrano [*Quickly, opening his eyes*] I am indeed! [*In a comically gruff voice*] Sister Martha, come nearer! [*The NUN demurely comes toward him*] Ha! ha! ha! Beautiful eyes, ever studying the ground!

Sister Martha [*Lifting her eyes and smiling*] But [*She sees his face and makes a gesture of surprise*] Oh!

Cyrano [*Low, pointing at ROXANE*] Hush! It is nothing! [*In a swaggering voice, aloud*] Yesterday, I ate meat!

Sister Martha I am sure you did! [*Aside*] That is why he is so pale! [*Quickly, low*] Come to the refectory presently I shall have ready for you there a good bowl of broth You will come!

Cyrano Yes, yes, yes

Sister Martha Ah, you are more reasonable today!

Roxane [*Hearing them whisper*] She is trying to convert you?

Sister Martha Indeed I am not!

Cyrano It is true, you, usually almost discursive in the holy cause, are reading me no sermon! You amaze me! [*With comical fury*] I will amaze you, too! Listen, you are authorized [*With the air of casting about in his mind, and finding the jest he wants*] Ah, now I shall amaze you! to pray for me, this evening in the chapel

Roxane Oh! oh!

Cyrano [*Laughing*] Sister Martha lost in amazement!

Sister Martha [*Gently*] I did not wait for your authorization

[*She goes in*]

Cyrano [*Turning to ROXANE, who is bending over her embroidery*] The devil, tapestry the devil, if I hope to live to see the end of you!

Roxane I was waiting for that jest

[*A slight gust of wind makes the leaves fall*]

Cyrano The leaves!

Roxane [*Looking up from her work and gazing off toward the avenues*] They are the russet gold of a Venetian beauty's hair Watch them fall!

Cyrano How consummately they do it! In that brief fluttering from bough

to ground, how they contrive still to put beauty! And though foredoomed to moulder upon the earth that draws them, they wish their fall invested with the grace of a free bird's flight!

Roxane Serious, you?

Cyrano [*Remembering himself*] Not at all, *Roxane*!

Roxane Come, never mind the falling leaves! Tell me the news, instead Where is my budget?

Cyrano Here it is!

Roxane Ah!

Cyrano [*Growing paler and paler, and struggling with pain*] Saturday, the nineteenth The King having filled his dish eight times with Cette preserves, and emptied it, was taken with a fever, his distemper, for high treason, was condemned to be let blood, and now the royal pulse is rid of febriculousity! Or Sunday at the Queen's great ball, were burned seven hundred and sixty three wax candles, our troops, it is said, defeated Austrian John, four sorcerers were hanged, Madame Athis's little dog had a distressing turn, the case called for a

Roxane Monsieur de Bergerac, leave out the little dog!

Cyrano Monday, nothing, or next to it, Lygdamire took a fresh lover

Roxane Oh!

Cyrano [*Over whose face is coming a change more and more marked*] Tuesday the whole Court assembled at Fontainebleau Wednesday, the fur Monglat said to Count Fiesco "No!" Thursday, Mancini, Queen of France, or little less Twenty fifth, the fair Monglat said to Count Fiesco "Yes!" And Saturday, the twenty-sixth [*He closes his eyes His head drops on his breast Silence*]

Roxane [*Surprised at hearing nothing further, turns, looks at him and starts to her feet in alarm*] Has he fainted? [*She runs to him, calling*] *Cyrano*!

Cyrano [*Opening his eyes, in a faint voice*] What is it? What is the matter! [*He sees ROXANE bending over him, hurriedly readjusts his hat, pulling it more closely over his head, and shrinks back in his armchair in terror*] No! no! I assure you, it is nothing! Do not mind me!

Roxane But surely

Cyrano It is merely the wound I received at Arras Sometimes you know even now

Roxane Poor friend!

Cyrano But it is nothing It will pass [*He smiles with effort*] It has passed

Roxane Each one of us has his wound I too have mine It is here, never to heal, that ancient wound [*She places her hand on her breast*] It is here, beneath the yellowing letter on which are still faintly visible tear-drops and drops of blood!

[*The light is beginning to grow less*]

Cyrano His letter? Did you not once say that some day you might show it to me?

Roxane Ah! Do you wish? His letter?

Cyrano Yes today I wish to

Roxane [*Handing him the little bag from her neck*] Here!

Cyrano I may open it?

Roxane Open it read!

[*She goes back to her embroidery frame, folds it up, orders her wools*]

Cyrano "Good-bye, Roxane! I am going to die!"

Roxane [*Stopping in astonishment*] You are reading it aloud?

Cyrano [*Reading*] "It is fated to come this evening, beloved, I believe! My soul is heavy, oppressed with love it had not time to utter and now Time is at end! Never again, never again shall my worshipping eyes "

Roxane How strangely you read his letter!

Cyrano [*Continuing*] " whose passionate revel it was, kiss in its fleeting grace your every gesture One, usual to you, of tucking back a little curl, comes to my mind and I cannot refrain from crying out "

Roxane How strangely you read his letter!

[*The darkness gradually increases*]

Cyrano " and I cry out Good-bye!"

Roxane You read it

Cyrano " my dearest, my darling, my treasure

Roxane in a voice

Cyrano " my love! "

Roxane in a voice a voice which I am not hearing for the first time!

[*ROXANE comes quietly nearer to him, without his seeing it, she steps behind his armchair, bends noiselessly over his shoulder, looks at the letter The darkness deepens*]

Cyrano " My heart never desisted for a second from your side and I am and shall be in the world that has no end, the one who loved you without measure, the one "

Roxane [*Laying her hand on his shoulder*] How can you go on reading? It is dark [*CYRANO starts, and turns round, sees her close to him, makes a gesture of dismay and hangs his head Then, in the darkness which has completely closed round them, she says slowly, clasping her hands*] And he, for fourteen years, has played the part of the comical old friend who came to cheer me!

Cyrano Roxane!

Roxane So it was you

Cyrano No, no, Roxane!

Roxane I ought to have divined it, if only by the way in which he speaks my name!

Cyrano No, it was not I!

Roxane So it was you!

Cyrano I swear to you

Roxane Ah, I detect at last the whole generous imposture The letters were yours!

Cyrano No!

Roxane The tender fancy, the dear folly, yours!

Cyrano No!

Roxane The voice in the night, was yours!

Cyrano I swear to you that it was not!

Roxane The soul was yours!

Cyrano I did not love you, no!

Roxane And you loved me!

Cyrano Not I it was the other!

Roxane You loved me!

Cyrano No!

Roxane Already your denial comes more faintly!

Cyrano No, no, my darling love, I did not love you!

Roxane Ah, how many things within the hour have died how many have been born! Why, why have been silent these long years, when on this letter, in which he had no part, the tears were yours?

Cyrano [*Handing her the letter*] Because the blood was his

Roxane Then why let the sublime bond of this silence be loosed today?

Cyrano Why?

[*Le Bret and RAGUENEAU enter running*]

Le Bret Madness! Monstrous madness! Ah, I was sure of it! There he is!

Cyrano [*Smiling and straightening himself*] *Tiens!* Where else?

Le Bret Madame, he is likely to have got his death by getting out of bed!

Roxane Merciful God! A moment ago, then that faintness that?

Cyrano It is true I had not finished telling you the news And on Saturday, the twenty-sixth, an hour after sundown, Monsieur de Bergerac died of murder done upon him [*He takes off his hat, his head is seen wrapped in bandages*]

Roxane What is he saying? *Cyrano*? Those bandages about his head? Ah, what have they done to you? Why?

Cyrano "Happy who falls, cut off by a hero, with an honest sword through his heart!" I am quoting from myself! Fate will have his laugh at us!

Here am I killed, in a trap, from behind, by a lackey, with a log! Nothing could be completer! In my whole life I shall have not had anything I wanted not even a decent death!

Ragueneau Ah, monsieur!

Cyrano Ragueneau, do not sob like that! [*Holding out his hand to him*] And what is the news with you, these latter days, fellow poet?

Ragueneau [*Through his tears*] I am candle snuffer at Molière's theatre

Cyrano Molière!

Ragueneau But I intend to leave no later than tomorrow Yes, I am indignant! Yesterday, they were giving Scapin, and I saw that he has appropriated a scene of yours

Le Bret A whole scene?

Ragueneau Yes, monsieur The one in which occurs the famous "What the devil was he doing in "

Le Bret Moliere has taken that from you!

Cyrano Hush! hush! He did well to take it! [*To RAGUENEAU*] The scene was very effective, was it not?

Ragueneau Ah, monsieur, the public laughed laughed!

Cyrano Yes, to the end, I shall have been the one who prompted and was forgotten! [*To ROXANE*] Do you remember that evening on which Christian spoke to you from below the balcony? There was the epitome of my life while I have stood below in darkness, others have climbed to gather the kiss and glory! It is well done, and on the brink of my grave I approve it. Moliere has genius. Christian was a fine fellow! [*At this moment, the chapel bell having rung, the NUNS are seen passing at the back, along the avenue, on their way to service*] Let them hasten to their prayers the bell is summoning them

Roxane [*Rising and calling*] Sister! Sister!

Cyrano [*Holding her back*] No! No! do not leave me to fetch anybody! When you came back I might not be here to rejoice [*The NUNS have gone into the chapel, the organ is heard*] I longed for a little music it comes in time!

Roxane I love you you shall live!

Cyrano No! for it is only in the fairy-tale that the shy and awkward prince when he hears the beloved say "I love you!" feels his ungainliness melt and drop from him in the sunshine of those words! But you would always know full well, dear heart, that there had taken place in your poor slave no beautifying change!

Roxane I have hurt you I have wrecked your life, I! I!

Cyrano You? The reverse! Woman's sweetness I had never known. My mother thought me unflattering. I had no sister. Later, I shunned Love's crossroad in fear of mocking eyes. To you I owe having had, at least, among the gentle and fair, a friend. Thanks to you there has passed across my life the rustle of a woman's gown.

Le Bret [*Calling his attention to the moonlight peering through the branches*] Your other friend, among the gentle and fair, is there she comes to see you!

Cyrano [*Smiling to the moon*] I see her!

Roxane I never loved but one and twice I lose him!

Cyrano Le Bret, I shall ascend into the opalescent moon, without need this time of a flying-machine!

Roxane What are you saying?

Cyrano Yes, it is there, you may be sure, I shall be sent for my Paradise. More than one soul of those I have loved must be apportioned there There I shall find Socrates and Galileo!

Le Bret [*In revolt*] No! No! It is too senseless, too cruel, too unfair! So true a poet! So great a heart! To die like this! To die!

Cyrano As ever Le Bret is grumbling!

Le Bret [*Bursting into tears*] My friend! My friend!

Cyrano [*Lifting himself, his eyes wild*] They are the Gascony Cadets!

Man in the gross Eh, yes! the weakness of the weakest point
Le Bret Learned even in his delirium!
Cyrano Copernicus said
Roxane Oh!
Cyrano But what the devil was he doing and what the devil was he
doing in that galley?

*Philosopher and physicist,
Musician, rhymester, duellist,
Explorer of the upper blue,
Retorter apt with point and point,
Lover as well,—not for his peace!
Here lies Hercule Savinien
De Cyrano de Bergerac,*

Who was everything but of account! But, your pardons, I must go
I wish to keep no one waiting See, a moonbeam, come to take me home!
[*He has dropped in his chair, ROXANE's weeping calls him back to reality, he
looks at her and gently strokes her mourning veil*] I do not wish Indeed,
I do not wish that you should sorrow less for Christian, the comely and
the kind! Only I wish that when the everlasting cold shall have seized upon
my fibres, this funereal veil should have a twofold meaning, and the mourn-
ing you wear for him be worn for me too a little!

Roxane I promise

Cyrano [*Seized with a great shivering, starts to his feet*] Not there! No!
Not in an elbow chair! [*All draw nearer to help him*] Let no one stay me!
No one! [*He goes and stands against the tree*] Nothing but this tree! [*Silence*]
She comes, Mors, the indiscriminate Madam! Already I am booted with
marble gauntleted with lead! [*He stuffs himself*] Ah, since she is on
her way, I will await her standing [*He draws his sword*] Sword in hand!

Le Bret *Cyrano*!

Roxane [*Swooning*] *Cyrano*!

[*All start back, terrified*]

Cyrano I believe she is looking at me that she dares to look at my nose,
the bony baggage who has none! [*He raises his sword*] What are you saying?
That it is no use? I know it! But one does not fight because there is hope
of winning! No! no! it is much finer to fight when it is no use!
What are all those? You are a thousand strong? Ah, I know you now
all my ancient enemies! Hypocrisy? [*He beats with his sword,
in the vacancy*] Take this! and this! Ha! Ha! Compromises? and Preju-
dices? and dastardly Expedients? [*He strikes*] That I should come to terms,
I? Never! Never! Ah, you are there too, you, bloated and pompous
Silliness! I know full well that you will lay me low at last: No matter
whilst I have breath, I will fight you, I will fight you, I will fight you! [*He
waves his sword in great sweeping circles, and stops, panting*] Yes, you have
wrested from me everything, laurel as well as rose Work your wills!
Spite of your worst, something will still be left me to take whither I go
and tonight when I enter God's house, in saluting, broadly will I sweep the

azure threshold with what in spite of all I carry forth unblemished and unbent
 [He starts forward, with lifted sword] and that is
 [The sword falls from his hands, he staggers, drops in the arms of LE BRET
 and RAGUENEAU]
 Roxane [Bending over him and kissing his forehead] That is?
 Cyrano [Opens his eyes again, recognizes her and says with a smile].
 My plume!

THE END

THE EMPEROR JONES¹

by Eugene O'Neill

Eugene Gladstone O'Neill was born in New York City in the year 1888, the son of the actor James O'Neill. He spent one year at Princeton, was at sea for two years, and attended Harvard, 1914-1915, where he became a member of Professor Baker's Workshop. In the summer of 1916, the Provincetown Players produced a number of his one-act plays, and with the production in 1920 of *Beyond the Horizon*, his first full length play, O'Neill became recognized as a dramatist of note. Of the many plays which he has written the following should be mentioned: *Beyond the Horizon*, *Anna Christie*, *Strange Interlude*, *The Hairy Ape*, *The Great God Brown*, and *Mourning Becomes Electra*. He has been awarded the Pulitzer Prize three times.

O'Neill's favorite theme is that of man struggling with inhibitions and frustrations. He is an artist of great boldness and sincerity. His vitality and fertility, together with his originality in choice of subject matter and treatment thereof, mark him as a modern. In his plays he stresses both stage effect and meaning. He has used effectively such devices as the tom tom in *The Emperor Jones*, and the masks in *The Great God Brown*. He can convey to his audience the terror of Jones as well as the despair of the Hairy Ape. Many of his situations are harsh, and many of his characters social outcasts, overwhelmed, and embittered. He is a critic of life, in the larger sense of that term.

CHARACTERS

BRUTUS JONES, *emperor*
 HENRY SMITHERS, *a Cockney trader*
 AN OLD NATIVE WOMAN
 LEM, *a native chief*
 SOLDIERS, *adherents of LEM*
 THE LITTLE FORMLESS FEARS
 JEFF
 THE NEGRO CONVICTS
 THE PRISON GUARD
 THE PLANTERS
 THE AUCTIONEER

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THE SLAVES
THE CONGO WITCH DOCTOR
THE CROCODILE GOD

(*The action of the play takes place on an island in the West Indies as yet not self determined by White Manne's The form of native government is, for the time being, an Empire*)

SCENES

- SCENE I *In the palace of the EMPEROR JONES Afternoon*
SCENE II *The edge of the Great Forest Dusk*
SCENE III *In the Forest Night*
SCENE IV *In the Forest Night*
SCENE V *In the Forest Night*
SCENE VI *In the Forest Night*
SCENE VII *In the Forest Night*
SCENE VIII *Same as Scene II—the edge of the Great Forest Dawn*

SCENE I

The audience chamber in the palace of the Emperor—a spacious, high-ceilinged room with bare, whitewashed walls The floor is of white tiles In the rear, to the left of center, a wide archway giving out on a portico with white pillars The palace is evidently situated on high ground for beyond the portico nothing can be seen but a vista of distant hills, their summits crowned with thick groves of palm trees In the right wall, center, a smaller arched doorway leading to the living quarters of the palace The room is bare of furniture with the exception of one huge chair made of uncut wood which stands at center, its back to rear This is very apparently the Emperor's throne It is painted a dazzling, eye-smiting scarlet There is a brilliant orange cushion on the seat and another smaller one is placed on the floor to serve as a footstool Strips of matting, dyed scarlet, lead from the foot of the throne to the two entrances

It is late afternoon but the sunlight still blazes yellowly beyond the portico and there is an oppressive burden of exhausting heat in the air

As the curtain rises, a native Negro woman sneaks in cautiously from the entrance on the right She is very old, dressed in cheap calico, barefooted, a red bandanna handkerchief covering all but a few stray wisps of white hair A bundle bound in colored cloth is carried over her shoulder on the end of a stick She hesitates beside the doorway, peering back as if in extreme dread of being discovered Then she begins to glide noiselessly, a step at a time, toward the doorway in the rear At this moment, SMITHERS appears beneath the portico

SMITHERS is a tall, stoop-shouldered man about forty His bald head, perched on a long neck with an enormous Adam's apple, looks like an egg The tropics have tanned his naturally pasty face with its small, sharp features

to a sickly yellow, and native rum has painted his pointed nose to a startling red His little, washy-blue eyes are red-rimmed and dart about him like a fever's His expression is one of unscrupulous meanness, cowardly and dangerous He is dressed in a worn riding suit of dirty white drill, puttees, spurs, and wears a white cork helmet A cartridge belt with an automatic revolver is around his waist He carries a riding whip in his hand He sees the woman and stops to watch her suspiciously Then, making up his mind, he steps quickly on tiptoe into the room The woman, looking back over her shoulder continually, does not see him until it is too late When she does SMITHERS springs forward and grabs her firmly by the shoulder She struggles to get away, fiercely but silently

Smithers [Tightening his grasp—roughly] Easy! None o' that, me birdie You can't wriggle out, now I got me 'ooks on yer

Woman [Seeing the uselessness of struggling, gives way to frantic terror, and sinks to the ground, embracing his knees supplicatingly] No tell him! No tell him, Mister!

Smithers [With great curiosity] Tell 'im? [Then scornfully] Oh, you mean 'is bloomin' Majesty What's the game, any'ow? What are you sneakin' away for? Been stealin' a bit, I s'pose [He taps her bundle with his riding whip significantly]

Woman [Shaking her head vehemently] No, me no steal

Smithers Bloody liar! But tell me what's up There's somethin' funny goin' on I smelled it in the air first thing I got up this mornin' You blacks are up to some devilment This palace of 'is is like a bleedin' tomb Where's all the 'ands? [The woman keeps sullenly silent SMITHERS raises his whip threateningly] Ow, yer won't, won't yer? I'll show yer what's what

Woman [Coweringly] I tell, Mister You no hit They go—all go [She makes a sweeping gesture toward the hills in the distance]

Smithers Run away—to the 'ills?

Woman Yes, Mister Him Emperor—Great Father [She touches her forehead to the floor with a quick mechanical jerk] Him sleep after eat Then they go—all go Me old woman Me left only Now me go too

Smithers [His astonishment giving way to an immense, mean satisfaction] Ow! So that's the ticket! Well, I know bloody well wot's in the air—when they runs orf to the 'ills The tom tom'll be thumpin' out there bloomin' soon [With extreme vindictiveness] And I'm bloody glad of it for one! Serve 'im right! Puttin' on airs, the stinkin' nigger! 'Is Majesty! Gawd blimey! I only 'opes I'm there when they takes 'im out to shoot 'im [Suddenly] 'E's still 'ere all right, ain't 'e?

Woman Him sleep

Smithers 'E's bound to find out soon as 'e wakes up 'E's cunnin' enough to know when 'is time's come [He goes to the doorway on right and whistles shrilly with his fingers in his mouth The old woman springs to her feet and runs out of the doorway, rear SMITHERS goes after her, reaching for his revolver] Stop or I'll shoot! [Then stopping—indifferently] Pop orf then, if yer like, yer black cow [He stands in the doorway, looking after her JONES enters

from the right He is a tall, powerfully-built, full-blooded Negro of middle age His features are typically negroid, yet there is something decidedly distinctive about his face—an underlying strength of will, a hardy, self-reliant confidence in himself that inspires respect His eyes are alive with a keen, cunning intelligence In manner he is shrewd, suspicious, evasive He wears a light blue uniform coat, sprayed with brass buttons, heavy gold chevrons on his shoulders, gold braid on the collar, cuffs, etc His pants are bright red with a light blue stripe down the side Patent leather laced boots with brass spurs, and a belt with a long-barreled, pearl-handled revolver in a holster complete his make up Yet there is something not altogether ridiculous about his grandeur He has a way of carrying it off]

Jones [Not seeing any one—greatly irritated and blinking sleepily—shouts] Who dare whistle dat way in my palace? Who dare wake up de Emperor? I'll git de hide frayed off some o' you niggers sho'!

Smithers [Showing himself—in a manner half-afraid and half-defiant] It was me whistled to yer [As JONES frowns angrily] I got news for yer

Jones [Putting on his suavest manner, which fails to cover up his contempt for the white man] Oh, it's you, Mister Smithers [He sits down on his throne with easy dignity] What news you got to tell me?

Smithers [Coming close to enjoy his discomfiture] Don't yer notice nothin' funny today?

Jones [Coldly] Funny? No I ain't perceived nothin' of de kind!

Smithers Then yer ain't so foxy as I thought yer was Where's all your court?—[sarcastically]—the Generals and the Cabinet Ministers and all?

Jones [Imperturbably] Where dey mostly runs to minute I closes my eyes—drinkin' rum and talkin' big down in de town [Sarcastically] How come you don't know dat? Ain't you ousin' with 'em most every day?

Smithers [Stung, but pretending indifference—with a wink] That's part of the day's work I got ter—ain't I—in my business?

Jones [Contemptuously] Yo' business!

Smithers [Imprudently enraged] Gawd blimey, you was glad enough for me ter take yer in on it when you landed here first You didn' 'ave no 'igh and mighty airs in them days!

Jones [His hand going to his revolver like a flash—menacingly] Talk polite, white man! Talk polite, you heah me! I'm boss heah now, is you forgettin'? *[The Cockney seems about to challenge this last statement with the facts but something in the other's eyes holds and cows him]*

Smithers [In a cowardly whine] No 'arm meant, old top

Jones [Condescendingly] I accepts yo' apology [Let's his hand fall from his revolver] No use'n you rakin' up ole times What I was den is one thing What I is now's another You didn't let me in on yo' crooked work out o' no kind feelin's dat time I done de dirty work fo' you—and most o' de brain work, too, fo' dat matter—and I was wu'th money to you, dat's de reason

Smithers Well, blimey, I give yer a start, didn't I?—when no one else would. I wasn't afraid to 'ire you like the rest was—'count of the story about your breakn' jail back in the States

Jones No, you didn't have no s'cuse to look down on me fo' dat You been in jail you'self more'n once

Smithers [*Furiously*] It's a lie! [*Then trying to pass it off by an attempt at scorn*] Garn! Who told yer that fairy tale?

Jones Dey's some tings I ain't got to be tole I kin see 'em in folk's eyes [*Then after a pause—meditatively*] Yes, you sho' give me a start And it didn't take long from dat time to git dese fool, woods' niggers right where I wanted dem [*With pride*] From stowaway to Emperor in two years! Dat's goin' some!

Smithers [*With curiosity*] And I bet you got yer pile o' money 'id safe some place

Jones [*With satisfaction*] I sho' has! And it's in a foreign bank where no pusson don't ever git it out but me no matter what come You didn't s'pose I was holdin' down dis Emperor job for de glory in it, did you? Sho'! De fuss and glory part of it, dat's only to turn de heads o' de low-flung, bush niggers dat's here Dey wants de big circus show for deir money I gives it to 'em an' I gits de money [*With a grin*] De long green, dat's me every time! [*Then rebukingly*] But you ain't got no kick agin me, Smithers I'se paid you back all you done for me many times Ain't I pertected you and winked at all de crooked tradin' you been doin' right out in de broad day? Sho' I has—and me makin' laws to stop it at de same time! [*He chuckles*]

Smithers [*Grimacing*] But, meanin' no 'arm, you been grabbin' right and left yourself, ain't yer? Look at the taxes you've put on 'em! Blimey! You've squeezed 'em dry!

Jones [*Chuckling*] No, dey ain't *all* dry yet I'se still heah, ain't I?

Smithers [*Smiling at his secret thought*] They're dry right now, you'll find out [*Changing the subject abruptly*] And as for me breakin' laws, you've broke 'em all yerself just as fast as yer made 'em

Jones Ain't I de Emperor? De laws don't go for him [*Judicially*] You heah what I tells you, Smithers Dere's little stealin' like you does, and dere's big stealin' like I does For de little stealin' dey gits you in jail soon or late For de big stealin' dey makes you Emperor and puts you in de Hall o' Fame when you croaks [*Reminiscently*] If dey's one thing I learns in ten years on de Pullman ca's listenin' to de white quality talk, it's dat same fact And when I gits a chance to use it I winds up Emperor in two years

Smithers [*Unable to repress the genuine admiration of the small fry for the large*] Yes, yer turned the bleedin' trick, all right Blimey, I never seen a bloke 'as 'ad de bloomin' luck you 'as

Jones [*Severely*] Luck? What you mean—luck?

Smithers I suppose you'll say as that swank about the silver bullet ain't luck—and that was what first got the fool blacks on yer side the time of the revolution, wasn't it?

Jones [*With a laugh*] Oh, dat silver bullet! Sho' was luck! But I makes dat luck, you heah? I loads de dice! Yessuh! When dat murderin' nigger ole Lem hired to kill me takes aim ten feet away and his gun misses fire and I shoots him dead, what you heah me say?

Smithers You said yer'd got a charm so's no lead bullet'd kill yer You was

so strong only a silver bullet could kill yer, you told 'em Blimey, wasn't that swank for yer—and plain, fat-'eaded luck?

Jones [*Proudly*] I got brains and I uses 'em quick. Dat ain't luck.

Smithers Yer know they wasn't 'ardly liable to get no silver bullets. And it was luck 'e didn't 'it you that time.

Jones [*Laughing*] And dere all dem fool bush niggers was kneelin' down and bumpin' deir heads on de ground like I was a miracle out o' de Bible. Oh, Lawd, from dat time on I has dem all eatin' out of my hand. I cracks de whip and dev jumps through.

Smithers [*With a sniff*] Yankee bluff done it.

Jones Ain't a man's talkin' big what makes him big—long as he makes folks believe it? Sho', I talks large when I ain't got nothin' to back it up, but I ain't talkin' wild just de same. I knows I kin fool 'em—I *knows* it—and dat's backin' enough fo' my game. And ain't I got to learn deir lingo and teach some of dem English befo' I kin talk to 'em? Ain't dat wuk? You ain't never learned ary word er it, Smithers, in de ten years you been heah, dough you knows it's money in you' pocket tradin' wid 'em if you does. But you'se too shiftless to take de trouble.

Smithers [*Flushing*] Never mind about me. What's this I've 'eard about yer really 'avin' a silver bullet molded for yourself?

Jones It's playin' out my bluff. I has de silver bullet molded and I tells 'em when de times comes I kills myself wid it. I tells 'em dat's 'cuse I'm de on'y man in de world big enuff to git me. No use'n deir tryin'. And dey falls down and bumps deir heads. [*He laughs*] I does dat so's I kin take a walk in peace widout no jealous nigger gunnin' at me from behind de trees.

Smithers [*Astonished*] Then you 'ad it made—'onest?

Jones Sho' did. Heah she be. [*He takes out his revolver, breaks it, and takes the silver bullet out of one chamber*] Five lead an' dis silver baby at de last. Don't she shine pretty? [*He holds it in his hand, looking at it admiringly, as if strangely fascinated*]

Smithers Let me see. [*Reaches out his hand for it*]

Jones [*Harshly*] Keep yo' hands whar dey b'long, white man. [*He replaces it in the chamber and puts the revolver back on his hip*]

Smithers [*Snarling*] Gawd blimey! Think I'm a bleedin' thief, you would.

Jones No, 'tain't dat. I knows you'se scared to steal from me. On'y I ain't 'lowin' nary body to touch dis baby. She's my rabbit's foot.

Smithers [*Sneering*] A bloomin' charm, wot? [*Venomously*] Well, you'll need all de bloody charms you 'as before long, s' 'elp me!

Jones [*Judicially*] Oh, I'se good for six months yit 'fore dey gits sick o' my game. Den, when I sees trouble comin', I makes my getaway.

Smithers Ho! You got it all planned, ain't yer?

Jones I ain't no fool. I knows dis Emperor's time is sho't. Dat why I make hay when de sun shine. Was you thinkin' I'se aimin' to hold down dis job for life? No, suh! What good is gittin' money if you stays back in dis raggedy country? I wants action when I spends. And when I sees dese niggers gittin' up deir nerve to tu'n me out, and I'se got all de money in sight, I resigns on de spot and beats it quick.

Smithers Where to?

Jones None o' yo' business

Smithers Not back to the bloody States, I'll lay my oath

Jones [*Suspiciously*] Why don't I? [*Then with an easy laugh*] You mean 'count of dat story 'bout me breakin' from jail back dere? Dat's all talk

Smithers [*Skeptically*] Ho, yes!

Jones [*Sharply*] You ain't 'sinuatin' I'se a liar, is you?

Smithers [*Hastily*] No, Gawd strike me! I was only thinkin' o' the bloody ies you told the blacks 'ere about killin' white men in the States

Jones [*Angered*] How come dey're lies?

Smithers You'd 'ave been in jail if you 'ad, wouldn't yer then? [*With venom*] And from what I've 'eard, it ain't 'ealthy for a black to kill a white man in the States They burns 'em in oil, don't they?

Jones [*With cool deadliness*] You mean lynchin' 'd scare me? Well, I tells you, *Smithers*, maybe I does kill one white man back dere Maybe I does And maybe I kills another right heah 'fore long if he don't look out

Smithers [*Trying to force a laugh*] I was on'y spoofin' yer Can't yer take a joke? And you was just sayin' you'd never been in jail

Jones [*In the same tone—slightly boastful*] Maybe I goes to jail dere for gettin' in an argument wid razors ovah a crap game Maybe I gits twenty years when dat colored man die Maybe I gits in 'nother argument wid de prison guard was overseer ovah us when we're wukin' de road Maybe he hits me wid a whip and I splits his head wid a shovel and runs away and files de chain off my leg and gits away safe Maybe I does all dat an' maybe I don't It's a story I tells you so's you knows I'se de kind of man dat if you evah repeats one word of it, I ends yo' stealin' on dis yearth mighty damn quick!

Smithers [*Terrified*] Think I'd peach on yer? Not me! Ain't I always been yer friend?

Jones [*Suddenly relaxing*] Sho' you has—and you better be

Smithers [*Recovering his composure—and with it his malice*] And just to show yer I'm yer friend, I'll tell yer that bit o' news I was goin' to

Jones Go ahead! Shoot de piece Must be bad news from de happy way you look

Smithers [*Warningly*] Maybe it's gettin' time for you to resign—with that bloomin' silver bullet, wot? [*He finishes with a mocking grin*]

Jones [*Puzzled*] What's dat you say? Talk plain

Smithers Ain't noticed any of the guards or servants about the place today, I 'aven't

Jones [*Carelessly*] Dey're all out in de garden sleepin' under de trees When I sleeps, dey sneaks a sleep, too, and I pretends I never suspicions it All I got to do is to ring de bell and dey come flyin', makin' a bluff dey was wukin' all de time

Smithers [*In the same mocking tone*] Ring the bell now an' you'll bloody well see what I means

Jones [*Startled to alertness, but preserving the same careless tone*] Sho' I rings [*He reaches below the throne and pulls out a big, common dinner bell which is painted the same vivid scarlet as the throne He rings this vigorously*

—then stops to listen Then he goes to both doors, rings again, and 'ooks out |

Smuthers [*Watching him with malicious satisfaction, after a pause—mockingly*] The bloody ship is sinkin' an' the bleedin' rats 'is slung their 'ooks

Jones [*In a sudden fit of anger flings the bell clattering into a corner*] Low flung, woods' niggers! [*Then catching SMUTHERS' eye on him, he controls himself and suddenly bursts into a low chuckling laugh*] Reckon I overplays my hand dis once! A man can't take de pot on a bob tailed flush all de time W is I sayin' I'd sit in six months mo'? Well, I'se changed my mind den I cashes in and resigns de job of Emperor right dis minute

Smuthers [*With real admiration*] Blimey, but you're a cool bird, and no mistake

Jones No use'n fussin' When I knows de game's up I kisses it good-by wid out no long waits Dey've all run off to de hills, ain't dey?

Smuthers Yes—every bleedin' man jack of 'em

Jones Den de revolution is at de post And de Emperor better git his feet smokin' up de trail [*He starts for the door in rear*]

Smuthers Goin' out to look for your 'orse? Yer won't find any They steals the 'orses first thing Mine was gone when I went for 'im this mornin' That's wot first give me a suspicion of wot was up

Jones [*Alarmed for a second, scratches his head, then philosophically*] Well, den I hoofs it Feet do yo' duty! [*He pulls out a gold watch and looks at it*] Three-thuty Sundown's at six-thuty or dereabouts [*Puts his watch back—with cool confidence*] I got plenty o' time to make it easy

Smuthers Don't be so bloomin' sure of it They'll be after you 'ot and 'eivy Ole Lem is at de bottom o' this business an' 'e 'ates you like 'ell 'E'd rather do for you than eat 'is dinner, 'e would!

Jones [*Scornfully*] Dat fool no count nigger! Does you think I'se scared o him? I stands him on his thick head more'n once befo' dis, and I does it again if he comes in my way— [*Fiercely*] And dis time I leave him a dead nigger fo' sho'!

Smuthers You'll 'ave to cut through the big forest—an' these blacks 'ere can sniff and follow a trail in the dark like 'ounds You'd 'ave to 'ustle to get through that forest in twelve hours even if you knew all the bloomin' trails like a native

Jones [*With indignant scorn*] Look-a-herh, white man! Does you think I'se a natural bo'n fool? Give me credit fo' havin' some sense, fo' Lawd's sake! Don't you s'pose I'se looked ahead and made sho' of all de chances? I'se gone out in dat big forest, pretendin' to hunt, so many times dat I knows it high an' low like a book I could go through on dem trails wid my eyes shut [*With great contempt*] Think dese ign'rent bush niggers dat ain't got brains enuff to know deir own names even can catch Brutus Jones? Huh, I s'pects not! Not on yo' life! Why, man, de white men went after me wid bloodhounds where I come from an' I jes' laughs at 'em It's a shame to fool dese black trash round heah dey're so easy You watch me, man I'll make dem look sick, I will I'll be 'cross de plain to de edge of de forest by time dark comes Once in de woods in de night, dey got a swell chance o' findin' dis baby! Dawn tomorrow I'll be out at de oder side and on de coast whar dat French gunboat is stayin' She

picks me up, takes me to Martinique when she go dar, and dere I is safe wid a mighty big bankroll in my jeans It's easy as rollin' off a log

Smithers [*Maliciously*] But s'posin' somethin' 'appens wrong an' they do nab yer?

Jones [*Decisively*] Dey don't—dat's de answer

Smithers But, just for argyment's sake—what'd you do?

Jones [*Frowning*] I'se got five lead bullets in dis gun good enuff fo' com mon bush niggers—and after dat I got de silver bullet left to cheat 'em out o' gittin' me

Smithers [*Jeeringly*] Ho, I was fergettin' that silver bullet You'll bump yourself orf in style, won't yer? Blimey!

Jones [*Gloomily*] You kin bet yo' whole roll on one thing, white man Dis baby plays out his string to de end and when he quits, he quits wid a bang de way he ought Silver bullet ain't none too good for him when he go dat's a fac'! [*Then shaking off his nervousness—with a confident laugh*] Sho! What is I talkin' about? Ain't come to dat yit and I never will—not wid trash niggers like dese yere [*Boastfully*] Silver bullet bring me luck anyway I kin outguess, outrun, outfight, an' outplay de whole lot o' dem all ovah de board any time o' de day er night! You watch me! [*From the distant hills comes the faint, steady thump of a tom-tom, low and vibrating It starts at a rate exactly corresponding to normal pulse beat—72 to the minute—and continues at a gradually accelerating rate from this point uninterruptedly to the very end of the play*]

Jones [*Starts at the sound A strange look of apprehension creeps into his face for a moment as he listens Then he asks, with an attempt to regain his most casual manner*] What's dat drum beatin' fo'?

Smithers [*With a mean grin*] For you That means the bleedin' ceremony 'as started I've 'eard it before and I knows

Jones Cer'mony? What cer'mony?

Smithers The blacks is 'oldin' a bloody meetin', 'avin' a war dance, gettin' heir courage worked up b'fore they starts after you

Jones Let dem! Dey'll sho' need it!

Smithers And they're there 'oldin' their 'eathen religious service—makin' no end of devil spells and charms to 'elp 'em against your silver bullet [*He guffaws loudly*] Blimey, but they're balmy as 'ell!

Jones [*A tiny bit awed and shaken in spite of himself*] Huh! takes more'n dat to scare dis chicken!

Smithers [*Scenting the other's feeling—maliciously*] Ternight when it's pitch black in the forest, they'll 'ave their pet devils and ghosts 'oundin' after you You'll find yer bloody 'air'll be standin' on end before termorrow mornin' [*Seriously*] It's a bleedin' queer place, that stinkin' forest, even in daylight Yer don't know what might 'appen in there, it's that rotten still Always sends the cold shivers down my back minute I gets in it

Jones [*With a contemptuous sniff*] I ain't no chicken-liver like you is Trees an' me, we'se friends, and dar's a full moon comin' bring me light And let dem po' niggers make all de fool spells dey'se a min' to Does yo' 'spect I'se

silly enuff to b'lieve in ghosts an' ha'n'ts an' all dat ole woman's talk? G'long, white man! You ain't talkin' to me [*With a chuckle*] Doesn't you know dey's got to do wid a man was member in good standin' o' de Baptist Church? Sho' I was dat when I was porter on de Pullmans, befo' I gits into my little trouble. Let dem try deir heathen tricks. De Baptist Church done peect me and land dem all in hell [*Then with more confident satisfaction*] And I'se got little silver bullet o' my own, don't forgit!

Smithers Ho! You 'aven't give much 'eed to your Baptist Church since you been down 'ere. I've 'eard myself you 'ad turned yer coat an' was takin' up with their blarsted witch doctors, or whatever the 'ell yer calls the swine.

Jones [*Vehemently*] I pretends to! Sho' I pretends! Dat's p'rt o' my game from de fust. If I finds out dem niggers believes dat black is white, den I yells it out louder 'n deir loudest. It don't git me nothin' to do missionary work for de Baptist Church. I'se after de coin, an' I lays my Jesus on de shelf for de time bein' [*Stops abruptly to look at his watch—alertly*] But I ain't got de time to waste on no more fool talk wid you. I'se gwine away from heah dis secon' [*He reaches in under the throne and pulls out an expensive Panama hat with a bright multicolored band and sets it jauntily on his head*] So long, white man! [*With a grin*] See you in jail sometime, maybe!

Smithers Not me, you won't. Well, I wouldn't be in yer bloody boots for no bloomin' money, but 'ere's wishin' yer luck just the same.

Jones [*Contemptuously*] You're de frightenedest man evah I see! I tells you I'se safe's 'f I was in New York City. It takes dem niggers from now to dark to git up de nerve to start somethin'. By dat time, I'se got a head start dey never kotch up wid.

Smithers [*Maliciously*] Give my regards to any ghosts yer meets up with.

Jones [*Grinning*] If dat ghost got money, I'll tell him never ha'n't you less'n he wants to lose it.

Smithers [*Flattered*] Garn! [*Then curiously*] Ain't yer takin' no luggage with yer?

Jones I travels light when I wants to move fast. And I got tinned grub buried on de edge o' de forest [*Boastfully*] Now say dat I don't look ahead an' use my brains! [*With a wide, liberal gesture*] I will all dat's left in de palace to you—and you better grab all you kin sneak away wid befo' dey gits here.

Smithers [*Gratefully*] Righto—and thanks ter yer [*As JONES walks toward the door in rear—cautioningly*] Say! Look 'ere, you ain't goin' out that way, are yer?

Jones Does you think I'd slink out de back door like a common nigger? I'se Emperor yit, ain't I? And de Emperor Jones leaves de way he comes, and dat black trash don't dare stop him—not yit, leastways [*He stops for a moment in the doorway, listening to the far-off but insistent beat of the tom-tom*] Lis ten to dat roll-call, will you? Must be mighty big drum carry dat far [*Then with a laugh*] Well, if dey ain't no whole brass band to see me off, I sho' got de drum part of it. So long, white man [*He puts his hands in his pockets and with studied carelessness, whistling a tune, he saunters out of the doorway and off to the left*]

Smithers [Looks after him with a puzzled admiration] 'E's got 'is bloomin' nerve with 'im, s'elp me! [Then angrily] Ho—the bleedin' nigger—puttin' on 'is bloody airs! I 'opes they nabs 'im an' gives 'im what's what!

CURTAIN

SCENE II

The end of the plain where the Great Forest begins The foreground is sandy, level ground dotted by a few stones and clumps of stunted bushes cowering close against the earth to escape the buffeting of the trade wind In the rear the forest is a wall of darkness dividing the world Only when the eye becomes accustomed to the gloom can the outlines of separate trunks of the nearest trees be made out, enormous pillars of deeper blackness A somber monotone of wind lost in the leaves moans in the air Yet this sound serves but to intensify the impression of the forest's relentless immobility, to form a background throwing into relief its brooding, implacable silence

[JONES enters from the left, walking rapidly He stops as he nears the edge of the forest, looks around him quickly, peering into the dark as if searching for some familiar landmark Then, apparently satisfied that he is where he ought to be, he throws himself on the ground, dog tired] Well, heah I is In de nick o' time, too! Little mo' an' it'd be blacker'n de ace of spades heah—abouts [He pulls a bandanna handkerchief from his hip pocket and mops off his perspiring face] Sho'! Gimme air! I'se tuckered out sho' 'nuff Dat soft Emperor job ain't no trainin' fo' a long hike ovah dat plain in de brilin' sun [Then with a chuckle] Cheer up, nigger, de worst is yet to come [He lifts his head and stares at the forest His chuckle peters out abruptly In a tone of awe] My goodness, look at dem woods, will you? Dat no count Smithers said dey'd be black an' he sho' called de turn [Turning away from them quickly and looking down at his feet, he snatches at a chance to change the subject—solicitously] Feet, you is holdin' up yo' end fine an' I sutinly hopes you ain't blisterin' none It's time you git a rest [He takes off his shoes, his eyes studiously avoiding the forest He feels of the soles of his feet gingerly] You is still in de pink—on'y a little mite feverish Cool yo'selfs Remember you done got a long journey yit befo' you [He sits in a weary attitude, listening to the rhythmic beating of the tom-tom He grumbles in a loud tone to cover up a growing uneasiness] Bush niggers! Wonder dey wouldn't git sick o' beatin' dat drum Sound louder, seem like I wonder if dey's startin' after me? [He scrambles to his feet, looking back across the plain] Couldn't see dem now, nohow, if dey was hundred feet away [Then shaking himself like a wet dog to get rid of these depressing thoughts] Sho', dey's miles an' miles behind What you git tin' fidgery about? [But he sits down and begins to lace up his shoes in great haste, all the time muttering reassuringly] You know what? Yo' belly is empty, dat's what's de matter wid you Come time to eat! Wid nothin' but wind on vo' stumach, o' course you feels juggedy Well, we eats right heah an' now

soon's I gits dese pesky shoes laced up [*He finishes lacing up his shoes*] Dere! Now le's see! [*Gets on his hands and knees and searches the ground around him with his eyes*] White stone, white stone, where is you? [*He sees the first white stone and crawls to it—with satisfaction*] Heah you is! I knowed dis was de right place Box of grub, come to me [*He turns over the stone and feels in under it—in a tone of dismay*] Ain't heah! Gorry, is I in de right place or isn't I? Dere's 'nother stone Guess dat's it [*He scrambles to the next stone and turns it over*] Ain't heah, neither! Grub, whar is you? Ain't heah Gorry, has I got to go hungry into dem woods—all de night? [*While he is talking he scrambles from one stone to another, turning them over in frantic haste Finally, he jumps to his feet excitedly*] Is I lost de place? Must have! But how dat happen when I was followin' de trail across de plain in broad daylight? [*Almost plaintively*] I'se hungry, I is! I gotta git my feed Whar's my strength gonna come from if I doesn't? Gorry, I gotta find dat grub high 'n' low some how! Why it come dark so quick like dat? Can't see nothin' [*He scratches a match on his trousers and peers about him The rate of the beat of the far-off tom-tom increases perceptibly as he does so He mutters in a bewildered voice*] How come all dese white stones come heah when I only remembers one? [*Suddenly, with a frightened gasp, he flings the match on the ground and stamps on it*] Nigger, is you gone crazy mad? Is you lightin' matches to show dem whar you is? Fo' Lawd's sake, use yo' haid Gorry, I'se got to be careful! [*He stares at the plain behind him apprehensively, his hand on his revolver*] But how come all dese white stones? And whar's dat tin box o' grub I hid all wrapped up in oilcloth? [*While his back is turned, the LITTLE FORMLESS FEARS creep out from the deeper blackness of the forest They are black, shapeless, only their glittering little eyes can be seen If they have any describable form at all it is that of a grubworm about the size of a creeping child They move noiselessly, but with deliberate, painful effort, striving to raise themselves on end, failing and sinking prone again JONES turns about to face the forest He stares up at the trees, seeking vainly to discover his whereabouts by then conformation*]

Can't tell nothin' from dem trees! Gorry, nothin' 'round heah looks like I evah seed it befo' I'se done lost de place sho' 'nuff! [*With mournful foreboding*] It's mighty queer! It's mighty queer! [*With sudden forced defiance—in an angry tone*] Woods, is you tryin' to put somethin' ovah on me? [*From the formless creatures on the ground in front of him comes a tiny gale of low mocking laughter like a rustling of leaves They squirm upward toward him in twisted attitudes JONES looks down, leaps backward with a yell of terror, yanking out his revolver as he does so—in a quavering voice*]

What's dat? Who's dar? What is you? Git away from me befo' I shoots you up! You don't?— [*He fires There is a flash, a loud report, then silence broken only by the far-off, quickened throb of the tom tom The formless creatures have scurried back into the forest JONES remains fixed in his position, listening intently The sound of the shot, the reassuring feel of the revolver in his hand, have somewhat restored his shaken nerve He addresses himself with renewed confidence*]

Dey're gone Dat shot fix 'em Dey was only little animals—little wild pigs,

I reckon Dey've maybe rooted out yo' grub an' eat it Sho', you fool nigger, what you think dey is—ha'nts? [*Excitedly*] Gorry, you give de game away when you fire dat shot Dem niggers heah dat fo' su'tu'! Time you beat it in de woods widout no long waits [*He starts for the forest—hesitates before the plunge—then urging himself in with manful resolution*] Git in, nigger! What you skeered at? Ain't nothin' dere but de trees! G t in! [*He plunges boldly into the forest*]

SCENE III

In the forest The moon has just risen Its beams, drifting through the canopy of leaves, make a barely perceptible, suffused, eerie glow A dense low wall of underbrush and creepers is in the nearer foreground, fencing in a small triangular clearing Beyond this is the massed blackness of the forest like an encompassing barrier A path is dimly discerned leading down to the clearing from left, rear and winding away from it again toward the right As the scene opens nothing can be distinctly made out Except for the beating of the tom-tom, which is a trifle louder and quicker than at the close of the previous scene, there is silence, broken every few seconds by a queer, clicking sound Then gradually the figure of the Negro, JEFF, can be discerned crouching on his haunches, at the rear of the triangle He is middle-aged, thin, brown in color, is dressed in a Pullman porter's uniform and cap He is throwing a pair of dice on the ground before him, picking them up, shaking them, casting them out with the regular, rigid, mechanical movements of an automaton The heavy, plodding footsteps of some one approaching along the trail from the left are heard and JONES' voice, pitched on a slightly higher key and strained in a cheery effort to overcome its own tremors

De moon's rizen Does you heah dat, nigger? You gits more light from dis out No mo' buttin' yo' fool head agin' de trunks an' scratchin' de hide off yo' legs in de bushes Now you sees whar yo'se gwine So cheer up! From now on you has a snap [*He steps just to the rear of the triangular clearing and mops off his face on his sleeve He has lost his Panama hat His face is scratched, his brilliant uniform shows several large rents*] What time's it gittin' to be, I wonder? I dissent light no match to find out Phoo' It's wa'm an' dat's a fac'! [*Wearily*] How long I been makin' tracks in dese woods? Must be hours an' hours Seems like fo'evah! Yit can't be, when de moon's jes' riz Dis am a long night fo' yo', yo' Majesty! [*With a mournful chuckle*] Majesty! Der ain't much majesty 'bout dis baby now [*With attempted cheerfulness*] Never min' It's all part o' de game Dis night come to an end like everything else And when you gits dar safe and has dat bankroll in yo' hands you laughs at all dis [*He starts to whistle but checks himself abruptly*] What yo' whistlin' for, you po' dope! Want all de worl' to heah you? [*He stops talking to listen*] Heah dat ole drum! Sho' gits nearer from de sound Dey's packin' it along wid 'em Time fo' me to move [*He takes a step forward, then stops—worriedly*] What's dat odder queer clickety sound I heah? Dere it is! Sound close! Sound

like—sound like— Fo' God's sake, sound like some nigger was shootin' crap! [*Frightenedly*] I better beat it quick when I gits dem notions [*He walks quickly into the clear space—then stands transfixed as he sees* JEFF—in a terrified gasp] Who dar? Who dat? Is dat you, Jeff? [*Starting toward the other, forgetful for a moment of his surroundings and really believing it is a living man that he sees—in a tone of happy relief*] Jeff! I'se sho' mighty glad to see you! Dey tol' me you done died from dat razor cut I gives you [*Stopping suddenly, bewilderedly*] But how you come to be heih, nigger? [*He stares fascinatedly at the other who continues his mechanical play with the dice* JONES' eyes begin to roll wildly *He stutters*] Ain't you gwine—look up—can't you speak to me? Is you—is you—a ha'nt? [*He jerks out his revolver in a frenzy of terrified rage*] Nigger, I kills you dead once Has I got to kill you ag'in? You take it den [*He fires When the smoke clears away, JEFF has disappeared* JONES stands trembling—then with a certain reassurance] He's gone, anyway Ha'nt or not ha'nt, dat shot fix him [*The beat of the far-off tom-tom is perceptibly louder and more rapid* JONES becomes conscious of it—with a start, looking back over his shoulder] Dey's gittin' near! Dey's comin' fast! And heah I is shootin' shots to let 'em know jes' whar I is! Oh, Gorry, I'se got to run [*Forgetting the path he plunges wildly into the underbrush in the rear and disappears in the shadow*]

SCENE IV

In the forest A wide dirt road runs diagonally from right, front, to left, rear Rising sheer on both sides the forest walls it in The moon is now up Under its light the road glimmers ghastly and unreal It is as if the forest had stood aside momentarily to let the road pass through and accomplish its veiled purpose This done, the forest will fold in upon itself again and the road will be no more

[JONES stumbles in from the forest on the right His uniform is ragged and torn He looks about him with numbed surprise when he sees the road, his eyes blinking in the bright moonlight He flops down exhaustedly and pants heavily for a while Then with sudden anger] I'm meltin' wid heat! Runnin' an' runnin' an' runnin'! Damn dis heah coat! Like a straitjacket! [*He tears off his coat and flings it away from him, revealing himself stripped to the waist*] Dere! Dat's better! Now I kin breathe! [*Looking down at his feet, the spurs catch his eye*] And to hell wid dese high-fangled spurs Dey're what's been a-trippin' me up an' breakin' my neck [*He unstraps them and flings them away disgustedly*] Dere! I gits rid o' dem frippety Emperor trappin's an' I travels lighter Lawd! I'se tired! [*After a pause, listening to the insistent beat of the tom-tom in the distance*] I must 'a' put some distance between myself an' dem—runnin' like dat—and yit—dat damn drum sounds jes' de same—nearer, even Well, I guess I a'most holds my lead anyhow Dey won't never catch up [*With a sigh*] If on'y my fool legs stands up Oh, I'se sorry I evah went in for dis Dat Emperor job is sho' hard to shake [*He looks around him*]

suspiciously] How'd dis road evah git heah? Good level road, too I never remembers seein' it befo' [*Shaking his head apprehensively*] Dese woods is sho' full o' de queerest things at night [*With a sudden terror*] Lawd God, don't let me see no more o' dem ha'nts! Dey gits my goat! [*Then trying to talk himself into confidence*] Ha'nts! You fool nigger, dey ain't no such things Don't de Baptist parson tell you dat many time? Is you civilized, or is you like dese ign'rent black niggers heah? Sho'! Dat was all in yo' own head Wasn't nothin' dere Wasn't no Jeff! Know what? You jes' get seein' dem things 'cause yo' belly's empty and you's sick wid hunger inside Hunger 'fects yo' head and yo' eyes Any fool know dat [*Then pleading fervently*] But bless God, I don't come across no more o' dem, whatever dey is! [*Then cautiously*] Rest! Don't talk! Rest! You needs it Den you gits on yo' way again [*Looking at the moon*] Night's half gone a'most You hits de coast in de mawning! Den yo's all safe [*From the right forward a small gang of Negroes enter They are dressed in striped convict suits, their heads are shaven, one leg drags limpingly, shackled to a heavy ball and chain Some carry picks, the others shovels They are followed by a white man dressed in the uniform of a prison guard A Winchester rifle is slung across his shoulder and he carries a heavy whip At a signal from the GUARD they stop on the road opposite where JONES is sitting JONES, who has been staring up at the sky, unmindful of their noiseless approach, suddenly looks down and sees them His eyes pop out, he tries to get to his feet and fly, but sinks back, too numbed by fright to move His voice catches in a choking prayer*] Lawd Jesus! [*The PRISON GUARD cracks his whip—noiselessly—and at that signal all the convicts start to work on the road They swing their picks, they shovel, but not a sound comes from their labor Their movements, like those of JEFF in the preceding scene, are those of automatons—rigid, slow, and mechanical The PRISON GUARD points sternly at JONES with his whip, motions him to take his place among the other shovelers JONES gets to his feet in a hypnotized stupor He mumbles subserviently*] Yes, suh! Yes, suh! I'se comin' [*As he shuffles, dragging one foot, over to his place, he curses under his breath with rage and hatred*] God damn yo' soul, I gits even wid you yit, some time [*As if there were a shovel in his hands he goes through weary, mechanical gestures of digging up dirt, and throwing it to the roadside Suddenly the GUARD approaches him angrily, threateningly He raises his whip and lashes JONES viciously across the shoulders with it JONES winces with pain and cowers abjectly The GUARD turns his back on him and walks away contemptuously Instantly JONES straightens up With arms upraised as if his shovel were a club in his hands, he springs murderously at the unsuspecting GUARD In the act of crashing down his shovel on the white man's skull, JONES suddenly becomes aware that his hands are empty He cries despairingly*] Whar's my shovel? Gimme my shovel 'til I splits his damn head! [*Appealing to his fellow convicts*] Gimme a shovel, one o' you, fo' God's sake! [*They stand fixed in motionless attitudes, their eyes on the ground The GUARD seems to wait expectantly, his back turned to the attacker JONES bellows with baffled, terrified rage, tugging frantically at his revolver*] I kills you, you white debil, if it's de last thing I evah does! Ghost or debil, I kill you agin! [*He frees the revolver and fires point-blank at the GUARD's back Instantly the walls of the forest close in*

from both sides, the road and the figures of the convict gang are blotted out in an ensnouding darkness. The only sounds are a crashing in the underbrush as JONES leaps away in mad flight and the throbbing of the tom tom, still faint, but increased in volume of sound and rapidity of beat.]

SCENE V

A large circular clearing, enclosed by the serried ranks of gigantic trunks of tall trees whose tops are lost to view. In the center is a big dead stump worn by time into a curious resemblance to an auction block. The moon floods the clearing with a clear light. JONES forces his way in through the forest on the left. He looks wildly about the clearing with hunted, fearful glances. His pants are in tatters, his shoes cut and misshapen, flapping about his feet. He slinks cautiously to the stump in the center and sits down in a tense position, ready for instant flight. Then he holds his head in his hands and rocks back and forth, moaning to himself miserably.

Oh, Lawd, Lawd! Oh, Lawd, Lawd! [*Suddenly he throws himself on his knees and raises his clasped hands to the sky—in a voice of agonized pleading.*] Lawd Jesus, heah my prayer! I se a po' sinner, a po' sinner! I knows I done wrong, I knows it! When I cottes Jeff cheatin' wid loaded dice my inger overcomes me and I kills him deid! Lawd, I done wrong! When dat guerd hits me wid de whip, my inger overcomes me, and I kills him deid. Lawd, I done wrong! And down heh whar dese fool bush niggers raises me up to de seat o' de mighty, I steals all I could grab. Lawd, I done wrong! I knows it! I se sorry! Forgive me, Lawd! Forgive dis po' sinner! [*Then beseeching terrifiedly.*] And keep dem away, Lawd! Keep dem away from me! And stop dat dium soundin' in my ears! Dat begin to sound ha'nted, too. [*He gets to his feet, evidently slightly reassured by his prayer—with attempted confidence.*] De Lawd'll preserve me from dem ha'nts after dis. [*Sits down on the stump again.*] I ain't skeered o' real men. Let dem come. But dem odders— [*He shudders—then looks down at his feet, working his toes inside the shoes—with a groan.*] Oh, my po' feet! Dem shoes ain't no use no more 'ceptin' to hurt. I'se better off wid-out dem. [*He unlaces them and pulls them off—holds the wrecks of the shoes in his hands and regards them mournfully.*] You was real, A-one patin' leather, too. Look at you now. Emperor, you'se gittin' mighty low! [*He sighs dejectedly and remains with bowed shoulders, staring down at the shoes in his hands as if reluctant to throw them away. While his attention is thus occupied, a crowd of figures silently enter the clearing from all sides. All are dressed in Southern costumes of the period of the fifties of the last century. There are middle aged men who are evidently well-to-do planters. There is one spruce, authoritative individual—the AUCTIONEER. There is a crowd of curious spectators, chiefly young belles and dandies who have come to the slave-market for diversion. All exchange courtly greetings in dumb show and chat silently together. There is something stiff, rigid, unreal, marionettish about their movements. They group themselves about the stump. Finally a batch of slaves is led in from the left by*

an attendant—three men of different ages, two women, one with a baby in her arms, nursing. They are placed to the left of the stump, beside JONES. The white planters look them over appraisingly as if they were cattle, and exchange judgments on each. The dandies point with their fingers and make witty remarks. The belles titter bewitchingly. All this in silence save for the ominous throb of the tom-tom. The AUCTIONEER holds up his hand, taking his place at the stump. The group strain forward attentively. He touches JONES on the shoulder peremptorily, motioning for him to stand on the stump—the auction block. JONES looks up, sees the figures on all sides, looks wildly for some opening to escape, sees none, screams and leaps madly to the top of the stump to get as far away from them as possible. He stands there, cowering, paralyzed with horror. The AUCTIONEER begins his silent spiel. He points to JONES, appeals to the planters to see for themselves. Here is a good field hand, sound in wind and limb as they can see. Very strong still in spite of his being middle-aged. Look at that back. Look at those shoulders. Look at the muscles in his arms and his sturdy legs. Capable of any amount of hard labor. Moreover, of a good disposition, intelligent, and tractable. Will any gentleman start the bidding? The PLANTERS raise their fingers, make their bids. They are apparently all eager to possess JONES. The bidding is lively, the crowd interested. While this has been going on, JONES has been seized by the courage of desperation. He dares to look down and around him. Over his face abject terror gives way to mystification, to gradual realization—stutteringly.] What you all doin', white folks? What's all dis? What you all lookin' at me fo'? What you don' wid me, anyhow? [Suddenly convulsed with raging hatred and fear.] Is dis a auction? Is you sellin' me like dey uster befo' de war? [Jerking out his revolver just as the AUCTIONEER knocks him down to one of the planters—glaring from him to the purchaser.] And you sells me? And you buys me? I shows you I'se a free nigger, damn yo' souls! [He fires at the AUCTIONEER and at the PLANTER with such rapidity that the two shots are almost simultaneous. As if this were a signal the walls of the forest fold in. Only blackness remains and silence broken by JONES as he rushes off, crying with fear—and by the quickened, ever louder beat of the tom tom.]

SCENE VI

A cleared space in the forest. The limbs of the trees meet over it forming a low ceiling about five feet from the ground. The interlocked ropes of creepers reaching upward to entwine the tree trunks give an arched appearance to the sides. The space thus enclosed is like the dark, noisome hold of some ancient vessel. The moonlight is almost completely shut out and only a vague wan light filters through. There is the noise of some one approaching from the left, stumbling and crawling through the undergrowth. JONES' voice is heard between chattering moans

Oh, Lawd, what I gwine do now? Ain't got no bullet left on'y de silver one. If mo' o' dem ha'nts come after me, how I gwine skeer dem away? Oh, Lawd,

on'y de silver one left—an' I gotta save dat fo' luck If I shoots dat one I'm a goner sho'! Lawd, it's black heah! Whar's de moon? Oh, Lawd, don't dis night evah come to an end? *[By the sounds, he is feeling his way cautiously forward]* Dere! Dis feels like a clear space I gotta lie down an' rest I don't care if dem niggers does cotch me I gotta rest *[He is well forward now where his figure can be dimly made out His pants have been so torn away that what is left of them is no better than a breech cloth He flings himself full length, face downward on the ground, panting with exhaustion Gradually it seems to grow lighter in the enclosed space and two rows of seated figures can be seen behind JONES They are sitting in crumpled, despairing attitudes, hunched, facing one another with their backs touching the forest walls as if they were shackled to them All are Negroes, naked save for loin cloths At first they are silent and motionless Then they begin to sway slowly forward toward each and back again in unison, as if they were laxly letting themselves follow the long roll of a ship at sea At the same time, a low, melancholy murmur rises among them, increasing gradually by rhythmic degrees which seem to be directed and controlled by the throb of the tom tom in the distance, to a long, tremulous wail of despair that reaches a certain pitch, unbearably acute, then falls by slow gradations of tone into silence and is taken up again JONES starts, looks up, sees the figures, and throws himself down again to shut out the sight A shudder of terror shakes his whole body as the wail rises up about him again But the next time, his voice, as if under some uncanny compulsion, starts with the others As their chorus lifts he rises to a sitting posture similar to the others, swaying back and forth His voice reaches the highest pitch of sorrow, of desolation The light fades out, the other voices cease, and only darkness is left JONES can be heard scrambling to his feet and running off, his voice sinking down the scale and receding as he moves farther and farther away in the forest The tom tom beats louder, quicker, with a more insistent, triumphant pulsation]*

SCENE VII

The foot of a gigantic tree by the edge of a great river A rough structure of boulders, like an altar, is by the tree The raised river bank is in the nearer background Beyond this the surface of the river spreads out, brilliant and unruffled in the moonlight, blotted out and merged into a veil of bluish mist in the distance JONES' voice is heard from the left rising and falling in the long, despairing wail of the chained slaves, to the rhythmic beat of the tom-tom As his voice sinks into silence, he enters the open space The expression of his face is fixed and stony, his eyes have an obsessed glare, he moves with a strange deliberation like a sleep-walker or one in a trance He looks around at the tree, the rough stone altar, the moonlit surface of the river beyond, and passes his hand over his head with a vague gesture of puzzled bewilderment Then, as if in obedience to some obscure impulse, he sinks into a kneeling, devotional posture before the altar Then

he seems to come to himself partly, to have an uncertain realization of what he is doing, for he straightens up and stares about him horrifiedly—in an incoherent mumble

What—what is I doin'? What is—dis place? Seems like I know dat tree—
an' dem stones—an' de river I remember—seems like I been heah befo'
[Tremblingly] Oh, Gorrry, I'se skeered in dis place! I'se skeered Oh, Lawd,
perfect dis sinner! [Crawling away from the altar, he cowers close to the
ground, his face hidden, his shoulders heaving with sobs of hysterical fight
From behind the trunk of the tree, as if he had sprung out of it, the figure of
the CONGO WITCH-DOCTOR appears He is wizened and old, naked except for
the fur of some small animal tied about his waist, its bushy tail hanging down
in front His body is stained all over a bright red Antelope horns are on each
side of his head, branching upward In one hand he carries a bone rattle, in the
other a charm stick with a bunch of white cockatoo feathers tied to the end A
great number of glass beads and bone ornaments are about his neck, ears,
wrists, and ankles He struts noiselessly with a queer prancing step to a posi-
tion in the clear ground between JONES and the altar Then with a preliminary,
summoning stamp of his foot on the earth, he begins to dance and to chant
As if in response to his summons the beating of the tom-tom grows to a fierce,
exultant boom whose throbs seem to fill the air with vibrating rhythm JONES
looks up, starts to spring to his feet, reaches a half kneeling, half-squatting po-
sition and remains rigidly fixed there, paralyzed with awed fascination by this
new apparition The WITCH-DOCTOR sways, stamping with his foot, his bone
rattle clicking the time His voice rises and falls in a weird, monotonous croon,
without articulate word divisions Gradually his dance becomes clearly one of
a narrative in pantomime, his croon is an incantation, a charm to allay the
fierceness of some implacable deity demanding sacrifice He flees, he is pur-
sued by devils, he hides, he flees again Ever wilder and wilder becomes his
flight, nearer and nearer draws the pursuing evil, more and more the spirit of
terror gains possession of him His croon, rising to intensity, is punctuated by
shrill cries JONES has become completely hypnotized His voice joins in the in-
cantation, in the cries, he beats time with his hands and sways his body to and
fro from the waist The whole spirit and meaning of the dance has entered
into him, has become his spirit Finally the theme of the pantomime halts on
a howl of despair, and is taken up again in a note of savage hope There is a
salvation The forces of evil demand sacrifice They must be appeased The
WITCH-DOCTOR points with his wand to the sacred tree, to the river beyond, to
the altar, and finally to JONES with a ferocious command JONES seems to sense
the meaning of this It is he who must offer himself for sacrifice He beats his
forehead abjectly to the ground, moaning hysterically] Mercy, O Lawd!
Mercy! Mercy on dis po' sinner [The WITCH-DOCTOR springs to the river
bank He stretches out his arms and calls to some God within its depths Then
he starts backward slowly, his arms remaining out A huge head of a crocodile
appears over the bank and its eyes, glittering greenly, fasten upon JONES He
stares into them fascinatedly The WITCH-DOCTOR prances up to him, touches
him with his wand, motions with hideous command toward the waiting mon-

ster JONES squirms on his belly nearer and nearer, moaning continually] Mercy, Lawd! Mercy! [The crocodile heaves more of his enormous hulk onto the land JONES squirms toward him The WITCH DOCTOR's voice shrills out in furious exultation, the tom tom beats madly JONES cries out in a fierce, exhausted spasm of anguished pleading] Lawd, save me! Lawd Jesus, heah my prayer! [Immediately, in answer to his prayer, comes the thought of the one bullet left him He snatches at his hip, shouting defiantly] De silver bullet! You don't git me yit! [He fires at the green eyes in front of him The head of the crocodile sinks back behind the river bank, the WITCH-DOCTOR springs behind the sacred tree and disappears JONES lies with his face to the ground, his arms outstretched, whimpering with fear as the throb of the tom tom fills the silence about him with a somber pulsation, a baffled but revengeful power]

SCENE VIII

Dawn Same as Scene II, the dividing line of forest and plain The nearest tree trunks are dimly revealed but the forest behind them is still a mass of glooming shadow The tom-tom seems on the very spot, so loud and continuously vibrating are its beats

LEM enters from the left, followed by a small squad of his soldiers, and by the Cockney trader, SMITHERS LEM is a heavy-set, ape faced old savage of the extreme African type, dressed only in a loin cloth A revolver and cartridge belt are about his waist His soldiers are in different degrees of rag-concealed nakedness All wear broad palm leaf hats Each one carries a rifle SMITHERS is the same as in Scene I One of the soldiers, evidently a tracker, is peering about keenly on the ground He points to the spot where JONES entered the forest LEM and SMITHERS come to look

Smithers [After a glance, turns away in disgust] That's where 'e went in right enough Much good it'll do yer 'E's miles orf by this an' safe to the Coast, damn 's 'ide! I tole yer yer'd lose 'im, didn't I?—wastin' the 'ole bloom-in' night beatin' yer bloody drum and castin' yer silly spells! Gawd blimey, wot a pack!

Lem [Gutturally] We cotch him [He makes a motion to his soldiers who squat down on their haunches in a semi circle]

Smithers [Exasperatedly] Well, ain't yer goin' in an' 'unt 'im in the woods? What the 'ell's the good of waitin'?

Lem [Imperturbably—squatting down himself] We cotch him

Smithers [Turning away from him contemptuously] Aw! Garn! 'E's a better man than the lot o' you put together I 'ates the sight o' 'im but I'll say that for 'im [A sound comes from the forest The soldiers jump to their feet cocking their rifles alertly LEM remains sitting with an imperturbable expression, but listening intently He makes a quick signal with his hand His followers creep quickly into the forest, scattering so that each enters at a different spot]

Smithers You ain't thinkin' that would be 'im, I 'ope?

Lem [*Calmly*] We cotch him

Smithers Blarsted fat 'eads! [*Then after a second's thought—wonderingly*] Still an' all, it might 'appen If 'e lost 'is bloody way in these stinkin' woods 'e'd likely turn in a circle without 'is knowin' it

Lem [*Peremptorily*] Sssh! [*The reports of several rifles sound from the forest, followed a second later by savage, exultant yells. The beating of the tom tom abruptly ceases. LEM looks up at the white man with a grin of satisfaction*] We cotch him Him dead

Smithers [*With a snarl*] 'Ow d'yer know it's 'im an' 'ow d'yer know 'e's dead?

Lem My mens dey got um silver bullets Lead bullet no kill him He got um strong charm I cook um money, make um silver bullet, make um strong charm, too

Smithers [*Astonished*] So that's wot you was up to all night, wot? You was scared to put after 'im till you'd molded silver bullets, eh?

Lem [*Simply stating a fact*] Yes Him got strong charm Lead no good

Smithers [*Slapping his thigh and guffawing*] Haw haw! If yer don't beat all 'ell [*Then recovering himself—scornfully*] I'll bet yer it ain't 'im they shot at all, yer bleedin' looney!

Lem [*Calmly*] Dey come bring him now [*The soldiers come out of the forest, carrying JONES' limp body. He is dead. They carry him to LEM, who examines his body with great satisfaction*]

Smithers [*Leans over his shoulder—in a tone of frightened awe*] Well, they did for yer right enough, Jonesy, me lad! Dead as a 'erring! [*Mockingly*] Where's yer 'igh an' mighty airs now, yer bloomin' Majesty? [*Then with a grin*] Silver bullets! Gawd blimey, but yer died in the 'eight o' style, any'ow!

CURTAIN

STRIFE¹

A DRAMA IN THREE ACTS

by John Galsworthy

A brief discussion of Galsworthy's work is on page 107

CHARACTERS

JOHN ANTHONY, *Chairman of the Trenartha Tin Plate Works*

EDGAR ANTHONY, *his son,*

FREDERIC H WILDER,

WILLIAM SCANTLEBURY,

OLIVER WANKLIN,

HENRY TENCH, *Secretary of the same*

FRANCIS UNDERWOOD, C E, *Manager of the same*

} *Directors of the same*

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SIMON HARNESS, *a Trades Union official*

DAVID ROBERTS,

JAMES GREEN,

JOHN BULGIN,

HENRY THOMAS,

GEORGE ROUS,

HENRY ROUS,

LEWIS,

JAGO,

EVANS,

A BLACKSMITH,

DAVIES,

A RED HAired YOUTH,

BROWN,

FROST, *valet to John Anthony*

ENID UNDERWOOD, *wife of Francis Underwood, daughter of John Anthony*

ANNIE ROBERTS, *wife of David Roberts*

MADGE THOMAS, *daughter of Henry Thomas*

MRS ROUS, *mother of George and Henry Rous*

MRS BULGIN, *wife of John Bulgin*

MRS YEO, *wife of a workman*

A PARLORMAID to the Underwoods

JAN, *Madge's brother, a boy of ten*

A CROWD OF MEN ON STRIKE

the workmen's committee

*workmen at the Trenartha Tin
Plate Works*

ACT I

It is noon In the UNDERWOODS' dining-room a bright fire is burning On one side of the fireplace are double-doors leading to the drawing-room, on the other side a door leading to the hall In the center of the room a long dining-table without a cloth is set out as a Board table At the head of it, in the Charman's seat, sits JOHN ANTHONY, an old man, big, clean shaven, and high-colored, with thick white hair, and thick dark eyebrows His movements are rather slow and feeble, but his eyes are very much alive There is a glass of water by his side On his right sits his son EDGAR, an earnest-looking man of thirty, reading a newspaper Next him WANKLIN, a man with putting eyebrows, and silver-streaked light hair, is bending over transfer papers TENCH, the Secretary, a short and rather humble, nervous man, with side whiskers, stands helping him On WANKLIN's right sits UNDERWOOD, the Manager, a quiet man, with a long, stiff jaw, and steady eyes Back to the fire is SCANTLEBURY, a very large, pale, sleepy man, with gray hair, rather bald Between him and the Charman are two empty chairs

Wilder [Who is lean, cadaverous, and complaining, with drooping gray mustaches, stands before the fire] I say, this fire's the devil! Can I have a screen, Tench?

Scantlebury A screen, ah!

Tench Certainly, Mr Wilder [*He looks at UNDERWOOD*] That is—perhaps the Manager—perhaps Mr Underwood—

Scantlebury These fireplaces of yours, Underwood—

Underwood [*Roused from studying some papers*] A screen? Rather! I'm sorry [*He goes to the door with a little smile*] We're not accustomed to complaints of too much fire down here just now [*He speaks as though he holds a pipe between his teeth, slowly, ironically*]

Wilder [*In an injured voice*] You mean the men H'm! [*UNDERWOOD goes out*]

Scantlebury Poor devils

Wilder It's their own fault, Scantlebury

Edgar [*Holding out his paper*] There's great distress among them, according to the *Trenartha News*

Wilder Oh, that rag! Give it to Wanklin Suit his Radical views They call us monsters, I suppose The editor of that rubbish ought to be shot

Edgar [*Reading*] "If the Board of worthy gentlemen who control the Trenartha Tin Plate Works from their arm-chairs in London would condescend to come and see for themselves the conditions prevailing amongst their work people during this strike—"

Wilder Well, we *have* come

Edgar [*Continuing*] "We cannot believe that even their leg of-mutton hearts would remain untouched" [*WANKLIN takes the paper from him*]

Wilder Ruffian! I remember that fellow when he hadn't a penny to his name, little snivel of a chap that's made his way by blackguarding everybody who takes a different view to himself [*ANTHONY says something that is not heard*]

Wilder What does your father say?

Edgar He says "The kettle and the pot"

Wilder H'm! [*He sits down next to SCANTLEBURY*]

Scantlebury [*Blowing out his cheeks*] I shall boil if I don't get that screen [*UNDERWOOD and ENID enter with a screen, which they place before the fire* ENID is tall, she has a small, decided face, and is twenty-eight years old]

Enid Put it closer, Frank Will that do, Mr Wilder? It's the highest we've got

Wilder Thanks, capitally

Scantlebury [*Turning, with a sigh of pleasure*] Ah! Merci, Madame!

Enid Is there anything else you want, Father? [*ANTHONY shakes his head*]
Edgar—anything?

Edgar You might give me a "J" nib, old girl

Enid There are some down there by Mr Scantlebury

Scantlebury [*Handing a little box of nibs*] Ah! your brother uses "J's" What does the manager use? [*With expansive politeness*] What does your husband use, Mrs Underwood?

Underwood A quill!

Scantlebury The homely product of the goose [*He holds out quills*]

Underwood [*Drily*] Thanks, if you can spare me one [*He takes a quill*]
What about lunch, Enid?

Emd [*Stopping at the double-doors and looking back*] We're going to have lunch here, in the drawing-room, so you needn't hurry with your meeting [*WANKLIN and WILDER bow, and she goes out*]

Scantlebury [*Rousing himself, suddenly*] Ah! Lunch! That hotel— Dreadful! Did you try the whitebait last night? Fried fat!

Wilder Past twelve! Aren't you going to read the minutes, Tench?

Tench [*Looking for the CHAIRMAN'S assent, reads in a rapid and monotonous voice*] 'At a Board Meeting held the 31st of January at the Company's Offices, 512, Cannon Street, E.C. Present—Mr Anthonv in the chair Messrs F H Wilder, William Scantlebury, Oliver Wanklin, and Edgar Anthony Read letters from the Manager dated January 20th, 23d, 25th, 28th, relative to the strike at the Company's Works Read letters to the Manager of January 21st, 24th, 26th, 29th Read letter from Mr Simon Harness, of the Central Union, asking for an interview with the Board Read letter from the Men's Committee, signed David Roberts, James Green, John Bulgin, Henry Thomas, George Rous, desiring conference with the Board, and it was resolved that a special Board Meeting be called for February 7th at the house of the Manager, for the purpose of discussing the situation with Mr Simon Harness and the Men's Committee on the spot Passed twelve transfers, signed and sealed nine certificates and one balance certificate" [*He pushes the book over to the CHAIRMAN*]

Anthony [*With a heavy sigh*] If it's your pleasure, sign the same [*He signs, moving the pen with difficulty*]

Wanklin What's the Union's game, Tench? They haven't made up their split with the men What does Harness want this interview for?

Tench Hoping we shall come to a compromise, I think, sir, he's having a meeting with the men this afternoon

Wilder Harness! Ah! He's one of those cold-blooded, cool-headed chaps I distrust them I don't know that we didn't make a mistake to come down What time'll the men be here?

Underwood Any time now

Wilder Well, if we're not ready, they'll have to wait—won't do them any harm to cool their heels a bit

Scantlebury [*Slowly*] Poor devils! It's snowing *What weather!*

Underwood [*With meaning slowness*] This house'll be the warmest place they've been in this winter

Wilder Well, I hope we're going to settle this business in time for me to catch the 6.30 I've got to take my wife to Spain tomorrow [*Chatily*] My old father had a strike at his works in '69, just such a February as this They wanted to shoot him

Wanklin What! In the close season?

Wilder By George, there was no close season for employers then! He used to go down to his office with a pistol in his pocket

Scantlebury [*Faintly alarmed*] Not seriously?

Wilder [*With finality*] Ended in his shootin' one of 'em in the legs

Scantlebury [*Unavoidably feeling his thigh*] No? Which?

Anthony [*Lifting the agenda paper*] To consider the policy of the Board in relation to the strike [*There is a silence*]

Wilder It's this infernal three cornered duel—the Union, the men, and our selves

Wanklin We needn't consider the Union

Wilder It's my experience that you've always got to consider the Union, con found them! If the Union were going to withdraw their support from the men, as they've done, why did they ever allow them to strike at all?

Edgar We've had that over a dozen times

Wilder Well, I've never understood it! It's beyond me They talk of the engi neers' and furnacemen's demands being excessive—so they are—but that's not enough to make the Union withdraw their support What's behind it?

Underwood Fear of strikes at Harper's and Tinewell's

Wilder [*With triumph*] Afraid of other strikes—now, that's a reason! Why couldn't we have been told that before?

Underwood You were

Tench You were absent from the Board that day, sir

Scantlebury The men must have seen they had no chance when the Union gave them up It's madness

Underwood It's Roberts!

Wilder Just our luck, the men finding a fanatical firebrand like Roberts for leader [*A pause*]

Wanklin [*Looking at ANTHONY*] Well?

Wilder [*Breaking in fussily*] It's a regular mess I don't like the position we're in, I don't like it, I've said so for a long time [*Looking at WANKLIN*] When Wanklin and I came down here before Christmas it looked as if the men must collapse You thought so too, Underwood

Underwood Yes

Wilder Well, they haven't! Here we are, going from bad to worse—losing our customers—shares going down!

Scantlebury [*Shaking his head*] M'm! M'm!

Wanklin What loss have we made by this strike, Tench?

Tench Over fifty thousand, sir!

Scantlebury [*Pained*] You don't say!

Wilder We shall never get it back

Tench No, sir

Wilder Who'd have supposed the men were going to stick out like this—nobody suggested that [*Looking angrily at TENCH*]

Scantlebury [*Shaking his head*] I've never liked a fight—never shall

Anthony No surrender! [*All look at him*]

Wilder Who wants to surrender? [*ANTHONY looks at him*] I—I want to act reasonably When the men sent Roberts up to the Board in December—then was the time We ought to have humored him, instead of that the Chairman—[*Dropping his eyes before ANTHONY's*—er—we snapped his head off We could have got them in then by a little tact

Anthony No compromise!

Wilder There we are! This strike's been going on now since October, and as far as I can see it may last another six months Pretty mess we shall be in by then The only comfort is, the men'll be in a worse!

Edgar [To UNDERWOOD] What sort of state are they really in, Frank?

Underwood [Without expression] Damnable!

Wilder Well, who on earth would have thought they'd have held on like this without support!

Underwood Those who know them

Wilder I defy any one to know them! And what about tin? Price going up daily When we do get started we shall have to work off our contracts at the top of the market

Wanklin What do you say to that, Chairman?

Anthony Can't be helped!

Wilder Shan't pay a dividend till goodness knows when!

Scantlebury [With emphasis] We ought to think of the shareholders [Turning heavily] Chairman, I say we ought to think of the shareholders [ANTHONY mutters]

Scantlebury What's that?

Tench The Chairman says he is thinking of you, sir

Scantlebury [Sinking back into torpor] Cynic!

Wilder It's past a joke I don't want to go without a dividend for years if the Chairman does We can't go on playing ducks and drakes with the Company's prosperity

Edgar [Rather ashamedly] I think we ought to consider the men [All but ANTHONY fidget in their seats]

Scantlebury [With a sigh] We mustn't think of our private feelings, young man That'll never do

Edgar [Ironically] I'm not thinking of our feelings I'm thinking of the men's

Wilder As to that—we're men of business

Wanklin That is the little trouble

Edgar There's no necessity for pushing things so far in the face of all this suffering—it's—it's cruel [No one speaks, as though EDGAR had uncovered something whose existence no man prizing his self-respect could afford to recognize]

Wanklin [With an ironical smile] I'm afraid we mustn't base our policy on luxuries like sentiment

Edgar I detest this state of things

Anthony We didn't seek the quarrel

Edgar I know that, sir, but surely we've gone far enough

Anthony No [All look at one another]

Wanklin Luxuries apart, Chairman, we must look out what we're doing

Anthony Give way to the men once and there'll be no end to it

Wanklin I quite agree, but— [ANTHONY shakes his head] You make it a question of bedrock principle? [ANTHONY nods] Luxuries again, Chairman! The shares are below par

Wilder Yes, and they'll drop to a half when we pass the next dividend

Scantlebury [With alarm] Come, come! Not so bad as that

Wilder [Grimly] You'll see! [Craning forward to catch ANTHONY's speech] I didn't catch—

Tench [*Hesitating*] The Chairman says, sir, "Fais que—que—devra—"

Edgar [*Sharply*] My father says "Do what we ought—and let things rip"

Wilder 'Tcha!

Scantlebury [*Throwing up his hands*] The Chairman's a Stoic—I always said the Chairman was a Stoic

Wilder Much good that'll do us

Wanklin [*Suavely*] Seriously, Chairman, are you going to let the ship sink under you, for the sake of—a principle?

Anthony She won't sink

Scantlebury [*With alarm*] Not while I'm on the Board, I hope

Anthony [*With a twinkle*] Better rat, Scantlebury

Scantlebury What a man!

Anthony I've always fought them, I've never been beaten yet

Wanklin We're with you in theory, Chairman But we're not all made of cast-iron

Anthony We've only to hold on

Wilder [*Rising and going to the fire*] And go to the devil as fast as we can!

Anthony Better go to the devil than give in!

Wilder [*Fretfully*] That may suit you, sir, but it doesn't suit me, or any one else, I should think [*ANTHONY looks him in the face—a silence*]

Edgar I don't see how we can get over it 'that to go on like this means starvation to the men's wives and families [*WILDER turns abruptly to the fire, and SCANTLEBURY puts out a hand to push the idea away*]

Wanklin I'm afraid again that sounds a little sentimental

Edgar Men of business are excused from decency, you think?

Wilder Nobody's more sorry for the men than I am, but if they [*lashing himself*] choose to be such a pig-headed lot, it's nothing to do with us, we've quite enough on *our* hands to think of ourselves and the shareholders

Edgar [*Irritably*] It won't kill the shareholders to miss a dividend or two, I don't see that *that's* reason enough for knuckling under

Scantlebury [*With grave discomfort*] You talk very lightly of your dividends, young man, I don't know where we are

Wilder There's only one sound way of looking at it We can't go on ruining *ourselves* with this strike

Anthony No caving in!

Scantlebury [*With a gesture of despair*] Look at him! [*ANTHONY is leaning back in his chair They do look at him*]

Wilder [*Returning to his seat*] Well, all I can say is, if that's the Chairman's view, I don't know what we've come down here for

Anthony To tell the men that we've got nothing for them— [*Grimly*] They won't believe it till they hear it spoken in plain English

Wilder H'm! Shouldn't be a bit surprised if that brute Roberts hadn't got us down here with the very same idea I hate a man with a grievance

Edgar [*Resentfully*] We didn't pay him enough for his discovery I always said that at the time

Wilder We paid him five hundred and a bonus of two hundred three years later If that's not enough! What does he want, for goodness' sake?

Tench [*Complainingly*] Company made a hundred thousand out of his brains, and paid him seven hundred—that's the way he goes on, sir

Wilder The man's a rank agitator! Look here, I hate the Unions But now we've got Harness here let's get him to settle the whole thing

Anthony No! [*Again they look at him*]

Underwood Roberts won't let the men assent to that

Scantlebury Fanatic! Fanatic!

Wilder [*Looking at ANTHONY*] And not the only one! [*FROST enters from the hall*]

Frost [*To ANTHONY*] Mr Harness from the Union, waiting, sir The men are here too, sir [*ANTHONY nods UNDERWOOD goes to the door, returning with HARNESS, a pale, clean-shaven man with hollow cheeks, quick eyes, and lantern jaw—FROST has retired*]

Underwood [*Pointing to TENCH's chair*] Sit there next the Chairman, Harness, won't you? [*At HARNESS's appearance, the Board have drawn together, as it were, and turned a little to him, like cattle at a dog*]

Harness [*With a sharp look round, and a bow*] Thanks! [*He sits—his accent is slightly nasal*] Well, gentlemen, we're going to do business at last, I hope

Wilder Depends on what you call business, Harness Why don't you make the men come in?

Harness [*Sardonically*] The men are far more in the right than you are The question with us is whether we shan't begin to support them again [*He ignores them all except ANTHONY, to whom he turns in speaking*]

Anthony Support them if you like, we'll put in free labor and have done with it

Harness That won't do, Mr Anthony You can't get free labor, and you know it

Anthony We shall see that

Harness I'm quite frank with you We were forced to withhold our support from your men because some of their demands are in excess of current rates I expect to make them withdraw those demands today if they do, take it straight from me, gentlemen, we shall back them again at once Now, I want to see something fixed upon before I go back tonight Can't we have done with this old-fashioned tug-of-war business? What good's it doing you? Why don't you recognize once for all that these people are men like yourselves, and want what's good for them just as you want what's good for you— [*Bitterly*] Your motor-cars, and champagne, and eight course dinners

Anthony If the men will come in, we'll do something for them

Harness [*Ironically*] Is that your opinion too, sir—and yours—and yours? [*The Directors do not answer*] Well, all I can say is It's a kind of high and mighty aristocratic tone I thought we'd grown out of—seems I was mistaken

Anthony It's the tone the men use Remains to be seen which can hold out longest—they without us, or we without them

Harness As business men, I wonder you're not ashamed of this waste of force, gentlemen You know what it'll all end in

Anthony What?

Harness Compromise—it always does

Scantlebury Can't you persuade the men that their interests are the same as ours?

Harness [*Turning, ironically*] I could persuade them of that, sir, if they were

Wilder Come, Harness, you're a clever man, you don't believe all the Socialistic claptrap that's talked nowadays. There's no real difference between their interests and ours.

Harness There's just one very simple question I'd like to put to you. Will you pay your men one penny more than they force you to pay them? [*WILDER is silent*]

Wanklin [*Chiming in*] I humbly thought that not to pay more than was necessary was the A B C of commerce.

Harness [*With irony*] Yes, that seems to be the A B C of commerce, sir, and the A B C of commerce is between your interests and the men's.

Scantlebury [*Whispering*] We ought to arrange something.

Harness [*Drily*] Am I to understand then, gentlemen, that your Board is going to make no concessions? [*WANKLIN and WILDER bend forward as if to speak, but stop*]

Anthony [*Nodding*] None. [*WANKLIN and WILDER again bend forward, and SCANTLEBURY gives an unexpected grunt*]

Harness You were about to say something, I believe? [*But SCANTLEBURY says nothing*]

Edgar [*Looking up suddenly*] We're sorry for the state of the men.

Harness [*Icily*] The men have no use for your pity, sir. What they want is justice.

Anthony Then let *them* be just.

Harness For that word "just" read "humble," Mr. Anthony. Why should they be humble? Barring the accident of money, aren't they as good men as you?

Anthony Cant!

Harness Well, I've been five years in America. It colors a man's notions.

Scantlebury [*Suddenly, as though avenging his uncompleted grunt*] Let's have the men in and hear what they've got to say! [*ANTHONY nods, and UNDERWOOD goes out by the single door*]

Harness [*Drily*] As I'm to have an interview with them this afternoon, gentlemen, I'll ask you to postpone your final decision till that's over. [*Again ANTHONY nods, and taking up his glass drinks. UNDERWOOD comes in again, followed by ROBERTS, GREEN, BULGIN, THOMAS, ROUS. They file in, hat in hand, and stand silent in a row. ROBERTS is lean, of middle height, with a slight stoop. He has a little rat-gnawn, brown-gray beard, mustaches, high cheek-bones, hollow cheeks, small fiery eyes. He wears an old and grease-stained blue serge suit, and carries an old bowler hat. He stands nearest the Chairman. GREEN, next to him, has a clean, worn face, with a small gray goatee beard and drooping mustaches, iron spectacles, and mild, straightforward eyes. He wears an overcoat, green with age, and a linen collar. Next to him is BULGIN, a tall, strong man, with a dark mustache, and fighting jaw, wearing a red muffler, who keeps*]

changing his cap from one hand to the other Next to him is THOMAS, an old man with a gray mustache, full beard, and weatherbeaten, bony face, whose overcoat discloses a lean, plucked-looking neck On his right, ROUS, the youngest of the five, looks like a soldier, he has a glitter in his eyes]

Underwood [Pointing] There are some chairs there against the wall, Roberts, won't you draw them up and sit down?

Roberts Thank you, Mr Underwood—we'll stand—in the presence of the Board [He speaks in a biting and staccato voice, rolling his r's, pronouncing his a's like an Italian a, and his consonants short and crisp] How are you, Mr Harness? Didn't expect t' have the pleasure of seeing you till this afternoon

Harness [Steadily] We shall meet again then, Roberts

Roberts Glad to hear that, we shall have some news for you to take to your people

Anthony What do the men want?

Roberts [Acidly] Beg pardon, I don't quite catch the Chairman's remark

Tench [From behind the Chairman's chair] The Chairman wishes to know what the men have to say

Roberts It's what the Board has to say we've come to hear It's for the Board to speak first

Anthony The Board has nothing to say

Roberts [Looking along the line of men] In that case we're wasting the Directors' time We'll be taking our feet off this pretty carpet [He turns, the men move slowly, as though hypnotically influenced]

Wanklin [Suavely] Come, Roberts, you didn't give us this long cold journey for the pleasure of saying that

Thomas [A pure Welshman] No, sir, an' what I say iss—

Roberts [Bitingly] Go on, Henry Thomas, go on You're better able to speak to the—Directors than me [THOMAS is silent]

Tench The Chairman means, Roberts, that it was the men who asked for the conference, the Board wish to hear what they have to say

Roberts Gad! If I was to begin to tell ye all they have to say, I wouldn't be finished today And there'd be some that'd wish they'd never left their London palaces

Harness What's your proposition, man? Be reasonable

Roberts You want reason, Mr Harness? Take a look round this afternoon before the meeting [He looks at the men, no sound escapes them] You'll see some very pretty scenery

Harness All right, my friend, you won't put me off

Roberts [To the men] We shan't put Mr Harness off Have some champagne with your lunch, Mr Harness, you'll want it, sir

Harness Come, get to business, man!

Thomas What we're asking, look you, is just simple justice

Roberts [Venomously] Justice from London? What are you talking about, Henry Thomas? Have you gone silly? [THOMAS is silent] We know very well what we are—discontented dogs—never satisfied What did the Chairman tell me up in London? That I d' didn't know what I was talking about I was a foolish, uneducated man, that knew nothing of the wants of the men I spoke for

Edgar Do please keep to the point

Anthony [*Holding up his hand*] There can only be one master, Roberts

Roberts Then, be Gad, it'll be us [*There is a silence, ANTHONY and ROBERTS stare at one another*]

Underwood If you've nothing to say to the Directors, Roberts, perhaps you'll let Green or Thomas speak for the men [*GREEN and THOMAS look anxiously at ROBERTS, at each other, and the other men*]

Green [*An Englishman*] If I'd been listened to, gentlemen—

Thomas What I've got to say iss what we've all got to say—

Roberts Speak for yourself, Henry Thomas

Scantlebury [*With a gesture of deep spiritual discomfort*] Let the poor men call their souls their own!

Roberts Aye, they shall keep their souls, for it's not much body that you've left them, Mr [*with biting emphasis, as though the word were an offense*] Scantlebury! [*To the men*] Well, will you speak, or shall I speak for you?

Rous [*Suddenly*] Speak out, Roberts, or leave it to others

Roberts [*Ironically*] Thank you, George Rous [*Addressing himself to ANTHONY*] The Chairman and Board of Directors have honored us by leaving London and coming all this way to hear what we've got to say, it would not be polite to keep them any longer waiting

Wilder Well, thank God for that!

Roberts Ye will not dare to thank Him when I have done, Mr Wilder, for all your piety Maybe your God up in London has no time to listen to the working man I'm told He is a wealthy God, but if He listens to what I tell Him, He will know more than ever He learned in Kensington

Harness Come, Roberts, you have your own God Respect the God of other men

Roberts That's right, sir We have another God down here, I doubt He is rather different to Mr Wilder's Ask Henry Thomas, he will tell you whether his God and Mr Wilder's are the same [*THOMAS lifts his hand, and cranes his head as though to prophesy*]

Wanklin For goodness' sake, let's keep to the point, Roberts

Roberts I rather think it is the point, Mr Wanklin If you can get the God of Capital to walk through the streets of Labor, and pay attention to what he sees, you're a brighter man than I take you for, for all that you're a Radical

Anthony Attend to me, Roberts! [*ROBERTS is silent*] You are here to speak for the men, as I am here to speak for the Board [*He looks slowly round WILDER, WANKLIN, and SCANTLERURY make movements of uneasiness, and EDGAR gazes at the floor A faint smile comes on HARNES's face*] Now then, what is it?

Roberts Right, sir! [*Throughout all that follows, he and ANTHONY look fixedly upon each other Men and Directors show in their various ways suppressed uneasiness, as though listening to words that they themselves would not have spoken*] The men can't afford to travel up to London, and they don't trust you to believe what they say in black and white They know what the post is [*he darts a look at UNDERWOOD and TENCH*], and what Directors' meetings are.

"Refer it to the manager—let the manager advise us on the men's condition. Can we squeeze them a little more?"

Underwood [*In a low voice*] Don't hit below the belt, Roberts!

Roberts Is it below the belt, Mr Underwood? The men know. When I came up to London, I told you the position straight. An' what came of it? I was told I didn't know what I was talkin' about. I can't afford to travel up to London to be told that again.

Anthony What have you to say for the men?

Roberts I have this to say—and first as to their condition. Ye shall 'ave no need to go and ask your manager. Ye can't squeeze them any more. Every man of us is well-nigh starving. [*A surprised murmur rises from the men. ROBERTS looks round*] Ye wonder why I tell ye that? Every man of us is going short. We can't be no worse off than we've been these weeks past. Ye needn't think that by waiting ye'll drive us to come in. We'll die first, the whole lot of us. The men have sent for ye to know, once and for all, whether ye are going to grant them their demands. I see the sheet of paper in the Secretary's hand. [*TENCH moves nervous'y*] That's it, I think, Mr Tench. It's not very large.

Tench [*Nodding*] Yes.

Roberts There's not one sentence of writing on that paper that we can do without. [*A movement amongst the men. ROBERTS turns on them sharply*] Isn't that so? [*The men assent reluctantly. ANTHONY takes from TENCH the paper and peruses it*] Not one single sentence. All those demands are fair. We have not asked anything that we are not entitled to ask. What I said up in London, I say again now: there is not anything on that piece of paper that a just man should not ask, and a just man give. [*A pause*]

Anthony There is not one single demand on this paper that we will grant. [*In the stir that follows on these words, ROBERTS watches the Directors and ANTHONY the men. WILDER gets up abruptly and goes over to the fire*]

Roberts D'ye mean that?

Anthony I do. [*WILDER at the fire makes an emphatic movement of disgust*]

Roberts [*Noting it, with dry intensity*] Ye best know whether the condition of the Company is any better than the condition of the men. [*Scanning the Directors' faces*] Ye best know whether ye can afford your tyranny—but this I tell ye. If ye think the men will give way the least part of an inch, ye're making the worst mistake ye ever made. [*He fixes his eyes on SCANTLEBURY*] Ye think because the Union is not supporting us—more shame to it!—that we'll be coming on our knees to you one fine morning. Ye think because the men have got their wives an' families to think of—that it's just a question of a week or two—

Anthony It would be better if you did not speculate so much on what we think.

Roberts Aye! It's not much profit to us! I will say this for you, Mr Anthony—ye know your own mind! [*Staring at ANTHONY*] I can reckon on ye!

Anthony [*Ironically*] I am obliged to you!

Roberts And I know mine. I tell ye this. The men will send their wives and families where the country will have to keep them, an' they will starve sooner than give way. I advise ye, Mr Anthony, to prepare yourself for the worst that can happen to your Company. We are not so ignorant as you might sup-

pose We know the way the cat is jumping Your position is not all that it might be—not exactly!

Anthony Be good enough to allow us to judge of our position for ourselves Go back, and reconsider your own

Roberts [*Stepping forward*] Mr Anthony, you are not a young man now, from the time I remember anything ye have been an enemy to every man that has come into your works I don't say that ye're a mean man, or a cruel man, but ye've grudged them the say of any word in their own fate Ye've fought them down four times I've heard ye say ye love a fight—mark my words—ye're fighting the last fight ye'll ever fight— [*TENCH touches ROBERTS's sleeve*]

Underwood Roberts! Roberts!

Roberts Roberts! Roberts! I mustn't speak my mind to the Chairman, but the Chairman may speak his mind to me!

Wilder What are things coming to?

Anthony [*With a grim smile at WILDER*] Go on, Roberts, say what you like!

Roberts [*After a pause*] I have no more to say

Anthony The meeting stands adjourned to five o'clock

Wanklin [*In a low voice to UNDERWOOD*] We shall never settle anything like this

Roberts [*Bitingly*] We thank the Chairman and Board of Directors for their gracious hearing [*He moves towards the door, the men cluster together stupefied then ROUS, throwing up his head, passes ROBERTS and goes out The others follow*]

Roberts [*With his hand on the door—maliciously*] Good day, gentlemen! [*He goes out*]

Harness [*Ironically*] I congratulate you on the conciliatory spirit that's been displayed With your permission, gentlemen, I'll be with you again at half-past five Good morning! [*He bows slightly, rests his eyes on ANTHONY, who returns his stare unmoved, and, followed by UNDERWOOD, goes out There is a moment of uneasy silence UNDERWOOD reappears in the doorway*]

Wilder [*With emphatic disgust*] Well! [*The double-doors are opened*]

Enid [*Standing in the doorway*] Lunch is ready [*EDGAR, getting up abruptly, walks out past his sister*]

Wilder Coming to lunch, Scantlebury?

Scantlebury [*Rising heavily*] I suppose so, I suppose so It's the only thing we can do [*They go out through the double-doors*]

Wanklin [*In a low voice*] Do you really mean to fight to a finish, Chair man? [*ANTHONY nods*]

Wanklin Take care! The essence of things is to know when to stop [*ANTHONY does not answer*]

Wanklin [*Very gravely*] This way disaster lies The ancient Trojans were fools to your father, Mrs Underwood [*He goes out through the double-doors*]

Enid I want to speak to Father, Frank [*UNDERWOOD follows WANKLIN out TENCH, passing round the table, is restoring order to the scattered pens and papers*]

Enid Aren't you coming, Dad? [*ANTHONY shakes his head ENID looks meaningly at TENCH*]

Enid Won't you go and have some lunch, Mr Tench?

Tench [*With papers in his hand*] Thank you, ma'am, thank you! [*He goes slowly, looking back*]

Enid [*Shutting the doors*] I do hope it's settled, Father!

Anthony No!

Enid [*Very disappointed*] Oh! Haven't you done anything? [*ANTHONY shakes his head*]

Enid Frank says they all want to come to a compromise, really, except that man Roberts

Anthony I don't

Enid It's such a horrid position for us If you were the wife of the manager, and lived down here, and saw it all You can't realize, Dad!

Anthony Indeed?

Enid We see *all* the distress You remember my maid Annie, who married Roberts? [*ANTHONY nods*] It's so wretched, her heart's weak, since the strike began, she hasn't even been getting proper food I know it for a fact Father

Anthony Give her what she wants, poor woman!

Enid Roberts won't let her take anything from us

Anthony [*Staring before him*] I can't be answerable for the men's obstinacy

Enid They're all suffering Father! Do stop it, for my sake!

Anthony [*With a keen look at her*] You don't understand my dear

Enid If I were on the Board, I'd do something

Anthony What would you do?

Enid It's because you can't bear to give way It's so—

Anthony Well?

Enid So unnecessary

Anthony What do *you* know about necessity? Read your novels, play your music, talk your talk, but don't try and tell *me* what's at the bottom of a struggle like this

Enid I live down here, and see it

Anthony What d'you imagine stands between you and your class and these men that you're so sorry for?

Enid [*Coldly*] I don't know what you mean, Father

Anthony In a few years you and your children would be down in the condition they're in, but for those who have the eyes to see things as they are and the backbone to stand up for themselves

Enid You don't know the state the men are in

Anthony I know it well enough

Enid You don't, Father, if you did, you wouldn't—

Anthony It's you who don't know the simple facts of the position What sort of mercy do you suppose you'd get if no one stood between you and the continual demands of labor? This sort of mercy— [*He puts his hand up to his throat and squeezes it*] First would go your sentiments, my dear, then your culture, and your comforts would be going all the time!

Enid I don't believe in barriers between classes

Anthony You—don't—believe—in—barriers—between the classes?

Enid [*Coldly*] And I don't know what that has to do with this question

Anthony It will take a generation or two for you to understand

Enid It's only you and Roberts, Father, and you know it! [*ANTHONY thrusts out his lower lip*] It'll ruin the Company

Anthony Allow me to judge of that

Enid [*Resentfully*] I won't stand by and let poor Annie Roberts suffer like this! And think of the children, Father! I warn you

Anthony [*With a grim smile*] What do you propose to do?

Enid That's my affair [*ANTHONY only looks at her*]

Enid [*In a changed voice, stroking his sleeve*] Father, you know you oughtn't to have this strain on you—you know what Dr. Fisher said!

Anthony No old man can afford to listen to old women

Enid But you have done enough, even if it really is such a matter of principle with you

Anthony You think so?

Enid Don't, Dad! [*Her face works*] You—you might think of us!

Anthony I am

Enid It'll break you down

Anthony [*Slowly*] My dear, I am not going to funk, on that you may rely [*Reenter TENCH with papers, he glances at them, then plucking up courage*]

Tench Beg pardon, Madam, I think I'd rather see these papers were disposed of before I get my lunch [*ENID, after an impatient glance at him, looks at her father, turns suddenly, and goes into the drawing room*]

Tench [*Holding the papers and a pen to ANTHONY, very nervously*] Would you sign these for me, please, sir? [*ANTHONY takes the pen and signs*]

Tench [*Standing with a sheet of blotting-paper behind EDGAR's chair, begins speaking nervously*] I owe my position to you, sir

Anthony Well?

Tench I'm obliged to see everything that's going on, sir, I—I depend upon the Company entirely. If anything were to happen to it, it'd be disastrous for me [*ANTHONY nods*] And, of course, my wife's just had another, and so it makes me doubly anxious just now. And the rates are really terrible down our way

Anthony [*With grim amusement*] Not more terrible than they are up mine

Tench No, sir? [*Very nervously*] I know the Company means a great deal to you, sir

Anthony It does, I founded it

Tench Yes, sir. If the strike goes on it'll be very serious. I think the Directors are beginning to realize that, sir

Anthony [*Ironically*] Indeed?

Tench I know you hold very strong views, sir, and it's always your habit to look things in the face, but I don't think the Directors—like it, sir, now they—they see it

Anthony [*Grimly*] Nor you, it seems

Tench [*With the ghost of a smile*] No, sir, of course I've got my children, and my wife's delicate, in my position I have to think of these things [*ANTHONY nods*] It wasn't that I was going to say, sir, if you'll excuse me [*hesitates*]—

Anthony Out with it, then!

Tench I know—from my own father, sir, that when you get on in life you do feel things dreadfully—

Anthony [*Almost paternally*] Come, out with it, *Tench*!

Tench I don't like to say it, sir

Anthony [*Stonily*] You must

Tench [*After a pause, desperately bolting it out*] I think the Directors are going to throw you over, sir

Anthony [*Sits in silence*] Ring the bell! [*TENCH nervously rings the bell and stands by the fire*]

Tench Excuse me for saying such a thing I was only thinking of you, sir [*FROST enters from the hall, he comes to the foot of the table, and looks at ANTHONY, TENCH covers his nervousness by arranging papers*]

Anthony Bring me a whisky and soda

Frost Anything to eat, sir? [*ANTHONY shakes his head FROST goes to the sideboard, and prepares the drink*]

Tench [*In a low voice, almost supplicating*] If you could see your way, sir, it would be a great relief to my mind, it would indeed [*He looks up at ANTHONY, who has not moved*] It does make me so very anxious I haven't slept properly for weeks, sir, and that's a fact [*ANTHONY looks in his face, then slowly shakes his head*]

Tench [*Disheartened*] No, sir? [*He goes on arranging papers FROST places the whisky and soda on a salver and puts it down by ANTHONY's right hand He stands away, looking gravely at ANTHONY*]

Frost Nothing I can get you, sir? [*ANTHONY shakes his head*] You're aware, sir, of what the doctor said, sir?

Anthony I am [*A pause FROST suddenly moves closer to him, and speaks in a low voice*]

Frost This strike, sir, puttin' all this strain on you Excuse me, sir, is it—is it worth it, sir? [*ANTHONY mutters some words that are inaudible*] Very good, sir! [*He turns and goes out into the hall TENCH makes two attempts to speak, but meeting his Chairman's gaze he drops his eyes, and, turning dismally, he too goes out ANTHONY is left alone He grips the glass, tilts it, and drinks deeply, then sets it down with a deep and rumbling sigh, and leans back in his chair*]

THE CURTAIN FALLS

ACT II

SCENE I

It is half-past three In the kitchen of ROBERTS's cottage a meager little fire is burning The room is clean and tidy, very barely furnished, with a brick floor and white-washed walls, much stained with smoke There is a kettle on the fire A door opposite the fireplace opens inward from a snowy street On the wooden table are a cup and saucer, a teapot, knife, and plate of bread and cheese Close to the fireplace in an old arm-chair, wrapped in a rug, sits MRS ROBERTS, a thin and dark-haired woman about thirty-five,

with patient eyes Her hair is not done up, but tied back with a piece of ribbon By the fire, too, is Mrs YEO, a red haired, broad faced person Sitting near the table is Mrs ROUS, an old lady, ashen white, with silver hair, by the door, standing, as if about to go, is Mrs BULGIN, a little pale, pinched-up woman In a chair, with her elbows resting on the table, and her face resting in her hands, sits MADGE THOMAS, a good looking girl, of twenty-two, with high cheekbones, deep set eyes, and dark untidy hair She is listening to the talk, but she neither speaks nor moves

Mrs Yeo So he give me a sixpence, and that's the first bit o' money I seen this week There an't much 'eat to this fire Come and warm yerself, Mrs Rous, you're lookin' as white as the snow, you are

Mrs Rous [Shivering—placidly] Ah! but the winter my old man was took was the proper winter Seventy nine that was, when none of you was hardly born—not Madge Thomas, nor Sue Bulgin [*Looking at them in turn*] Annie Roberts, 'ow old were you, dear?

Mrs Roberts Seven, Mrs Rous

Mrs Rous Seven—well, ther'! A tiny little thing!

Mrs Yeo [Aggressively] Well, I was ten myself, I remembers it

Mrs Rous [Placidly] The Company hadn't been started three years Father was workin' on the acid, that's 'ow he got 'is pisoned leg I kep' sayin' to 'im, "Father, you've got a pisoned leg" "Well," 'e said, "Mother, pison or no pison, I can't afford to go a-layin' up" An' two days after, he was on 'is back, and never got up again It was Providence! There wasn't none o' these Compensation Acts then

Mrs Yeo Ye hadn't no strike that winter! [*With grim humor*] This winter's 'ard enough for me Mrs Roberts, you don't want no 'arder winter, do you? Wouldn't seem natural to 'ave a dinner, would it, Mrs Bulgin?

Mrs Bulgin We've had bread and tea last four days

Mrs Yeo You got that Friday's laundry job?

Mrs Bulgin [Dispiritedly] They said they'd give it me, but when I went last Friday, they were full up I got to go again next week

Mrs Yeo Ah! There's too many after that I send Yeo out on the ice to put on the gentry's skates an' pick up what 'e can Stops 'im from broodin' about the 'ouse

Mrs Bulgin [In a desolate, matter-of-fact voice] Leavin' out the men—it's bad enough with the children I keep 'em in bed, they don't get so hungry when they're not running about, but they're that restless in bed they worry your life out

Mrs Yeo You're lucky they're all so small It's the goin' to school that makes 'em 'ungry Don't Bulgin give you anythin'?

Mrs Bulgin [Shakes her head, then, as though by afterthought] Would if he could, I s'pose

Mrs Yeo [Sardonically] What! 'Aven't 'e got no shares in the Company?

Mrs Rous [Rising with tremulous cheerfulness] Well, good by, Annie Roberts, I'm going along home

Mrs Roberts Stay an' have a cup of tea, Mrs Rous?

Mrs Rous [*With the faintest smile*] Roberts'll want 'is tea when he comes in I'll just go an' get to bed, it's warmer there than anywhere [*She moves very shakily towards the door*]

Mrs Yeo [*Rising and giving her an arm*] Come on, Mother, take my arm, we're all goin' the same way

Mrs Rous [*Taking the arm*] Thank you, my dearies! [*They go out, followed by Mrs BULGIN*]

Madge [*Moving for the first time*] There, Annie, you see that! I told George Rous, "Don't think to have my company till you've made an end of all this trouble You ought to be ashamed," I said, "with your own mother looking like a ghost, and not a stick to put on the fire So long as you're able to fill your pipes, you'll let us starve" "I'll take my oath, Madge," he said, "I've not had smoke nor drink these three weeks!" "Well, then, why do you go on with it?" "I can't go back on Roberts!" That's it! Roberts, always Roberts! They'd all drop it but for him When *he* talks it's the devil that comes into them [*A silence Mrs ROBERTS makes a movement of pain*] Ah! You don't want him beaten! He's your man With everybody like their own shadows! [*She makes a gesture towards Mrs ROBERTS*] If Rous wants me he must give up Roberts If *he* gave him up—they all would They're only waiting for a lead Father's against him—they're all against him in their hearts

Mrs Roberts You won't beat Roberts! [*They look silently at each other*]

Madge Won't I? The cowards—when their own mothers and their own children don't know where to turn

Mrs Roberts Madge!

Madge [*Looking searchingly at Mrs ROBERTS*] I wonder he can look you in the face [*She squats before the fire, with her hands out to the flame*] Har-ness is here again They'll have to make up their minds today

Mrs Roberts [*In a soft, slow voice, with a slight West-country burr*] Roberts will never give up the furnacemen and engineers 'Twouldn't be right

Madge You can't deceive me It's just his pride [*A tapping at the door is heard, the women turn as ENID enters She wears a round fur cap, and a jacket of squirrel's fur She closes the door behind her*]

Enid Can I come in, Annie?

Mrs Roberts [*Flinching*] Miss Enid! Give Mrs Underwood a chair, Madge! [*MADGE gives ENID the chair she has been sitting on*]

Enid Thank you! Are you any better?

Mrs Roberts Yes, M'm, thank you, M'm

Enid [*Looking at the sullen MADGE as though requesting her departure*] Why did you send back the jelly? I call that really wicked of you!

Mrs Roberts Thank you, M'm, I'd no need for it

Enid Of course! It was Roberts's doing, wasn't it? How can he let all this suffering go on amongst you?

Madge [*Suddenly*] What suffering?

Enid [*Surprised*] I beg your pardon!

Madge Who said there was suffering?

Mrs Roberts Madge!

Madge [Throwing her shawl over her head] Please to let us keep ourselves to ourselves We don't want you coming here and spying on us

Enid [Confronting her, but without rising] I didn't speak to you

Madge [In a low, fierce voice] Keep your kind feelings to yourself You think you can come amongst us, but you're mistaken Go back and tell the Manager that

Enid [Stonily] This is not your house

Madge [Turning to the door] No, it is not my house, keep clear of my house, Mrs Underwood [*She goes out ENID taps her fingers on the table*]

Mrs Roberts Please to forgive Madge Thomas, M'm, she's a bit upset today [*A pause*]

Enid [Looking at her] Oh, I think they're so stupid, all of them

Mrs Roberts [With a faint smile] Yes, M'm

Enid Is Roberts out?

Mrs Roberts Yes, M'm

Enid It is *his doing*, that they don't come to an agreement Now isn't it, Annie?

Mrs Roberts [Softly, with her eyes on ENID, and moving the fingers of one hand continually on her breast] They do say that your father, M'm—

Enid My father's getting an old man, and you know what old men are

Mrs Roberts I am sorry, M'm

Enid [More softly] I don't expect you to feel sorry, Annie I know it's his fault as well as Roberts's

Mrs Roberts I'm sorry for any one that gets old, M'm, it's dreadful to get old, and Mr Anthony was such a fine old man I always used to think

Enid [Impulsively] He always liked you, don't you remember? Look here Annie, what can I do? I do so want to know You don't get what you ought to have [*Going to the fire, she takes the kettle off, and looks for coals*] And you're so naughty sending back the soup and things!

Mrs Roberts [With a faint smile] Yes, M'm?

Enid [Resentfully] Why, you haven't even got coals?

Mrs Roberts If you please, M'm, to put the kettle on again, Roberts won't have long for his tea when he comes in He's got to meet the men at four

Enid [Putting the kettle on] That means he'll lash them into a fury again Can't you stop his going, Annie? [*Mrs Roberts smiles ironically*] Have you tried? [*A silence*] Does he know how ill you are?

Mrs Roberts It's only my weak 'eart, M'm

Enid You used to be so well when you were with us

Mrs Roberts [Stuffening] Roberts is always good to me

Enid But you ought to have everything you want, and you have nothing!

Mrs Roberts [Appealingly] They tell me I don't look like a dyin' woman?

Enid Of course you don't, if you could only have proper— Will you see my doctor if I send him to you? I'm sure he'd do you good

Mrs Roberts [With faint questioning] Yes, M'm

Enid Madge Thomas oughtn't to come here, she only excites you As if I didn't know what suffering there is amongst the men! I do feel for them dreadfully, but you know they *have* gone too far

Mrs Roberts [*Continually moving her fingers*] They say there's no other way to get better wages, M'm

Enid [*Earnestly*] But, Annie, that's why the Union won't help them. My husband's very sympathetic with the men, but he says they're not underpaid.

Mrs Roberts No, M'm?

Enid They never think how the Company could go on if we paid the wages they want.

Mrs Roberts [*With an effort*] But the dividends having been so big, M'm.

Enid [*Taken aback*] You all seem to think the shareholders are rich men, but they're not—most of them are really no better off than working men. [*Mrs Roberts smiles*] They have to keep up appearances.

Mrs Roberts Yes, M'm?

Enid You don't have to pay rates and taxes, and a hundred other things that they do. If the men didn't spend such a lot in drink and betting they'd be quite well off!

Mrs Roberts They say, workin' so hard, they must have some pleasure.

Enid But surely not low pleasure like that.

Mrs Roberts [*A little resentfully*] Roberts never touches a drop, and he's never had a bet in his life.

Enid Oh! but he's not a com—I mean he's an engineer—a superior man.

Mrs Roberts Yes, M'm. Roberts says they've no chance of other pleasures.

Enid [*Musing*] Of course, I know it's hard.

Mrs Roberts [*With a spice of malice*] And they say gentlefolk's just as bad.

Enid [*With a smile*] I go as far as most people, Annie, but you know, your self, that's nonsense.

Mrs Roberts [*With painful effort*] A lot o' the men never go near the Public, but even they don't save but very little, and that goes if there's illness.

Enid But they've got their clubs, haven't they?

Mrs Roberts The clubs only give up to eighteen shillin's a week, M'm, and it's not much amongst a family. Roberts says workin' folk have always lived from hand to mouth. Sixpence today is worth more than a shillin' tomorrow, that's what they say.

Enid But that's the spirit of gambling.

Mrs Roberts [*With a sort of excitement*] Roberts says a working man's life is all a gamble, from the time 'e's born to the time 'e dies. [*Enid leans forward, interested. Mrs Roberts goes on with a growing excitement that culminates in the personal feeling of the last words.*] He says, M'm, that when a working man's baby is born, it's a toss-up from breath to breath whether it ever draws another, and so on all 'is life, an' when he comes to be old, it's the workhouse or the grave. He says that without a man is very near, and pinches and stunts 'imself and 'is children to save, there can't be neither surplus nor security. That's why he wouldn't have no children [*she sinks back*], not though I wanted them.

Enid Yes, yes, I know!

Mrs Roberts No, you don't, M'm. You've got your children, and you'll never need to trouble for them.

Enid [*Gently*] You oughtn't to be talking so much, Annie. [*Then, in spite*

of herself] But Roberts was paid a lot of money, wasn't he, for discovering that process?

Mrs Roberts [On the defensive] All Roberts's savin's have gone He's al ways looked forward to this strike He says he's no right to a farthing when the others are suffering 'Tisn't so with all o' them! Some don't seem to care no more than that—so long as they get their own

Enid I don't see how they can be expected to when they're suffering like this [*In a changed voice*] But Roberts ought to think of you! It's all terrible! The kettle's boiling Shall I make the tea? [*She takes the teapot and, seeing tea there, pours water into it*] Won't you have a cup?

Mrs Roberts No, thank you, M'm [*She is listening, as though for footsteps*] I'd sooner you didn't see Roberts, M'm, he gets so wild

Enid Oh! but I must, Annie, I'll be quite calm, I promise

Mrs Roberts It's life an' death to him, M'm

Enid [Very gently] I'll get him to talk to me outside, we won't excite you

Mrs Roberts [Faintly] No, M'm [*She gives a violent start* ROBERTS has come in, unseen]

Roberts [Removing his hat—with subtle mockery] Beg pardon for coming in, you're engaged with a lady, I see

Enid Can I speak to you, Mr Roberts?

Roberts Whom have I the pleasure of addressing, Ma'am?

Enid But surely you know me! I'm Mrs Underwood

Roberts [With a bow of malice] The daughter of our Chairman

Enid [Earnestly] I've come on purpose to speak to you, will you come out side a minute? [*She looks at Mrs Roberts*]

Roberts [Hanging up his hat] I have nothing to say, Ma'am

Enid But I must speak to you, please [*She moves towards the door*]

Roberts [With sudden venom] I have not the time to listen!

Mrs Roberts David!

Enid Mr Roberts, please!

Roberts [Taking off his overcoat] I am sorry to disoblige a lady—Mr Anthony's daughter

Enid [Wavering, then with sudden decision] Mr Roberts, I know you've another meeting of the men [*Roberts bows*] I came to appeal to you Please, please, try to come to some compromise, give way a little, if it's only for your own sakes!

Roberts [Speaking to himself] The daughter of Mr Anthony begs me to give way a little, if it's only for our own sakes!

Enid For everybody's sake, for your wife's sake

Roberts For my wife's sake, for everybody's sake—for the sake of Mr Anthony

Enid Why are you so bitter against my father? He has never done anything to you

Roberts Has he not?

Enid He can't help his views, any more than you can help yours

Roberts I really didn't know that I had a right to views!

Enid He's an old man, and you— [*Seeing his eyes fixed on her, she stops*]

Roberts [*Without raising his voice*] If I saw Mr Anthony going to die, and I could save him by lifting my hand, I would not lift the little finger of it

Enid You—you— [*She stops again, biting her lips*]

Roberts I would not, and that's flat!

Enid [*Coldly*] You don't mean what you say, and you know it!

Roberts I mean every word of it

Enid But why?

Roberts [*With a flash*] Mr Anthony stands for tyranny! That's why!

Enid Nonsense! [*MRS ROBERTS makes a movement as if to rise, but sinks back in her chair*]

Enid [*With an impetuous movement*] Annie!

Roberts Please not to touch my wife!

Enid [*Recoiling with a sort of horror*] I believe—you are mad

Roberts The house of a madman, then, is not the fit place for a lady

Enid I'm not afraid of you

Roberts [*Bowing*] I would not expect the daughter of Mr Anthony to be afraid Mr Anthony is not a coward like the rest of them

Enid [*Suddenly*] I suppose you think it brave, then, to go on with the struggle

Roberts Does Mr Anthony think it brave to fight against women and children? Mr Anthony is a rich man, I believe, does he think it brave to fight against those who haven't a penny? Does he think it brave to set children crying with hunger, and women shivering with cold?

Enid [*Putting up her hand, as though warding off a blow*] My father is acting on his principles, and you know it!

Roberts And so am I!

Enid You hate us, and you can't bear to be beaten!

Roberts Neither can Mr Anthony, for all that he may say

Enid At any rate you might have pity on your wife [*MRS ROBERTS, who has her hand pressed to her heart, takes it away, and tries to calm her breathing*]

Roberts Madam, I have no more to say [*He takes up the loaf. There is a knock at the door, and UNDERWOOD comes in. He stands looking at them. ENID turns to him, then seems undecided*]

Underwood Enid!

Roberts [*Ironically*] Ye were not needing to come for your wife, Mr Underwood. We are not rowdies

Underwood I know that, Roberts. I hope Mrs Roberts is better [*ROBERTS turns away without answering*]. Come, Enid!

Enid I make one more appeal to you, Mr Roberts, for the sake of your wife

Roberts [*With polite malice*] If I might advise ye, Ma'am—make it for the sake of your husband and your father [*ENID, suppressing a retort, goes out. UNDERWOOD opens the door for her and follows. ROBERTS, going to the fire, holds out his hands to the dying glow*]

Roberts How goes it, my girl? Feeling better, are you? [*MRS ROBERTS smiles faintly. He brings his overcoat and wraps it round her. Looking at his watch*] Ten minutes to four! [*As though inspired*] I've seen their faces, there's no fight in them, except for that one old robber

Mrs Roberts Won't you stop and eat, David? You've 'ad nothing all day!

Roberts [*Putting his hand to his throat*] Can't swallow till those old sharks are out o' the town [*He walks up and down*] I shall have a bother with the men—there's no heart in them, the cowards Blind as bats, they are—can't see a day before their noses

Mrs Roberts It's the women, David

Roberts Ah! So they say! They can remember the women when their own bellies speak! The women never stop them from the drink, but from a little suffering to themselves in a sacred cause, the women stop them fast enough

Mrs Roberts But think o' the children, David

Roberts Ah! If they will go breeding themselves for slaves, without a thought o' the future o' them they breed—

Mrs Roberts [*Gasping*] That's enough, David, don't begin to talk of that—I won't—I can't—

Roberts [*Staring at her*] Now, now, my girl!

Mrs Roberts [*Breathlessly*] No, no, David—I won't!

Roberts There, there! Come, come! That's right! [*Bitterly*] Not one penny will they put by for a day like this Not they! Hand to mouth—Gad!—I know them! They've broke my heart There was no holdin' them at the start, but now the pinch 'as come

Mrs Roberts How can you expect it, David? They're not made of iron

Roberts Expect it? Wouldn't I expect what I would do meself? Wouldn't I starve an' rot rather than give in? What one man can do, another can

Mrs Roberts And the women?

Roberts This is not women's work

Mrs Roberts [*With a flash of malice*] No, the women may die for all you care That's their work

Roberts [*Averting his eyes*] Who talks of dying? No one will die till we have beaten these— [*He meets her eyes again, and again turns his away Excitedly*] This is what I've been waiting for all these months To get the old robbers down, and send them home again without a farthin's worth o' change I've seen their faces, I tell you, in the valley of the shadow of defeat [*He goes to the peg and takes down his hat*]

Mrs Roberts [*Following with her eyes—softly*] Take your overcoat, David, it must be bitter cold

Roberts [*Coming up to her—his eyes are furtive*] No, no! There, there, stay quiet and warm I won't be long, my girl

Mrs Roberts [*With soft bitterness*] You'd better take it [*She lifts the coat But ROBERTS puts it back, and wraps it round her He tries to meet her eyes, but cannot Mrs ROBERTS stays huddled in the coat, her eyes, that follow him about, are half malicious, half yearning He looks at his watch again, and turns to go In the doorway he meets JAN THOMAS, a boy of ten in clothes too big for him, carrying a penny whistle*]

Roberts Hallo, boy! [*He goes JAN stops within a yard of Mrs ROBERTS, and stares at her without a word*]

Mrs Roberts Well, Jan!

Jan Father's coming, sister Madge is coming [*He sits at the table, and fidgets with his whistle, he blows three vague notes, then imitates a cuckoo There is a tap on the door Old THOMAS comes in*]

Thomas A very coot tay to you, Ma'am It is petter that you are

Mrs Roberts Thank you, Mr Thomas

Thomas [*Nervously*] Roberts in?

Mrs Roberts Just gone on to the meeting, Mr Thomas

Thomas [*With relief, becoming talkative*] This is fery unfortunate, look you! I came to tell him that we must make terms with London It is a fery great pity he is gone to the meeting He will be kicking against the pricks, I am thinking

Mrs Roberts [*Half rising*] He'll never give in, Mr Thomas

Thomas You must not be fretting, that is very pat for you Look you, there iss hartly any mans for supporting him now, but the engineers and George Rous [*Solemnly*] This strike is no longer coing with Chapel, look you! I have listened carefully, an' I have talked with her [*JAN blows*] Sst! I don't care what th' others say, I say that *Chapel means us* to be stopping the trouble, that is what I make of her, and it is my opinion that this is the fery best thing for all of us If it wasn't my opinion, I ton't say—but it is my opinion, look you

Mrs Roberts [*Trying to suppress her excitement*] I don't know what'll come to Roberts, if you give in

Thomas It iss no disgrace whateffer! All that a mortal man coult do he hass tone It iss against Human Nature he hass gone, fery natural—any man may do that, but Chapel has spoken and he must not go against her [*JAN imitates the cuckoo*] Ton't make that squeaking! [*Going to the door*] Here iss my daughter come to sit with you A fery goot day, Ma'am—no fretting—remember! [*MADGE comes in and stands at the open door, watching the street*]

Madge You'll be late, Father, they're beginning [*She catches him by the sleeve*] For the love of God, stand up to him, Father—this time!

Thomas [*Detaching his sleeve with dignity*] Leave me to do what's proper, girl! [*He goes out MADGE, in the center of the open doorway, slowly moves in, as though before the approach of some one*]

Rous [*Appearing in the doorway*] Madge! [*MADGE stands with her back to MRS ROBERTS, staring at him with her head up and her hands behind her*]

Rous [*Who has a fierce, distracted look*] Madge! I'm going to the meeting [*MADGE, without moving, smiles contemptuously*] D'ye hear me? [*They speak in quick low voices*]

Madge I hear! Go, and kill your own mother, if you must [*Rous seizes her by both her arms She stands rigid, with her head bent back He releases her, and he too stands motionless*]

Rous I swore to stand by Roberts I swore that! Ye want me to go back on what I've sworn

Madge [*With slow soft mockery*] You are a pretty lover!

Rous Madge!

Madge [*Smiling*] I've heard that lovers do what their girls ask them—[*JAN sounds the cuckoo's notes*]

—but that's not true, it seems!

Rous You'd make a blackleg of me!

Madge [*With her eyes half closed*] Do it for me!

Rous [*Dashing his hand across his brow*] Damn! I can't!

Madge [*Swiftly*] Do it for me!

Rous [*Through his teeth*] Don't play the wanton with me!

Madge [*With a movement of her hand towards JAN—quick and low*] I would be *that* for the children's sake!

Rous [*In a fierce whisper*] Madge! Oh, Madge!

Madge [*With soft mockery*] But you can't break your word for me!

Rous [*With a choke*] Then, Begod, I can! [*He turns and rushes off* MADGE stands, with a faint smile on her face, looking after him She turns to MRS ROBERTS]

Madge I have done for Roberts!

Mrs Roberts [*Scornfully*] Done for my man, with that—! [*She sinks back*]

Madge [*Running to her, and feeling her hands*] You're as cold as a stone! You want a drop of brandy Jan, run to the "Lion", say I sent you for Mrs Roberts

Mrs Roberts [*With a feeble movement*] I'll just sit quiet, Madge Give Jan—his—tea

Madge [*Giving JAN a slice of bread*] There, ye little rascal Hold your piping [*Going to the fire, she kneels*] It's going out

Mrs Roberts [*With a faint smile*] 'Tis all the same! [*JAN begins to blow his whistle*]

Madge Tsht! Tsht!—you— [*JAN stops*]

Mrs Roberts [*Smiling*] Let 'im play, Madge

Madge [*On her knees at the fire, listening*] Waiting an' waiting I've no patience with it, waiting an' waiting—that's what a woman has to do! Can you hear them at it—I can! [*JAN begins again to play his whistle, MADGE gets up, half tenderly she ruffles his hair, then, sitting, leans her elbows on the table, and her chin on her hands Behind her, on MRS ROBERTS's face the smile has changed to horrified surprise She makes a sudden movement, sitting forward, pressing her hands against her breast Then slowly she sinks back, slowly her face loses the look of pain, the smile returns She fixes her eyes again on JAN, and moves her lips and finger to the tune*]

THE CURTAIN FALLS

SCENE II

It is past four In a gray, failing light, an open muddy space is crowded with workmen Beyond, divided from it by a barbed-wire fence, is the raised towing path of a canal, on which is moored a barge In the distance are marshes and snow-covered hills The "Works" high wall runs from the canal across the open space, and in the angle of this wall is a rude platform of barrels and boards On it, HARNESS is standing ROBERTS, a little apart from the crowd, leans his back against the wall On the raised towing path two bargemen lounge and smoke indifferently

Harness [*Holding out his hand*] Well, I've spoken to you straight If I speak till tomorrow I can't say more

Jago [*A dark, sallow, Spanish looking man with a short, thin beard*] Mister, want to ask you! Can they get blacklegs?

Bulgin [*Menacing*] Let 'em try [*There are savage murmurs from the crowd*]

Brown [*A round-faced man*] Where could they get 'em then?

Evans [*A small, restless, harassed man, with a fighting face*] There's always blacklegs, it's the nature of 'em There's always men that'll save their own skins [*Another savage murmur There is a movement, and old THOMAS, joining the crowd, takes his stand in front*]

Harness [*Holding up his hand*] They can't get them But that won't help you Now, men, be reasonable Your demands would have brought on us the burden of a dozen strikes at a time when we were not prepared for them The Unions live by Justice, not to one, but all Any fair man will tell you—you were ill-advised! I don't say you go too far for that which you're entitled to but you're going too far for the moment, you've dug a pit for yourselves Are you to stay there, or are you to climb out? Come!

Lewis [*A clean-cut Welshman with a dark mustache*] You've hit it, Mister! Which is it to be? [*Another movement in the crowd, and Rous, coming quickly, takes his stand next THOMAS*]

Harness Cut your demands to the right pattern, and we'll see you through, refuse, and don't expect me to waste my time coming down here again I'm not the sort that speaks at random, as you ought to know by this time If you're the sound men I take you for—no matter who advises you against it—[*he fixes his eyes on ROBERTS*] you'll make up your minds to come in, and trust to us to get your terms Which is it to be? Hands together, and victory—or—the starvation you've got now? [*A prolonged murmur from the crowd*]

Jago [*Sullenly*] Talk about what you know

Harness [*Lifting his voice above the murmur*] Know? [*With cold passion*] All that you've been through, my friend, I've been through—I was through it when I was no bigger than [*pointing to a youth*] that shaver there, the Unions then weren't what they are now What's made them strong? It's hands together that's made them strong I've been through it all, I tell you, the brand's on my soul yet I know what you've suffered—there's nothing you can tell me that I don't know, but the whole is greater than the part, and you are only the part Stand by us, and we will stand by you [*Quartering them with his eyes, he waits The murmuring swells, the men form little groups GREEN, BULGIN, and LEWIS talk together*]

Lewis Speaks very sensible, the Union chap

Green [*Quietly*] Ah! if I'd a been listened to, you'd 'ave 'eard sense these two months past [*The bargemen are seen laughing*]

Lewis [*Pointing*] Look at those two blanks over the fence there!

Bulgin [*With gloomy violence*] They'd best stop their cackle, or I'll break their jaws

Jago [*Suddenly*] You say the furnace-men's paid enough?

Harness I did not say they were paid enough, I said they were paid as much as the furnace men in similar works elsewhere

Evans That's a lie! [*Hubbub*] What about Harper's?

Harness [*With cold irony*] You may look at home for lies, my man Harper's shifts are longer, the pay works out the same

Henry Rous [*A dark edition of his brother GEORGE*] Will ye support us in double pay overtime Saturdays?

Harness Yes, we will

Jago What have ye done with our subscriptions?

Harness [*Coldly*] I have told you what we *will* do with them

Evans Ah! *will*, it's always *will*! Ye'd have our mates desert us [*Hubbub*]

Bulgin [*Shouting*] Hold your row! [*EVANS looks round angrily*]

Harness [*Lifting his voice*] Those who know their right hands from their lefts know that the Unions are neither thieves nor traitors I've said my say Figure it out, my lads, when you want me you know where I shall be [*He jumps down, the crowd gives way, he passes through them, and goes away A BARGEMAN looks after him, jerking his pipe with a derisive gesture The men close up in groups, and many looks are cast at ROBERTS, who stands alone against the wall*]

Evans He wants ye to turn blacklegs, that's what he wants He wants ye to go back on us Sooner than turn blackleg—I'd starve, I would

Bulgin Who's talkin' o' blacklegs—mind what you're saying, will you?

Blacksmith [*A youth with yellow hair and huge arms*] What about the women?

Evans They can stand what we can stand, I suppose, can't they?

Blacksmith Ye've no wife?

Evans An' don't want one!

Thomas [*Raising his voice*] Aye! Give us the power to come to terms with London, lads

Davies [*A dark, slow-fly, gloomy man*] Go up the platform, if you got any thing to say, go up an' say it [*There are cries of "Thomas!" He is pushed to wards the platform, he ascends it with difficulty, and bares his head, waiting for silence A hush*]

Red-Haired Youth [*Suddenly*] Coot old Thomas! [*A hoarse laugh, the bargemen exchange remarks, a hush again, and THOMAS begins speaking*]

Thomas We are all in the teph together, and it iss Nature that has put us there

Henry Rous It's London put us there!

Evans It's the Union

Thomas It iss not Lonton, nor it iss not the Union—it iss Nature It iss no disgrace whateffer to a potty to give in to Nature For this Nature iss a fery pig thing, it is pigger than what a man is There iss more years to my hett than to the hett of any one here It is fery pat, look you, this coing against Nature It is pat to make other potties suffer, when there is nothing to pe cot py it [*A laugh THOMAS angrily goes on*] What are ye laughing at? It is pat, I say! We are fighting for a principle, there is no potty that shall say I am not a peliever in principle Putt when Nature says "No further," then it is no coot snapping

your fingers in her face [*A laugh from ROBERTS, and murmurs of approval*]
 This Nature must be humored. It is a man's business to be pure, honest, just, and
 merciful. That's what Chapel tells you [*To ROBERTS, angrily*]. And, look you,
 David Roberts, Chapel tells you ye can do that without going against Nature.
Jago What about the Union?

Thomas I don't trust the Union, they have treated us like turt. "Do what we
 tell you," said they. I have been captain of the furnace men twenty years, and I
 say to the Union—[*excitedly*]"Can you tell me then, as well as I can tell
 you, what is the right wages for the work that these men do?" For five and
 twenty years I have paid my moneys to the Union and—[*with great excitement*]
 —for nothings! What is that but roguery, for all that this Mr. Harness says!
 [*Murmurs*]

Evans Hear, hear

Henry Rous Get on with you! Cut on with it then!

Thomas Look you, if a man does not trust me, am I going to trust him?

Jago That's right

Thomas Let them alone for rogues, and act for ourselves [*Murmurs*]

Blacksmith That's what we been doin', haven't we?

Thomas [*With increased excitement*] I was brought up to do for meself.
 I was brought up to go without a thing, if I had not moneys to pay it. There is
 too much, look you, of doing things with other people's moneys. We have fought
 fair, and if we have been beaten, it is no fault of ours. Give us the power to make
 terms with London for ourself, if we don't succeed, I say it is better to take our
 beating like men, than to tie like dogs, or hang on to others' coat-tails to make
 them do our business for us!

Evans [*Muttering*] Who wants to?

Thomas [*Craning*] What's that? If I stand up to a potty, and he knocks me
 town, I am not to go hollering to other potties to help me, I am to stand up
 again, and if he knocks me town properly, I am to stay there, isn't that right?
 [*Laughter*]

Jago No Union!

Henry Rous Union! [*Others take up the shout*]

Evans Blacklegs! [*BULGIN and the BLACKSMITH shake their fists at EVANS*]

Thomas [*With a gesture*] I am an old man, look you [*A sudden silence,
 then murmurs again*]

Lewis Old fool, with his "No Union!"

Bulgin Them furnace chaps! For twopence I'd smash the faces o' the lot of
 them

Green If I'd a been listened to at the first—

Thomas [*Wiping his brow*] I'm comin' now to what I was going to say—

Davies [*Muttering*] An' time too!

Thomas [*Solemnly*] Chapel says. Don't carry on this strife! Put an end
 to it!

Jago That's a lie! Chapel says go on!

Thomas [*Scornfully*] Intee! I have ears to my head

Red-Haired Youth Ah! long ones! [*A laugh*]

Jago Your ears have misbeled you then

Thomas [Excitedly] Ye cannot be right if I am, ye cannot haf it both ways
Red Haired Youth Chapel can though! [*The Shaver* laughs, there are murmurs from the crowd]

Thomas [Fixing his eyes on "The Shaver"] Ah! ye're coing the roat to tamnation An' so I say to all of you If ye co against Chapel I will not pe with you, nor will any other Got fearing man [*He steps down from the platform*]
Jago makes his way towards it There are cries of "Don't let 'im go up!"]

Jago Don't let him go up? That's free speech, that is [*He goes up*] I ain't got much to say to you Look at the matter plain, we've come the road this far, and now you want to chuck the journey We've all been in one boat, and now you want to pull in two We engineers have stood by you, ye're ready now, are ye, to give us the go by? If we'd a known that before, we'd not a started out with you so early one bright morning! That's all I've got to say Old man Thomas a'n't got his Bible lesson right If you give up to London, or to Har-ness, now, it's givin' us the chuck—to save your skins—you won't get over that, my boys, it's a dirty thing to do [*He gets down, during his little speech, which is ironically spoken, there is a restless discomfort in the crowd* Rous, stepping forward, jumps on the platform He has an air of fierce distraction Sullen murmurs of disapproval from the crowd]

Rous [Speaking with great excitement] I'm no blanky orator, mates, but wot I say is drove from me What I say is yuman nature Can a man set an' see 'is mother starve? Can 'e now?

Roberts [Starting forward] Rous!

Rous [Staring at him fiercely] Sim 'Arness said fair! I've changed my mind!

Roberts Ah! Turned your coat you mean! [*The crowd manifests a great surprise*]

Lewis [Apostrophizing Rous] Hallo! What's turned him round?

Rous [Speaking with intense excitement] 'E said fair "Stand by us," 'e said, "and we'll stand by you" That's where we've been makin' our mistake this long time past, and who's to blame for't? [*He points at ROBERTS*] That man there! "No," 'e said, "fight the robbers," 'e said, "squeeze the breath out o' them!" But it's not the breath out o' them that's being squeezed, it's the breath out of *us* and *ours*, and that's the book of truth I'm no orator, mates, it's the flesh and blood in me that's speakin', it's the heart o' me [*With a menacing, yet half-ashamed movement towards ROBERTS*] He'll speak to you again, mark my words, but don't ve listen [*The crowd groans*] It's hell fire that's on that man's tongue [*ROBERTS is seen laughing*] Sim 'Arness is right What are we without the Union—handful o' parched leaves—a puff o' smoke I'm no orator, but I say Chuck it up! Chuck it up! Sooner than go on starving the women and the children [*The murmurs of acquiescence almost drown the murmurs of dissent*]

Evans What's turned you to blacklegging?

Rous [With a furious look] Sim 'Arness knows what he's talking about Give us power to come to terms with London, I'm no orator, but I say—have done wi' this black misery! [*He gives his muffler a twist, jerks his head back, and jumps off the platform* The crowd applauds and surges forward Amid

cries of "That's enough!" "Up Union!" "Up Har'ness!" ROBERTS quietly ascends the platform There is a moment of silence]

Blacksmith We don't want to hear you Shut it!

Henry Rous Get down! [*Amid such cries they surge towards the platform*]

Evans [*Fiercely*] Let 'im speak! Roberts! Roberts!

Bulgin [*Muttering*] He'd better look out that I don't crack his skull [ROBERTS faces the crowd, probing them with his eyes till they gradually become silent He begins speaking One of the bargemen rises and stands]

Roberts You don't want to hear me, then? You'll listen to Rous and to that old man, but not to me You'll listen to Sim Harness of the Union that's treated you so fair, maybe you'll listen to those men from London? Ah! You groan! What for? You love their feet on your necks, don't you? [*Then as BULGIN elbows his way towards the platform, with calm pathos*] You'd like to break my jaw, John Bulgin Let me speak, then do your smashing, if it gives you pleasure [*BULGIN stands motionless and sullen*] Am I a liar, a coward, a traitor? If only I were, ye'd listen to me, I'm sure [*The murmurings cease, and there is now dead silence*] Is there a man of you here that has less to gain by striking? Is there a man of you that had more to lose? Is there a man of you that has given up eight hundred pounds since this trouble here began? Come now, is there? How much has Thomas given up—ten pounds or five, or what? You listened to him, and what had he to say? "None can pretend," he said, "that I am not a believer in principle—[*with biting irony*]—but when Nature says 'No further, 't es going agenst Nature'" I tell you if a man cannot say to Nature "Budge me from this if ye can!"—[*with a sort of exaltation*]—his principles are but his belly "Oh, but," Thomas says, "a man can be pure and honest, just and merciful, and take off his hat to Nature!" I tell you Nature's neither pure nor honest, just nor merciful You chaps that live over the hull, an' go home dead beat in the dark on a snowy night—don't ye fight your way every inch of it? Do ye go lyin' down an' trustin' to the tender mercies of this merciful Nature? Try it and you'll soon know with what ye've got to deal 'T es only by that—[*he strikes a blow with his clenched fist*]—in Nature's face that a man can be a man "Give in," says Thomas, "go down on your knees, throw up your foolish fight, an' perhaps," he said, "perhaps your enemy will chuck you down a crust"

Jago Never!

Evans Curse them!

Thomas I nefer said that

Roberts [*Bitingly*] If ye did not say it, man, ye meant it An' what did ye say about Chapel? "Chapel's against it," ye said "She's against it!" Well, if Chapel and Nature go hand in hand, it's the first I've ever heard of it That young man there—[*pointing to Rous*]—said I 'ad 'ell fire on my tongue If I had I would use it all to scorch and wither this talking of surrender Surrenderin's the work of cowards and traitors

Henry Rous [*As GEORGE ROUS moves forward*] Go for him, George—don't stand his lip!

Roberts [*Flinging out his finger*] Stop there, George Rous, it's no time this to settle personal matters [*Rous stops*] But there was one other spoke to you—

Mr Simon Harness We have not much to thank Mr Harness and the Union for They said to us, "Desert your mates, or we'll desert you" An' they did desert us

Evans They did

Roberts Mi Simon Harness is a clever man, but he has come too late [*With intense conviction*] For all that Mr Simon Harness says, for all that Thomas Rous, for all that any man present here can say—*We've won the fight!* [*The crowd sags nearer, looking eagerly up With withering scorn*] You've felt the pinch o't in your bellies You've forgotten what that fight 'as been, many times I have told you, I will tell you now this once again The fight o' the country's body and blood against a blood-sucker The fight of those that spend themselves with every blow they strike and every breath they draw, against a thing that fattens on them, and grows and grows by the law of *merciful* Nature That thing is Capital! A thing that buys the sweat o' men's brows, and the tortures o' their brains, at its own price *Don't* I know that? Wasn't the work o' *my* brains bought for seven hundred pounds, and hasn't one hundred thousand pounds been gained them by that seven hundred without the stirring of a finger? It is a thing that will take as much and give you as little as it can That's *Capital!* A thing that will say—"I'm very sorry for you, poor fellows—you have a cruel time of it, I know," but will not give one sixpence of its dividends to help you have a better time That's *Capital!* Tell me, for all their talk, is there one of them that will consent to another penny on the Income Tax to help the poor? That's *Capital!* A white-faced, stony-hearted monster! Ye have got it on its knees, are ye to give up at the last minute to save your miserable bodies pain? When I went this morning to those old men from London, I looked into their very 'earts One of them was sitting there—Mr Scantlebury, a mass of flesh nourished on us sittin' there for all the world like the shareholders in this Company, that sit not moving tongue nor finger, takin' dividends—a great dumb ox that can only be roused when its food is threatened I looked into his eyes and I saw *he was afraid*—afraid for himself and his dividends, afraid for his fees, afraid of the very shareholders he stands for, and all but one of them's afraid—like children that get into a wood at night, and start at every rustle of the leaves I ask you, men—[*he pauses, holding out his hand till there is utter silence*—]give me a free hand to tell them "Go you back to London The men have nothing for you!" [*A murmuring*] Give me that, an' I swear to you, within a week you shall have from London all you want

Evans, Jago and Others A free hand! Give him a free hand! Bravo—bravo!

Roberts 'Tis not for this little moment of time we're fighting [*the murmuring dies*], not for ourselves, our own little bodies, and their wants, 'tis for all those that come after throughout all time [*With intense sadness*] Oh! men—for the love o' them, don't roll up another stone upon their heads, don't help to blacken the sky, an' let the bitter sea in over them They're welcome to the worst that can happen to me, to the worst that can happen to us all, aren't they—aren't they? If we can shake [*passionately*] that white faced monster with the bloody lips, that has sucked the life out of ourselves, our wives, and children, since the world began [*Dropping the note of passion, but with the utmost weight and intensity*] If we have not the hearts of men to stand against

it breast to breast, and eye to eye, and force it backward till it cry for mercy, it will go on sucking life, and we shall stay forever what we are [*in almost a whisper*], less than the very dogs [*An utter stillness, and ROBERTS stands rocking his body slightly, with his eyes burning the faces of the crowd*]

Evans and Jago [*Suddenly*] *Roberts*! [*The shout is taken up There is a slight movement in the crowd, and MADGE, passing below the towing-path, stops by the platform, looking up at ROBERTS A sudden doubting silence*]

Roberts "Nature," says that old man, "give in to Nature" I tell you, strike your blow in Nature's face—an' let it do its worst! [*He catches sight of MADGE, his brows contract, he looks away*]

Madge [*In a low voice—close to the platform*] Your wife's dying! [*ROBERTS glares at her as if torn from some pinnacle of exaltation*]

Roberts [*Trying to stammer on*] I say to you—answer them—answer them— [*He is drowned by the murmur in the crowd*]

Thomas [*Stepping forward*] Ton't you hear her, then?

Roberts What is it? [*A dead silence*]

Thomas Your wife, man! [*ROBERTS hesitates, then with a gesture, he leaps down, and goes away below the towing-path, the men making way for him The standing BARGEMAN opens and prepares to light a lantern Daylight is fast failing*]

Madge He needn't have hurried! Annie Roberts is dead [*Then in the silence, passionately*] You pack of blinded hounds! How many more women are you going to let to die? [*The crowd shrinks back from her, and breaks up in groups, with a confused, uneasy movement MADGE goes quickly away below the towing-path There is a hush as they look after her*]

Lewis There's a spitfire for ye!

Bulgin [*Growling*] I'll smash 'er jaw

Green If I'd a-been listened to, that poor woman—

Thomas It's a judgment on him for coing against Chapel I tolt him how 'twould bel

Evans All the more reason for sticking by 'im [*A cheer*] Are you goin' to desert him now 'e's down? Are you going to chuck him over, now 'e's lost 'is wife? [*The crowd is murmuring and cheering all at once*]

Rous [*Stepping in front of platform*] Lost his wife! Aye! Can't ye see? Look at home, look at your own wives! What's to save them? Ye'll have the same in all your houses before long!

Lewis Aye, aye!

Henry Rous Right! George, right! [*There are murmurs of assent*]

Rous It's not us that's blind, it's Roberts How long will ye put up with 'im?

Henry Rous, Bulgin, Davies Give 'im the chuck! [*The cry is taken up*]

Evans [*Fiercely*] Kick a man that's down? Down?

Henry Rous Stop his jaw there! [*EVANS throws up his arm at a threat from BULGIN The BARGEMAN, who has lighted the lantern, holds it high above his head*]

Rous [*Springing on to the platform*] What brought him down then, but 'is own black obstinacy? Are ye goin' to follow a man that can't see better than that where he's goin'?

Evans He's lost 'is wife
Rous An' whose fault's that but his own? 'Ave done with 'im, I say, before
 he's killed your own wives and mothers
Davies Down 'im!
Henry Rous He's finished!
Brown We've had enough of 'im!
Blacksmith Too much! [*The crowd takes up these cries, excepting only*
EVANS, JAGO, and GREEN, who is seen to argue mildly with the BLACKSMITH]
Rous [*Above the hubbub*] We'll make terms with the Union, lads [*Cheers*]
Evans [*Fiercely*] Ye blacklegs!
Bulgin [*Savagely—squaring up to him*] Who are ye callin' blacklegs, Rat?
 [*EVANS throws up his fists, parries the blow, and returns it They fight The*
bargemen are seen holding up the lantern and enjoying the sight Old THOMAS
steps forward and holds out his hands]
Thomas Shame on your strife! [*The BLACKSMITH, BROWN, LEWIS, and the*
RED-HAIRED YOUTH pull EVANS and BULGIN apart The stage is almost dark]

THE CURTAIN FALLS

ACT III

It is five o'clock In the UNDERWOODS' drawing-room, which is artistically furnished, ENID is sitting on the sofa working at a baby's frock EDGAR, by a little spindle legged table in the center of the room, is fingering a china-box His eyes are fixed on the double-doors that lead into the dining-room

Edgar [*Putting down the china-box, and glancing at his watch*] Just on five They're all in there waiting, except Frank Where's he?

Enid He's had to go down to Gasgoyne's about a contract Will you want him?

Edgar He can't help us This is a director's job [*Motioning towards a single door half hidden by a curtain*] Father in his room?

Enid Yes

Edgar I wish he'd stay there, Enid [*ENID looks up at him*] This is a beastly business, old girl [*He takes up the little box again and turns it over and over*]

Enid I went to the Roberts's this afternoon, Ted

Edgar That wasn't very wise

Enid He's simply killing his wife

Edgar We are, you mean

Enid [*Suddenly*] Roberts ought to give way!

Edgar There's a lot to be said on the men's side

Enid I don't feel half so sympathetic with them as I did before I went They just set up class feeling against you Poor Annie was looking dreadfully bad—fire going out, and nothing fit for her to eat [*EDGAR walks to and fro*] But she would stand up for Roberts When you see all this wretchedness going on and feel you can do nothing, you have to shut your eyes to the whole thing

Edgar If you can

Enid When I went I was all on their side, but as soon as I got there I began to feel quite different at once. People talk about sympathy with the working classes, they don't know what it means to try and put it into practice. It seems hopeless.

Edgar Ah! well

Enid It's dreadful going on with the men in this state. I do hope the Dad will make concessions.

Edgar He won't [*Gloomily*]. It's a sort of religion with him. Curse it! I know what's coming! He'll be voted down.

Enid They wouldn't dare!

Edgar They will—they're in a funk.

Enid [*Indignantly*] He'd never stand it!

Edgar [*With a shrug*] My dear girl, if you're beaten in a vote, you've got to stand it.

Enid Oh! [*She gets up in alarm*]. But would he resign?

Edgar Of course! It goes to the roots of his beliefs.

Enid But he's so wrapped up in this company, Ted! There'd be nothing left for him! It'd be dreadful! [*Edgar shrugs his shoulders*]. Oh, Ted, he's so old now! You mustn't let them!

Edgar [*Hiding his feelings in an outburst*]. My sympathies in this strike are all on the side of the men.

Enid He's been Chairman for more than thirty years! He made the whole thing! And think of the bad times they've had, it's always been he who pulled them through. Oh, Ted, you must—

Edgar What is it you want? You said just now you hoped he'd make concessions. Now you want me to back him in not making them. This isn't a game, Enid!

Enid [*Hotly*]. It isn't a game to me that the Dad's in danger of losing all he cares about in life. If he won't give way, and he's beaten, it'll simply break him down!

Edgar Didn't you say it was dreadful going on with the men in this state?

Enid But can't you see, Ted, Father'll never get over it! You must stop them somehow. The others are afraid of him. If you back him up—

Edgar [*Putting his hand to his head*]. Against my convictions—against yours! The moment it begins to pinch one personally—

Enid It isn't personal, it's the Dad!

Edgar Your family or yourself, and over goes the show!

Enid [*Resentfully*]. If you don't take it seriously, I do.

Edgar I am as fond of him as you are, that's nothing to do with it.

Enid We can't tell about the men, it's all guesswork. But we know the Dad might have a stroke any day. D'you mean to say that he isn't more to you than—

Edgar Of course he is.

Enid I don't understand you then.

Edgar H'm!

Enid If it were for oneself it would be different, but for our own father! You don't seem to realize

Edgar I realize perfectly

Enid It's your first duty to save him

Edgar I wonder

Enid [*Imploring*] Oh, Ted! It's the only interest he's got left, it'll be like a death blow to him!

Edgar [*Restraining his emotion*] I know

Enid Promise!

Edgar I'll do what I can [*He turns to the double doors. The curtained door is opened, and ANTHONY appears. EDGAR opens the double-doors, and passes through. SCANTLEBURY's voice is faintly heard: "Past five, we shall never get through—have to eat another dinner at that hotel!" The doors are shut. ANTHONY walks forward.*]

Anthony You've been seeing Roberts, I hear

Enid Yes

Anthony Do you know what trying to bridge such a gulf as this is like? [*ENID puts her work on the little table, and faces him.*] Filling a sieve with sand!

Enid Don't!

Anthony You think with your gloved hands you can cure the trouble of the century [*He passes on.*]

Enid Father! [*ANTHONY stops at the double doors.*] I'm only thinking of you!

Anthony [*More softly*] I can take care of myself, my dear

Enid Have you thought what'll happen if you're beaten—[*she points*—]—in there?

Anthony I don't mean to be

Enid Oh! Father, don't give them a chance. You're not well, need you go to the meeting at all?

Anthony [*With a grim smile*] Cut and run?

Enid But they'll out-vote you!

Anthony [*Putting his hand on the doors*] We shall see!

Enid I beg you, Dad! [*ANTHONY looks at her softly.*] Won't you? [*ANTHONY shakes his head. He opens the doors. A buzz of voices comes in.*]

Scantlebury Can one get dinner on that 6.30 train up?

Tench No, sir, I believe not, sir

Wilder Well, I shall speak out, I've had enough of this

Edgar [*Sharply*] What? [*It ceases instantly. ANTHONY passes through, closing the doors behind him. ENID springs to them with a gesture of dismay. She puts her hand on the knob, and begins turning it, then goes to the fireplace, and taps her foot on the fender. Suddenly she rings the bell. FROST comes in by the door that leads into the hall.*]

Frost Yes, M'm?

Enid When the men come, Frost, please show them in here, the hall's cold.

Frost I could put them in the pantry, M'm

Enid No I don't want to—to offend them, they're so touchy

Frost Yes, M'm [*Pause*] Excuse me, Mr Anthony's 'ad nothing to eat all day

Enid I know, Frost

Frost Nothin' but two whiskies and sodas, M'm

Enid Oh! you oughtn't to have let him have those

Frost [*Gravely*] Mr Anthony is a little difficult, M'm It's not as if he were a younger man, an' knew what was good for 'im, he will have his own way

Enid I suppose we all want that

Frost Yes, M'm [*Quietly*] Excuse me speakin' about the strike I'm sure if the other gentlemen were to give up to Mr Anthony, and quietly let the men 'ave what they want, afterwards, that'd be the best way I find that very useful with him at times, M'm [*ENID shakes her head*] If he's crossed, it makes him violent [*with an air of discovery*], and I've noticed in my own case, when I'm violent I'm always sorry for it afterwards

Enid [*With a smile*] Are you ever violent, Frost?

Frost Yes, M'm, oh! sometimes very violent

Enid I've never seen you

Frost [*Impersonally*] No, M'm, that is so [*ENID fidgets towards the back of the door With feeling*] Bein' with Mr Anthony, as you know, M'm, ever since I was fifteen, it worries me to see him crossed like this at his age I've taken the liberty to speak to Mr Wanklin [*dropping his voice*]*—*seems to be the most sensible of the gentlemen—but 'e said to me "That's all very well, Frost, but this strike's a very serious thing," 'e said "Serious for all parties, no doubt," I said, "but yumor 'im, sir," I said, "yumor 'im It's like this, if a man comes to a stone wall, 'e doesn't drive 'is 'ead against it, 'e gets over it" "Yes," 'e said, "you'd better tell your master that" [*Frost looks at his nails*] That's where it is, M'm I s'ud to Mr Anthony this morning "Is it worth it, sir?" "Damn it," he said to me, "Frost! Mind your own business, or take a month's notice!" Beg pardon, M'm, for using such a word

Enid [*Moving to the double-doors, and listening*] Do you know that man Roberts, Frost?

Frost Yes, M'm, that's to say, not to speak to But to look at 'im you can tell what *he's* like

Enid [*Stopping*] Yes?

Frost He's not one of these 'ere ordinary 'armless Socialists 'E's violent, got a fire inside 'im What I call "personal" A man may 'ave what opinions 'e likes, so long as 'e's not personal, when 'e's that 'e's *not* safe

Enid I think that's what my father feels about Roberts

Frost No doubt, M'm, Mr Anthony has a feeling against him [*ENID glances at him sharply, but finding him in perfect earnest, stands biting her lips, and looking at the double-doors*] It's a regular right down struggle between the two I've no patience with this Roberts, from what I 'ear he's just an ordinary workin' man like the rest of 'em If he did invent a thing he's no worse off than 'undreds of others My brother invented a new kind o' dumb-waiter—nobody gave *him* anything for it, an' there it is, bein' used all over the place [*ENID*

moves closer to the double-doors] There's a kind o' man that never forgives the world because 'e wasn't born a gentleman What I say is—no man that's a gentleman looks down on another because 'e 'appens to be a class or two above 'im no more than if 'e 'appens to be a class or two below

Enid [*With slight impatience*] Yes, I know, Frost, of course Will you please go in and ask if they'll have some tea, say I sent you

Frost Yes, M'm [*He opens the doors gently and goes in There is a momentary sound of eanest, rather angry talk*]

Wilde I don't agree with you

Wanklin We've had this over a dozen times

Edgar [*Impatiently*] Well, what's the proposition?

Scantlebury Yes, what does your father say? Tea? Not for me, not for me!

Wanklin What I understand the Chairman to say is this— [*Frost reenters, closing the door behind him*]

Enid [*Moving from the door*] Won't they have any tea, Frost? [*She goes to the little table, and remains motionless, looking at the baby's frock A parlormaid enters from the hall*]

Parlormaid A Miss Thomas, M'm

Enid [*Raising her head*] Thomas? What Miss Thomas—d'you mean a—?

Parlormaid Yes, M'm

Enid [*Blankly*] Oh! Where is she?

Parlormaid In the porch

Enid I don't want— [*She hesitates*]

Frost Shall I dispose of her, M'm?

Enid I'll come out No, show her in here, Ellen [*The PARLORMAID and FROST go out ENID, pursing her lips, sits at the little table, taking up the baby's frock The PARLORMAID ushers in MADGE THOMAS and goes out, MADGE stands by the door*]

Enid Come in What is it? What have you come for, please?

Madge Brought a message from Mrs Roberts

Enid A message? Yes

Madge She asks you to look after her mother

Enid I don't understand

Madge [*Sullenly*] That's the message

Enid But—what—why?

Madge Annie Roberts is dead [*There is a silence*]

Enid [*Horried*] But it's only a little more than an hour since I saw her

Madge Of cold and hunger

Enid [*Rising*] Oh! that's not true! the poor thing's heart— What makes you look at me like that? I tried to help her

Madge [*With suppressed savagery*] I thought you'd like to know

Enid [*Passionately*] It's so unjust! Can't you see that I want to help you all?

Madge I never harmed any one that hadn't harmed me first

Enid [*Coldly*] What harm have I done you? Why do you speak to me like that?

Madge [*With the bitterest intensity*] You come out of your comfort to spy on us! A week of nunger, that's what you want!

Enid [*Standing her ground*] Don't talk nonsense!

Madge I saw her die, her hands were blue with the cold

Enid [*With a movement of grief*] Oh! why wouldn't she let me help her? It's such senseless pride!

Madge Pride's better than nothing to keep your body warm

Enid [*Passionately*] I won't talk to you! How can you tell what I feel? It's not my fault that I was born better off than you

Madge We don't want your money

Enid You don't understand, and you don't want to, please to go away!

Madge [*Balefully*] You've killed her, for all your soft words, you and your father—

Enid [*With rage and emotion*] That's wicked! My father is suffering himself through this wretched strike

Madge [*With somber triumph*] Then tell him Mrs Roberts is dead! That'll make him better

Enid Go away!

Madge When a person hurts us we get it back on them [*She makes a sudden and swift movement towards ENID, fixing her eyes on the child's frock lying across the little table ENID snatches the frock up, as though it were the child itself They stand a yard apart, crossing glances*]

Madge [*Pointing to the frock with a little smile*] Ah! You felt that! Lucky it's her mother—not her children—you've to look after, isn't it? *She* won't trouble you long!

Enid Go away!

Madge I've given you the message [*She turns and goes out into the hall ENID, motionless till she has gone, sinks down at the table, bending her head over the frock, which she is still clutching to her The double-doors are opened, and ANTHONY comes slowly in, he passes his daughter, and lowers himself into an arm-chair He is very flushed*]

Enid [*Hiding her emotion—anxiously*] What is it, Dad? [*ANTHONY makes a gesture, but does not speak*] Who was it? [*ANTHONY does not answer ENID going to the double-doors meets EDGAR coming in They speak together in low tones*] What is it, Ted?

Edgar That fellow Wilder! Taken to personalities! He was downright insulting

Enid What did he say?

Edgar Said Father was too old and feeble to know what he was doing! The Dad's worth six of him!

Enid Of course he is [*They look at ANTHONY The doors open wider, WANKLIN appears with SCANTLEBURY*]

Scantlebury [*Sotto voce*] I don't like the look of this!

Wanklin [*Going forward*] Come, Chairman! Wilder sends you his apologies A man can't do more [*WILDER, followed by TENCH, comes in, and goes to ANTHONY*]

Wilder [*Glumly*] I withdraw my words, sir I'm sorry [*ANTHONY nods to him*]

End You haven't come to a decision, Mr Wanklin? [WANKLIN *shakes his head*]

Wanklin We're all here, Chairman, what do you say? Shall we get on with the business, or shall we go back to the other room?

Scantlebury Yes, yes, let's get on. We must settle something [He turns from a small chair, and settles himself suddenly in the largest chair with a sigh of comfort. WILDER and WANKLIN also sit, and TENCH, drawing up a straight backed chair close to his Chairman, sits on the edge of it with the minute-book and a stylographic pen.]

End [Whispering] I want to speak to you a minute, Ted [They go out through the double-doors]

Wanklin Really, Chairman, it's no use soothing ourselves with a sense of false security. If this strike's not brought to an end before the General Meeting, the shareholders will certainly haul us over the coals.

Scantlebury [Stirring] What—what's that?

Wanklin I know it for a fact.

Anthony Let them!

Wilder And get turned out?

Wanklin [To ANTHONY] I don't mind martyrdom for a policy in which I believe, but I object to being burnt for some one else's principles.

Scantlebury Very reasonable—you must see that, Chairman.

Anthony We owe it to other employers to stand firm.

Wanklin There's a limit to that.

Anthony You were all full of fight at the start.

Scantlebury [With a sort of groan] We thought the men would give in, but they—haven't!

Anthony They will!

Wilder [Rising and pacing up and down] I can't have my reputation as a man of business destroyed for the satisfaction of starving the men out. [Almost in tears.] I can't have it! How can we meet the shareholders with things in the state they are?

Scantlebury Hear, hear—hear, hear!

Wilder [Lashing himself] If any one expects me to say to them I've lost you fifty thousand pounds and sooner than put my pride in my pocket I'll lose you another. [Glancing at ANTHONY] It's—it's unnatural! I don't want to go against you, sir—

Wanklin [Persuasively] Come, Chairman, we're *not* free agents. We're part of a machine. Our only business is to see the Company earns as much profit as it safely can. If you blame me for want of principle I say that we're Trustees. Reason tells us we shall never get back in the saving of wages what we shall lose if we continue this struggle—really, Chairman, we *must* bring it to an end, on the best terms we can make.

Anthony No. [There is a pause of general dismay.]

Wilder It's a deadlock then. [Letting his hands drop with a sort of despair.] Now I shall never get off to Spain!

Wanklin [Retaining a trace of irony] You hear the consequences of your victory, Chairman?

Wilder [*With a burst of feeling*] My wife's ill!

Scantlebury Dear, dear! You don't say so

Wilder If I don't get her out of this cold, I won't answer for the consequences [*Through the double doors EDGAR comes in looking very grave*]

Edgar [*To his father*] Have you heard this, sir? Mrs Roberts is dead! [*Every one stares at him, as if trying to gauge the importance of this news*] ERIC saw her this afternoon, she had no coals, or food, or anything. It's enough! [*There is a silence, every one avoiding the other's eyes, except ANTHONY, who stares hard at his son*]

Scantlebury You don't suggest that we could have helped the poor thing?

Wilder [*Flustered*] The woman was in bad health. Nobody can say there's any responsibility on us. At least—not on me.

Edgar [*Hotly*] I say that we *are* responsible.

Anthony War is war!

Edgar Not on women!

Wanklin It not infrequently happens that women are the greatest sufferers.

Edgar If we knew that, all the more responsibility rests on us.

Anthony This is no matter for amateurs.

Edgar Call me what you like, sir. It's sickened me. We had no right to carry things to such a length.

Wilder I don't like this business a bit—that Radical rag will twist it to their own ends, see if they don't! They'll get up some cock and bull story about the poor woman's dying from starvation. I wash my hands of it.

Edgar You can't. None of us can.

Scantlebury [*Striking his fist on the arm of his chair*] But I protest against this—

Edgar Protest as you like, Mr Scantlebury, it won't alter facts.

Anthony That's enough.

Edgar [*Facing him angrily*] No, sir. I tell you exactly what I think. If we pretend the men are not suffering, it's humbug, and if they're suffering, we know enough of human nature to know the women are suffering more, and as to the children—well—it's damnable! [*SCANTLEBURY rises from his chair*] I don't say that we meant to be cruel, I don't say anything of the sort, but I do say it's criminal to shut our eyes to the facts. We employ these men, and we can't get out of it. I don't care so much about the men, but I'd sooner resign my position on the Board than go on starving women in this way. [*All except ANTHONY are now upon their feet. ANTHONY sits grasping the arms of his chair and staring at his son*]

Scantlebury I don't—I don't like the way you're putting it, young sir.

Wanklin You're rather overshooting the mark.

Wilder I should think so indeed!

Edgar [*Losing control*] It's no use blinking things! If you want to have the death of women on your hands—I don't!

Scantlebury Now, now, young man!

Wilder On our hands? Not on *mine*, I won't have it!

Edgar We are five members of this Board, if we were four against it, why did we let it drift till it came to this? You know perfectly well why—because

we hoped we should starve the men out Well, all we've done is to starve one woman out!

Scantlebury [*Almost hysterically*] I protest, I protest! I'm a humane man—we're all humane men!

Edgar [*Scornfully*] There's nothing wrong with our *humanity* It's our imaginations, Mr Scantlebury

Wilder Nonsense! My imagination's as good as yours

Edgar If so, it isn't good enough

Wilder I foresaw this!

Edgar Then why didn't you put your foot down?

Wilder Much good that would have done [*He looks at ANTHONY*]

Edgar If you, and I, and each one of us here who say that our imaginations are so good—

Scantlebury [*Flurried*] I never said so

Edgar [*Paying no attention*] —had put our feet down, the thing would have been ended long ago, and this poor woman's life wouldn't have been crushed out of her like this For all we can tell there may be a dozen other starving women

Scantlebury For God's sake, sir, don't use that word at a—at a Board meeting, it's—it's monstrous

Edgar I will use it, Mr Scantlebury

Scantlebury Then I shall not listen to you I shall not listen! It's painful to me [*He covers his ears*]

Wanklin None of us are opposed to a settlement, except your father

Edgar I'm certain that if the shareholders knew—

Wanklin I don't think you'll find their imaginations are any better than ours Because a woman happens to have a weak heart—

Edgar A struggle like this finds out the weak spots in everybody Any child knows that If it hadn't been for this cut-throat policy, she needn't have died like this, and there wouldn't be all this misery that any one who isn't a fool can see is going on [*Throughout the foregoing ANTHONY has eyed his son, he now moves as though to rise, but stops as EDGAR speaks again*] I don't defend the men, or myself, or anybody

Wanklin You may have to! A coroner's jury of disinterested sympathizers may say some very nasty things We mustn't lose sight of our position

Scantlebury [*Without uncovering his ears*] Coroner's jury! No, no, it's not a case for that!

Edgar I've had enough of cowardice

Wanklin Cowardice is an unpleasant word, Mr Edgar Anthony It will look very like cowardice if we suddenly concede the men's demands when a thing like this happens, we must be careful!

Wilder Of course we must We've no knowledge of this matter, except a rumor The proper course is to put the whole thing into the hands of Harness to settle for us, that's natural, that's what we *should* have come to any way

Scantlebury [*With dignity*] Exactly! [*Turning to EDGAR*] And as to you, young sir, I can't sufficiently express my—my distaste for the way you've treated the whole matter You ought to withdraw! Talking of starvation, talking of cowardice! Considering what our views are! Except your own father—we're

all agreed the only policy is—is one of goodwill—it's most irregular, it's most improper, and all I can say is it's—it's given me pain— [*He places his hand over his heart*]

Edgar [*Stubbornly*] I withdraw nothing [*He is about to say more when SCANTLEBURY once more covers up his ears*] TENCH suddenly makes a demonstration with the minute book *A sense of having been engaged in the unusual comes over all of them, and one by one they resume their seats* EDGAR alone remains on his feet]

Wilder [*With an air of trying to wipe something out*] I pay no attention to what young Mr. Anthony has said. Coroner's jury! The idea's preposterous!—I move this amendment to the Chairman's motion. That the dispute be placed at once in the hands of Mr. Simon Harness for settlement, on the lines indicated by him this morning. Any one second that? [*TENCH writes in his book*]

Wanklin I do

Wilder Very well, then, I ask the Chairman to put it to the Board

Anthony [*With a great sigh—slowly*] We have been made the subject of an attack [*Looking round at WILDER and SCANTLEBURY with ironical contempt*] I take it on my shoulders. I am seventy-six years old. I have been Chairman of this Company since its inception two-and-thirty years ago. I have seen it pass through good and evil report. My connection with it began in the year that this young man was born [*EDGAR bows his head*] ANTHONY, *gripping his chair, goes on*] I have had to do with "men" for fifty years, I've always stood up to them, I have never been beaten yet. I have fought the men of this Company four times, and four times I have beaten them. It has been said that I am not the man I was [*He looks at WILDER*] However that may be, I am man enough to stand to my guns [*His voice grows stronger*] *The double-doors are opened* ENID *slips in, followed by UNDERWOOD, who restrains her*] The men have been treated justly, they have had fair wages, we have always been ready to listen to complaints. It has been said that times have changed, if they have, I have not changed with them. Neither will I. It has been said that masters and men are equal! Cant! There can only be one master in a house! Where two men meet the better man will rule. It has been said that Capital and Labor have the same interests. Cant! Their interests are as wide asunder as the poles. It has been said that the Board is only part of a machine. Cant! We are the machine, its brains and sinews, it is for us to lead and to determine what is to be done, and to do it without fear or favor. Fear of the men! Fear of the shareholders! Fear of our own shadows! Before I am like that, I hope to die [*He pauses, and meeting his son's eyes, goes on*] There is only one way of treating "men"—with the iron hand. This half and half business, the half and half manners of this generation, has brought all this upon us. Sentiment and softness, and what this young man, no doubt, would call his social policy. You can't eat cake and have it! This middle-class sentiment, or socialism, or whatever it may be, is rotten. Masters are masters, men are men! Yield one demand, and they will make it six. They are [*he smiles grimly*] like *Oliver Twist*, asking for more. If I were in *their* place I should be the same. But I am not in *their* place. Mark my words: one fine morning, when you have given way here, and given way

there—you will find you have parted with the ground beneath your feet, and are deep in the bog of bankruptcy, and with you, floundering in that bog, will be the very men you have given way to. I have been accused of being a domineering tyrant, thinking only of my pride—I am thinking of the future of this country, threatened with the black waters of confusion, threatened with mob government, threatened with what I cannot see. If by any conduct of mine I help to bring this on us, I shall be ashamed to look my fellows in the face [ANTHONY stares before him, at what he cannot see, and there is perfect stillness. FROST comes in from the hall, and all but ANTHONY look round at him uneasily.]

Frost [To his master] The men are here, sir [ANTHONY makes a gesture of dismissal] Shall I bring them in, sir?

Anthony Wait! [FROST goes out, ANTHONY turns to face his son] I come to the attack that has been made upon me [EDGAR, with a gesture of deprecation, remains motionless, with his head a little bowed] A woman has died. I am told that her blood is on my hands, I am told that on my hands is the starvation and the suffering of other women and of children.

Edgar I said "on our hands," sir.

Anthony It is the same [His voice grows stronger and stronger, his feeling is more and more made manifest] I am not aware that if my adversary suffer in a fair fight not sought by me, it is my fault. If I fall under his feet—as fall I may—I shall not complain. That will be my look-out—and this is—his. I cannot separate, as I would, these men from their women and children. A fair fight is a fair fight! Let them learn to think before they pick a quarrel!

Edgar [In a low voice] But is it a fair fight, Father? Look at them, and look at us! They've only this one weapon!

Anthony [Grimly] And you're weak kneed enough to teach them how to use it! It seems the fashion nowadays for men to take their enemy's side. I have not learnt that art. Is it my fault that they quarreled with their Union too?

Edgar There is such a thing as Mercy.

Anthony And Justice comes before it.

Edgar What seems just to one man, sir, is injustice to another.

Anthony [With suppressed passion] You accuse me of injustice—of what amounts to inhumanity—of cruelty— [EDGAR makes a gesture of horror—a general frightened movement.]

Wanklin Come, come, Chairman.

Anthony [In a grim voice] These are the words of my own son. They are the words of a generation that I don't understand, the words of a soft breed. [A general murmur. With a violent effort ANTHONY recovers his control.]

Edgar [Quietly] I said it of myself, too, Father. [A long look is exchanged between them, and ANTHONY puts out his hand with a gesture as if to sweep the personalities away, then places it against his brow, swaying as though from giddiness. There is a movement towards him. He moves them back.]

Anthony Before I put this amendment to the Board, I have one more word to say [He looks from face to face] If it is carried, it means that we shall fail in what we set ourselves to do. It means that we shall fail in the duty that we owe to all Capital. It means that we shall fail in the duty that we owe ourselves.

It means that we shall be open to constant attack to which we as constantly shall have to yield Be under no misapprehension—run this time, and you will never make a stand again! You will have to fly like curs before the whips of your own men If that is the lot you wish for, you will vote for this amendment [*He looks again, from face to face, finally resting his gaze on EDGAR, all sit with their eyes on the ground ANTHONY makes a gesture, and TENCH hands him the book He reads*] “Moved by Mr Wilder, and seconded by Mr Wanklin “That the men’s demands be placed at once in the hands of Mr Simon Harness for settlement on the lines indicated by him this morning” [*With sudden vigor*] Those in favor Signify the same in the usual way! [*For a minute no one moves, then hastily, just as ANTHONY is about to speak, WILDER’s hand and WANKLIN’s are held up, then SCANTLEBURY’s, and last EDGAR’s, who does not lift his head*] Contrary? [*ANTHONY lifts his own hand In a clear voice*] The amendment is carried I resign my position on this Board [*ENID gasps, and there is dead silence ANTHONY sits motionless, his head slowly drooping, suddenly he heaves as though the whole of his life had risen up within him*] Fifty years! You have disgraced me, gentlemen Bring in the men! [*He sits motionless, staring before him The Board draws hurriedly together, and forms a group TENCH in a frightened manner speaks into the hall UNDERWOOD almost forces ENID from the room*]

Wilder [*Hurriedly*] What’s to be said to them? Why isn’t Harness here? Ought we to see the men before he comes? I don’t—

Tench Will you come in, please? [*Enter THOMAS, GREEN, BULGIN, and ROUS, who file up in a row past the little table TENCH sits down and writes All eyes are fixed on ANTHONY, who makes no sign*]

Wanklin [*Stepping up to the little table, with nervous cordiality*] Well, Thomas, how’s it to be? What’s the result of your meeting?

Rous Sim Harness has our answer He’ll tell you what it is We’re waiting for him He’ll speak for us

Wanklin Is that so, Thomas?

Thomas [*Sullenly*] Yes Roberts will not be coming, his wife is dead

Scantlebury Yes, yes! Poor woman! Yes! Yes!

Frost [*Entering from the hall*] Mr Harness, sir! [*As HARNESS enters he retires HARNESS has a piece of paper in his hand, he bows to the Directors, nods towards the men, and takes his stand behind the little table in the very center of the room*]

Harness Good evening, gentlemen [*TENCH, with the paper he has been writing, joins him, they speak together in low tones*]

Wilder We’ve been waiting for you, Harness Hope we shall come to some—

Frost [*Entering from the hall*] Roberts! [*He goes ROBERTS comes hastily in, and stands staring at ANTHONY His face is drawn and old*]

Roberts Mr Anthony, I am afraid I am a little late I would have been here in time but for something that—has happened [*To the men*] Has anything been said?

Thomas No! But, man, what made ye come?

Roberts Ye told us this morning, gentlemen, to go away and reconsider our

position We have reconsidered it, we are here to bring you the men's answer [To ANTHONY] Go ye back to London We have nothing for you By no jot or tittle do we abate our demands, nor will we until the whole of those demands are yielded [ANTHONY looks at him but does not speak There is a movement amongst the men as though they were bewildered]

Harness Roberts!

Roberts [Glancing fiercely at him, and back to ANTHONY] Is that clear enough for ye? Is it short enough and to the point? Ye made a mistake to think that we would come to heel Ye may break the body, but ye cannot break the spirit Get back to London The men have nothing for ye! [Pausing uneasily, he takes a step towards the unmoving ANTHONY]

Edgar We're all sorry for you, Roberts, but—

Roberts Keep your sorrow, young man Let your father speak!

Harness [With the sheet of paper in his hand, speaking from behind the little table] Roberts!

Roberts [To ANTHONY, with passionate intensity] Why don't ye answer?

Harness Roberts!

Roberts [Turning sharply] What is it?

Harness [Gravely] You're talking without the book, things have traveled past you [He makes a sign to TENCH, who beckons the Directors They quickly sign his copy of the terms] Look at this, man! [Holding up his sheet of paper] "Demands conceded, with the exception of those relating to the engineers and furnace-men Double wages for Saturday's overtime Night-shifts as they are" These terms have been agreed The men go back to work again tomorrow The strike is at an end

Roberts [Reading the paper, and turning on the men They shrink back from him, all but Rous, who stands his ground With deadly stillness] Ye have gone back on me? I stood by ye to the death, ye waited for *that* to throw me over! [The men answer, all speaking together]

Rous It's a lie!

Thomas Ye were past endurance, man

Green If ye'd listen to me—

Bulgin [Under his breath] Hold your jaw!

Roberts Ye waited for *that*!

Harness [Taking the Director's copy of the terms, and handing his own to TENCH] That's enough, men You had better go [The men shuffle slowly, awkwardly away]

Wilder [In a low, nervous voice] There's nothing to stay for now, I suppose [He follows to the door] I shall have a try for that train! Coming, Scantlebury?

Scantlebury [Following with WANKLIN] Yes, yes, wait for me [He stops as ROBERTS speaks]

Roberts [To ANTHONY] But ye have not signed them terms! They can't make terms without their Chairman! Ye would never sign them terms! [ANTHONY looks at him without speaking] Don't tell me ye have! for the love o' God! [With passionate appeal] I reckoned on ye!

Harness [Holding out the Director's copy of the terms] The Board has

signed! [ROBERTS looks dully at the signatures—dashes the paper from him, and covers up his eyes]

Scantlebury [Behind his hand to TENCH] Look after the Chairman! He's not well, he's not well—he had no lunch. If there's any fund started for the women and children, put me down for—for twenty pounds. [He goes out into the hall, in cumbious haste, and WANKLIN, who has been staring at ROBERTS and ANTHONY with twitchings of his face, follows. EDGAR remains seated on the sofa, looking at the ground, TENCH, returning to the bureau, writes in his minute book. HARNESS stands by the little table, gravely watching ROBERTS.]

Roberts Then you're no longer Chairman of this Company! [Breaking into half-mad laughter.] Ah! ha—ah, ha, ha! They've thrown ye over—thrown over their Chairman. Ah—ha—ha! [With a sudden dreadful calm.] So—they've done us both down, Mr. Anthony? [ENID, hurrying through the double-doors, comes quickly to her father.]

Anthony Both broken men, my friend Roberts!

Harness [Coming down and laying his hands on ROBERTS's sleeve] For shame, Roberts! Go home quietly, man, go home!

Roberts [Tearing his arm away] Home? [Shrinking together—in a whisper.] Home!

Enid [Quietly to her father] Come away, dear! Come to your room! [ANTHONY rises with an effort. He turns to ROBERTS, who looks at him. They stand several seconds, gazing at each other fixedly, ANTHONY lifts his hand, as though to salute, but lets it fall. The expression of ROBERTS's face changes from hostility to wonder. They bend their heads in token of respect. ANTHONY turns, and slowly walks towards the curtained door. Suddenly he sways as though about to fall, recovers himself, and is assisted out by EDGAR and ENID, UNDERWOOD follows, but stops at the door. ROBERTS remains motionless for several seconds, staring intently after ANTHONY, then goes out into the hall.]

Tench [Approaching HARNESS] It's a great weight off my mind, Mr. Harness! But what a painful scene, sir! [He wipes his brow. HARNESS, pale and resolute, regards with a grim half-smile the quavering TENCH.] It's all been so violent! What did he mean by "Done us both down"? If he has lost his wife, poor fellow, he oughtn't to have spoken to the Chairman like that!

Harness A woman dead, and the two best men both broken!

Tench [Staring at him—suddenly excited] D'you know, sir—these terms, they're the very same we drew up together, you and I, and put to both sides before the fight began? All this—all this—and—and what for?

Harness [In a slow grim voice] That's where the fun comes in! [UNDERWOOD without turning from the door makes a gesture of assent.]

THE CURTAIN FALLS

WINGS OVER EUROPE¹

A DRAMATIC EXTRAVAGANZA ON A PRESSING THEME

by Robert Nichols and Maurice Browne

Although *Wings over Europe* stands, in its own right, as a stimulating and significant play, these very qualities are enhanced when one learns that it was first produced, in New York, on December 10, 1928, almost 17 years before the destruction of Hiroshima. The authors are both Englishmen. Robert Nichols, a graduate of Oxford, was a Second Lieutenant in the R A F during World War I and, from 1921-1924, Professor of English Literature in the Imperial University, Tokyo. He is well known in England as a dramatist and poet. Maurice Browne, a graduate of Cambridge, is also a poet and dramatist, and a theatrical manager as well. Founder and director of the Chicago Little Theatre, parent theater of the famous American Little Theatres, he has produced many plays in England and in America, among them *Journey's End* at the Savoy Theatre, London, in 1929.

PERSONS IN THE PLAY

Members of the Cabinet

WALTER GRANTLY, *Prime Minister*
 LORD SUNNINGDALE, *Lord Privy Seal*
 LORD DEDHAM, *Lord High Chancellor*
 MATTHEW GRINDLE, *Chancellor of the Exchequer*
 SIR HUMPHREY HALIBURTON, *Secretary of State for Home Affairs*
 EVELYN ARTHUR, *Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs*
 RICHARD STAPP, *Secretary of State for War*
 LORD COSSINGTON, *Secretary of State for the Dominions*
 ESME FAULKNER, *Secretary of State for the Air*
 SIR ROMILLY BLOUNT, *First Lord of the Admiralty*
 LORD VIVIAN VERE, *President of the Board of Education*
 ST JOHN PASCOE, *Attorney General*
 H G DUNNE, *First Commissioner of Works*

Other Characters

FRANCIS LIGHTFOOT, *the Prime Minister's Nephew*
 SIR BERKELEY RUMMEL } *Neurological Specialists*
 SIR HENRY HAND }
 ALBERT CUMMINS, *a Labourer*
 HART-PLIMSOLL, *a Clerk in the Foreign Office*
 TAGGERT, *a Mechanic*
 A POLICE SUPERINTENDENT, TWO CABINET MESSENGERS, FOUR MEN CARRYING A BODY

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PLACE *No 10 Downing Street*TIME *Tomorrow morning*

ACT I

SCENE *The obliging Muse has planted us where, passing between the Horse Guards Parade and Birdcage Walk, we have perhaps wished that for a moment—just long enough to have a peep—we might be in the Cabinet Council Room at No 10 Downing Street. We have our backs to the Horse Guards Parade and are looking towards the Georgian clock on the marble mantelpiece, set precisely in the middle of the farther wall. A cheerful fire is burning in the grate, but we can scarcely see it because the entire middle of the cream-panelled, book-shelved room is occupied by a lengthy table, round the circumference of which are neatly arranged no less than thirteen (ominous number) leather-covered blotting-books, as if to hem in the long array of inkpots, stationery boxes, etc., which form, as it were, the backbone of the table. Chief among these inkpots, right under the eye of the clock, we notice the King of the Inkpots, more massive than his brethren, and rightly conclude that it is before this inkpot, with his back to the fire, that Britain's Prime Minister is accustomed to sit. How pleasant is fancy we—my fellow author and I—seat ourselves in two august armchairs and, leaning back for a moment to savour Ministerial privilege, survey the room. It is a cheerful room, much more cheerful than might be expected by you or us (who somehow had the notion that the making of history was a gloomy process likely to leave on immediate surroundings a desponding portentousness), in point of fact, the sunlight of this spring morning, falling on our left through the two deep double-paned windows (double, we presume, to keep out sound), gently gilds the dark carpet below them and the corners of the table, equipped with writing materials, which stands between. Yes, the room is cheerful and comfortable enough, and the book shelves, packed with brown leather-jerkined volumes of law and flanking the mantelpiece behind us, give us so certain, if subdued, a feeling of authority that, should the tall double doors to the ante room on our right open, and the Secretary for Foreign Affairs himself appear in the area behind the pillars which stand before those double doors, who knows but that, taking casual pencils from the trays before us, we might not tap our teeth with them and say "Ah, Mr Arthur, we are giving you the day off. These chairs are, as you see, adequately occupied the Prime Minister's by myself, and yours, next to it, by my fellow-author. Pray, come again tomorrow" and, having so delivered ourselves, point to the door on our left or right rear, as if to dismiss the protagonist of our play to one of the offices of the private secretaries. But the Muse has indulged us far enough, and silently beckons us into the auditorium.*

We are just in time to see Two Messengers begin to move that row of chairs which flanked the wall opposite us, when we sat where we had no right to be, up to their appropriate stations at the table. Now the elder of the

Messengers halts a moment to look at the clock, reading half past nine, casts a farewell glance round the great table, and, with a cough by way of signal to his fellow, prepares to withdraw when the Prime Minister who, all this time—oblivious of our creative selves—has been standing warming his hands at the fire, turns round What is he like? He is in well-preserved later middle age He is a country gentleman and a Conservative He wears pince-nez For the present let us be content with that, perhaps, when the Cabinet Committee is met, we may learn more

PRIME MINISTER Tell Sir Berkeley Rummel and Sir Henry Hand that I'd be obliged if they'd step in here, directly they've finished their examination [*The Messengers go towards the door Voices are heard in the ante-room*] All right Don't bother Tell my nephew I'd like to see him in about ten minutes [*The ante-room door opens The Messengers go out As the Messengers go, Sir Berkeley Rummel, tall, clean-shaven, gold-spectacled, grizzled, and Sir Henry Hand, stoutish, bearded, philosophically-twinkling, enter*] Well, gentlemen, the famous room—itself! Are you duly awed? I do like to toast myself for a few minutes before a Cabinet Committee—puts me in the mood, you know Besides, most of our visitors like to see me here Nice room, not too grave, just grave enough—nice politician, not too grave—just grave enough—the same in your profession—my little grand-daughter does make me laugh so—cheerfulness will keep breaking in, as Johnson used to remark— [*And then, suddenly—for all this is simply method that has grown to habit*] What's the verdict, Sir Berkeley? [*The Physicians exchange glances*]

RUMMEL Sir Henry and I are in complete agreement Your nephew is perfectly normal

PRIME MINISTER Certain?

RUMMEL Absolutely

HAND No doubt whatever

PRIME MINISTER Well, well

HAND The young man is what is popularly known as highly strung, but not more so than any sensitive man of his attainments Extraordinary results only originate in fine organizations He is the type of artist-scientist, a type not uncommon among great physicists Pascal belonged to it, and Newton, at least mentally

RUMMEL [*Taking up tale*] Charles Darwin, one of the sanest men who ever lived, was of a not dissimilar type Your nephew, Mr Grantly, though highly strung, as Sir Henry says, is altogether normal

PRIME MINISTER How did he take the examination? Did he spot what you were after?

RUMMEL No, no Oh, dear, no No, we told him that—as he's staying with you here—you had asked us to your breakfast table that we might make his acquaintance, because we had a special interest in the neurological make-up of men of remarkable aptitudes, above all, of eminent physicists He said he was honored Completely unsuspecting

HAND Completely

PRIME MINISTER No trace of megalomania?

[*The Physicians cannot refrain from the exchange of a mutual smile and shrug*]

HAND Most certainly not On the contrary, Mr Lightfoot is extremely modest

RUMMEL We do well to remember, Mr Grantly, that that young man will be remembered when we, with all our temporal eminence, are completely forgotten A disconcerting thought

PRIME MINISTER H'm didn't tell you his latest?

RUMMEL No, about that he appeared almost morbidly secretive

HAND Not morbidly

RUMMEL I was not speaking pathologically

PRIME MINISTER How much do you know?

HAND About his latest discovery? Nothing

PRIME MINISTER No, about

RUMMEL Ah! Precisely Yes He told us that, as a boy, he had had an instructor to whom he was much devoted—

HAND Extraordinarily devoted—

RUMMEL And this early instructor stole his first results—passed them off as his own—results not of world importance, like some of his later discoveries, but of great theoretical interest and very dear to the boy, because they were his first

PRIME MINISTER He was sixteen

HAND Tch! Tch!

PRIME MINISTER Anything more?

RUMMEL Well

PRIME MINISTER Yes?

HAND Rumor Mere rumor

PRIME MINISTER From him?

HAND Oh, dear me, no

PRIME MINISTER Then?

RUMMEL People will talk, Mr Grantly

PRIME MINISTER And we listen Yes, gentlemen, it's true, my sister, Francis Lightfoot's mother—you remember, she died about four years ago? Poor Francis—yes, it is quite true that she—[*Turns his back on them and warms his hands*] she had a lover

RUMMEL The instructor? [*Prime Minister nods*] And the boy found out?

PRIME MINISTER Yes [*Turns about again*] Since then he won't even communicate with any other physicist—not on any account

HAND That accounts for the secretiveness

RUMMEL Then how does he—

PRIME MINISTER He publishes everything himself His father left him a very handsome fortune And there he lives—did he tell you that? Stuck in the country, spending Heaven knows what in his laboratory, and seeing nobody but his assistants

HAND Remarkable

PRIME MINISTER Twenty-five years old and thirty thousand a year! An actress and an interest in racehorses would be more healthy

HAND I fear I cannot agree with you there However, if he is a trifle inhuman

—I can't say I found him so—he'll soften in time Sir Ernest Rutherford tells me that he is bound to receive the Nobel Prize this year

PRIME MINISTER Really?

RUMMEL You may take it as semi-official

PRIME MINISTER I'd rather it was the Derby All the same—at twenty-five! Well done, Francis!

RUMMEL [*Rubbing it in*] You must admit it doesn't look like abnormality megalomania

PRIME MINISTER No, Sir Berkeley, I have to admit it does not

HAND I might as well examine Sir Berkeley!

[*The Prime Minister speaks loudly, for a youthful face has peered round the jamb of the softly-opened great doors to the ante-room*]

PRIME MINISTER The Medical Research Council had better send a deputation—Come in, Francis

RUMMEL [*Taking the cue*] Thank you If you should care at any time to refer to us with regard to the fitness of the individual mentioned, we shall be more than glad to repeat the testimony we have already given you Good day, Mr Grantly I thank you for a very pleasant beginning to an arduous morning and for the honor, the great honor, of meeting your illustrious and elusive nephew

[*Enter Francis Lightfoot He is twenty-five years old, but looks much younger He is dressed in a striped gray double-breasted coat and waist-coat, gray "bags," soft brown shoes, he wears no tie, all his clothes are well cut, but worn with carelessness He is slightly below medium height and of graceful build, he has small hands and feet and a shock of brown hair His face is very beautiful and rather unearthly To prosaic people there is something rather noxious in this unearthliness, just as to poetic people there is something angelic in it He has fine eyes which, in repose, alternate between dreaminess and daring, in action they betray, as do his brows, nostrils, and mouth, a fiercely petulant wilfulness and an extreme pride—a pride entirely what the Bible would call "ghostly" His manner is nervous and constrained, for he is not at his ease in the world of affairs When, however, he is possessed by an idea or principle and must strive for it, all his awkwardness vanishes, his voice, a high tenor, becomes eloquent with an eloquence which is, however, somewhat marred by shrillness of timbre, and his gestures and bearing display a certain nobility as fiery as it is un-English At present he is evidently suffering from a profound inward happy excitement, but is endeavoring to appear calm, and this endeavor results in his casting quick and uneasy glances in every direction, but especially at the group by the fire, nor is this nervousness concealed, but rather emphasized, by the manner in which he stands with his feet planted on the base of one of the columns, while he swings from it at arm's length by one hand*]

HAND Good-day It has been a great pleasure—a most remarkable genius [*They turn to go Francis Lightfoot does not change his position*]

RUMMEL Good bye, Mr Lightfoot [*Genially*] We trust you will favor us

with further opportunities to pursue our investigations on your distinguished person

LIGHTFOOT I am sane?

RUMMEL My dear Mr Lightfoot—

LIGHTFOOT That's all right Good bye, Sir Berkeley Am I sane, Sir Henry?

HAND Of course, of course Nobody—

LIGHTFOOT Good bye

RUMMEL Good bye

HAND Good bye [*Exchanging glances, the Physicians withdraw*]

LIGHTFOOT [*Advancing*] Well, Uncle, that about completes it You have to accept it all now

PRIME MINISTER I never doubted it, my boy

LIGHTFOOT But you wondered if I mightn't have been "overworking" shall we call it?

PRIME MINISTER In my position, a layman the Cabinet

LIGHTFOOT I forgive you—I could forgive anybody—almost anybody—this morning [*Swings himself on to a corner of the table*] You know, I've never cried since mother Well, there were tears in my eyes as I dressed this morning [*Staring in front of him*] Think! Today, for the first time in history, Man is free! [*Sudden change of tone*] All the same, I wish I was back in my laboratory—I shall be glad when it's over—excitement, except in my laboratory, always makes me sick

PRIME MINISTER Don't let yourself get excited, my boy It's not going to be easy I fear you may have some disappointments in front of you

LIGHTFOOT Disappointments?

PRIME MINISTER [*Taking him past precipices at a good round trot*] Man will be man, but everybody will, I am sure, do their best to help you—

LIGHTFOOT Help me? I am going to help them

PRIME MINISTER To help you help them, I should have said Well, well, all is ready You'll seat yourself just behind me and draw up when the battle begins

LIGHTFOOT Battle!

PRIME MINISTER [*Who has timed his stroke*] Public affairs are always a battle—I don't know why [*Genially*] perhaps it's because, as the Chinese sage used to say, those who speak don't know, and those who know don't speak

LIGHTFOOT I am going to make a statement, nothing more You and the Cabinet Committee will then act on it for the public good

PRIME MINISTER [*Soothingly*] Of course, of course [*Returning to his point*] But has it ever struck you, Francis, that there's nothing on earth—except religion—on which men are so divided as the public good?

LIGHTFOOT Not when the question is large enough, and the issue simple

PRIME MINISTER It takes genius to tell which questions are large, and, except Evelyn Arthur, there is no genius in my Cabinet The rest of us are just, I hope, sound men doing our best As to a simple issue, in a public life of over thirty years [*Cheerily*] I have never yet met one

LIGHTFOOT But, Uncle, if I were to say to you "I am a terrible angel and I come to offer you a choice on which you must decide in the next five minutes—and that choice is "Will you live or die?" "

PRIME MINISTER I fear that in my public capacity I should certainly have to say, "I choose to live", in my private capacity I don't know my son killed, my daughters married, my wife dead If I hadn't my granddaughter—

LIGHTFOOT But you have There's Marjorie, and there's your duty So the issue's simple, and you say, "I choose to live"

PRIME MINISTER [*Shrugging*] Yes, I suppose so

LIGHTFOOT [*Ardently*] Very well That is precisely the question I put to you, and not to you only, but to Europe and, for the matter of that, to the entire world And [*Triumphantly*] the answer will be the same—for the world will have life and will have it more abundantly!

PRIME MINISTER Don't you—er—just a trifle—in the enthusiasm of an adept, you understand—overstate the case?

LIGHTFOOT Not one jot

PRIME MINISTER [*Leaving it*] Well, if the issue's as simple as that, let us hope the others will see it Most men want to live, I believe, certainly most of my Cabinet do, if only for the abundance of—er—life, which will be theirs when they step into my shoes Especially Mr Richard Stapp—Daredevil Dick Ah, well [*Change of tone*] If I were you, I'd concentrate on the Secretary for Foreign Affairs

LIGHTFOOT Evelyn Arthur?

PRIME MINISTER He has done more for the progress of science than any living public man He has the charm of Puck, the wisdom of Prospero, the coolest—some people suggest the coldest—temperament in Europe, but, above all, courage, immense courage My wife used to say "Arthur is courageous because he doesn't give a damn, not the remotest fraction of a damn" But I don't know

Anyhow, I'm very fond of him Go after him, my boy A fatal enemy, a good friend so long—and just so long—as he thinks your case—unkind people might add your position in the game—is sound

LIGHTFOOT My case is sound I have no position

PRIME MINISTER Every man, being a member of society, must have a position

LIGHTFOOT I have no position I am a scientist—that is simply a mind, the Mind of Man, if you like Position? No We are above them

PRIME MINISTER [*Uneasily*] I hope my colleagues will understand you

LIGHTFOOT Mr Arthur will

PRIME MINISTER [*Heartened*] Well, play to Arthur

LIGHTFOOT I've no intention of "playing" to anyone If Mr Arthur takes me, well and good If not—

PRIME MINISTER If not?

LIGHTFOOT [*With a gust of angry pride*] On their heads— [*Checking himself, cheerful*] Oh, no, it'll be all right They've no alternative [*A piteous note coming into his voice*] This is somehow all much more difficult than I expected

PRIME MINISTER [*Kindly*] Physics and politics are not quite the same Yours is a perfect world of form and number Ours is—well—little Marjorie calls me Old Giddy Gray-Hair But take my word for this, my boy I've done my best to understand what you've told me about your stupendous discovery and to

grasp the implications, staggering as they are I shall do my best for you
[*Offers his hand*]

LIGHTFOOT [*Rising*] For me? No! For all men [*Shakes hands*]

PRIME MINISTER [*Glancing at the open throat*] By the way, do you think you could—? [*He indicates the lack of tie*]

LIGHTFOOT My neck's perfectly clean

PRIME MINISTER A tie would—er—

LIGHTFOOT Er?

PRIME MINISTER My colleagues—the impression—

LIGHTFOOT If my statement can't produce an impression, a tie won't

PRIME MINISTER But which will they encounter first?

LIGHTFOOT [*Fretting*] What a lot of preliminaries there do seem to freeing Mankind [*Viciously*] I hate ties!

PRIME MINISTER But for so great an occasion, for the day on which Mankind is—

LIGHTFOOT All right—the lovely green one [*Dashes away*]

PRIME MINISTER [*Calling after Francis Lightfoot*] Green?

[*One of the great doors has opened*]

LIGHTFOOT For the Birthday of Humanity! [*At the door Francis Lightfoot all but collides with the play's protagonist Evelyn Arthur enters, smiles charmingly and a little deprecatingly, as if smiling at his own indulgence no less than at the young man's impetuosity Francis Lightfoot gives him a laughing stare Mystifyingly*] Green! Green [*Exit Francis Lightfoot*]

ARTHUR [*Still smiling and carefully closing the door*] Dear, dear me, is humanity having yet another birthday? [*Turns about and advances*] I trust not Celebrations are usually followed by headaches, and birthdays are for children

[*Patting the Prime Minister on the shoulders, for Evelyn Arthur seldom shakes hands*] Well, how are you? No green about you, I trust

PRIME MINISTER No, Evelyn I'm in the pink

ARTHUR That's right Green, I suppose, for hope—horrid monosyllable, "hope"—out of place in the mouth of any really Civilized Man [*One has the feeling that these two words "Civilized Man" have for Evelyn Arthur the reality that other words—shall we say such as "Humanity"?—have for other natures, so distinctly do the capitals go up as he enunciates them*]

PRIME MINISTER Are any of us really civilized? With one inevitable exception

ARTHUR Ah, my dear Walter, we have had no civilization yet, only civilizations

PRIME MINISTER Is my nephew civilized?

ARTHUR So that was your genius nephew, the wicked cause of my leaving my last piece of toast—always the best Well, I forgive him He takes after his mother, Walter, a very beautiful woman His face reminds me of some wonderful person I can't quite call to mind—Donatello's St George, perhaps,—no, that's not quite it

PRIME MINISTER He'll be back in a moment He's staying with me, you know, upstairs I told you something of this morning's business on the telephone, now I want you to feel his bumps, so to speak

ARTHUR A charming task D'you know, when I last saw the great Einstein, he talked of little else but this prodigy? I mayn't, I suppose, ask—

PRIME MINISTER No I promised him to say nothing till the Committee—Ssh!! Here he comes! [*Evelyn Arthur turns to the fire Francis Lightfoot enters, wearing a green tie*] Francis, you know Mr Arthur

[*Francis Lightfoot stops short Evelyn Arthur turns about*]

ARTHUR [*Holding out his hand*] Ah, so the green referred to the tie—how d'you do? That curious and well-beloved acquaintance of my remote Oxford youth, Walter Pater, always used to wear one—I can't say it suited him as it does you Do any of you young people read Pater nowadays?

LIGHTFOOT [*In alarm*] Where are you going, Uncle?

PRIME MINISTER "Big fleas have little fleas—"

And Ministers have Secretaries

[*The Prime Minister seeks out his Secretary in the left hand room Exit Prime Minister*]

ARTHUR [*Pleasantly*] A singularly poor rhyme—even for Downing Street You care for poetry, Mr Lightfoot? I see you have a book in your pocket—physics, I suppose—well, it too has poetry, the grandest of all May I see it? [*Francis Lightfoot hurriedly hands it to him*] Ah—Shelley

LIGHTFOOT It was given me years ago My mother Next to Clark Maxwell, I—I love Shelley

ARTHUR Clark Maxwell? Ah, yes And Shelley [*Pretending to turn over the leaves*] Our only romantic poet with scientific leanings—

LIGHTFOOT Chemistry and physics Professor Whitehead—

ARTHUR [*Reading*] "A pool of treacherous and tremendous calm"—what a marvelous line! I beg your pardon [*He closes the book*]

LIGHTFOOT Professor Whitehead—[*Evelyn Arthur seems trying to recollect*] the man who wrote "Principia Mathematica" with Bertrand Russell

ARTHUR [*Feigning*] Of course, how stupid of me

LIGHTFOOT He pointed out to me, in the days when I used to—when he used to meet those fellows—that, had Shelley been born today, he would have been a great chemist You won't laugh at me, Mr Arthur? I love these poems, sometimes they seem almost like my own voice talking to me—for Physics are my passion and Humanity my religion

ARTHUR [*Gazes at the ground, then gives Francis Lightfoot a sharp glance Easily*] I was wondering only just now whose face yours reminded me of

LIGHTFOOT Mine?

ARTHUR Yes, you bear a remarkable likeness to Shelley

LIGHTFOOT Really? What an honor!

ARTHUR Hadn't it struck you?

LIGHTFOOT [*Diffidently*] Well, to be quite candid, once or twice [*With judicial enthusiasm*] And then, you see, I can't help knowing that, in my sphere as physicist, I'm his equal as poet [*The Prime Minister enters softly Evelyn Arthur exchanges a glance with him and holds up a warning finger*]

ARTHUR [*Without irony*] That gives you a very high position

LIGHTFOOT Of course, but I shall be worthy of it Has my uncle told you anything?

ARTHUR No

LIGHTFOOT Well— [*The Prime Minister seems about to steal away when loud voices and hearty laughter are heard in the ante-room*] Damn! There they are Hello, Uncle, I didn't hear you come in

PRIME MINISTER I didn't want to disturb you [*A peal of laughter*] The Cabinet Committee is— [*The door opens, the Cabinet Committee begins to come in, several members are in conversation*]

ARTHUR Francis—Mr Lightfoot, I mean—

LIGHTFOOT [*Smiling*] Oh, please Francis

ARTHUR Thank you I don't know what you're going to say or do at this meeting but, if I can be of any assistance, pray rely on me

LIGHTFOOT Thank you, thank you so much

ARTHUR [*Change of tone*] I'd stay where you are, wait till they're seated [*He smiles and advances*] Hello, Hal Good morning, Stapp

STAPP What's it all about? Goin' to the country?

ARTHUR I think not [*He greets a friend or two, then sits down to the right of the Prime Minister's chair*]

GRINDLE I trust, Mr Grantly, that we shall find time today to proceed to our consideration of budget proposals?

PRIME MINISTER [*Uneasily hastening on*] That depends, Mr Grindle, that depends

HALIBURTON [*To Richard Stapp*] So I replied that if necessary I would move in the police Of course, they gave way Government's Government [*To the Prime Minister*] Yes, Grantly?

PRIME MINISTER Congratulate you on your speech last night [*Change of tone*] Help us to get 'em started

HALIBURTON Anything wrong?

PRIME MINISTER Nothing I only want to get started

HALIBURTON Certainly, certainly [*He sits down Genially waving*] Come on, you fellows

SUNNINGDALE Hello, hello, starters waitin'! [*He sits down*]

HALIBURTON No jibbin' at the post

[*Still chatting, they hasten to their seats*]

COSSINGTON [*Calling*] Perfectly charming Delighted Of course I'll come

SUNNINGDALE [*Growing cheerfully*] Clear the course Clear the course Cossington, we'll be charmed an' delighted if you'll sit down

COSSINGTON [*Sitting down*] Where's-s the turtle-s-soup? S sunningdale's-s hungry

HALIBURTON Boys! Boys!

[*The Prime Minister raps the table Talk dies down Now that they are seated, it would be pleasant to review their appearances but, inasmuch as each is a synthesis arrived at through hints afforded by the only models available—namely, living and lately dead personages—the Muse contents herself with asserting that, in the Fourth Dimension of Anglo-Saxon Dramatic Art, where all is relative to something outside that art, and our quantum of Truth has the habit of perforcefully undergoing such sudden transformations as would surprise even a Niels Bohr, the appearance of these gentlemen is*

everything which the Censor permits and nothing which he doesn't You and I may think that the Prime Minister reminds us a little, in some respects, of Sir Arthur Campbell Bannerman, Lord Oxford, and Mr Baldwin, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, of Lord Salisbury, Lord Balfour, and Sir Austen Chamberlain, and the others of a number of eminent personages, with whose outward aspects the Daily Press has made us not unfamiliar But we assure you that, till the Censor assures us that we are not mistaken, the less said about these misapprehensions of ours, and the sooner we all get on with the play the better Accordingly—]

PRIME MINISTER Gentlemen—are those doors shut, Pascoe? Make quite sure, will you?

[H G Dunne rises and does so]

GRINDLE Mr Grantly, there's a stranger in the room—

PRIME MINISTER One minute, Grindle— *[H G Dunne returns]* Thank you, Mr Dunne *[He raps again]* Gentlemen *[Complete silence]* you have perhaps already noticed three unusual facts about this morning's proceedings—First, we are meeting earlier than usual, second, there is a stranger present—draw up your chair, Francis *[Francis Lightfoot draws up his chair between the Prime Minister and Evelyn Arthur]* Third, there is nothing on our Agenda paper to account for his presence The last fact explains the first two The matter we have to consider is of so grave, unique, and confidential a nature—*[He pauses]* that I have not thought fit to give to any outside person, how ever close to us and our work, any intimation of its nature For the same reason, even the Secretary has been excluded, so making a return to the precedent set in this room a few years ago, when we sat as a Cabinet Committee—as we sit now—conducting a war

LIGHTFOOT War!

[Murmurs of annoyance at this interruption]

PRIME MINISTER Francis! *[Evelyn Arthur whispers to Francis Lightfoot He subsides]* You know me well enough, gentlemen, *[Louder and more rapidly,]* to be sure that I do not take such steps without due cause, and I should like to make it plain from the start that, extraordinary as the statements you are shortly to hear must sound to our inexperienced ears, they are well-founded, and I take full responsibility for them I need not enlarge on the capacities of Francis Lightfoot his name and achievements are familiar to every reader of the daily press, despite the fact that, as perhaps some of you have heard, not only does he not associate with his fellow-physicists, but he also shuns all publicity and is known to the world only by two things his immense scientific prestige and his reputation as a recluse I will therefore content myself, in respect to his capabilities, with two facts only last time Mr Arthur saw the world-famous Albert Einstein, Professor Einstein spoke of little else but Mr Lightfoot's work—that is the first fact This is the second I have this morning heard, on unimpeachable authority, that Mr Lightfoot will receive next year, at the unprecedented age of twenty-five, the Nobel Prize *[Pause]* Did you know that, Francis?

LIGHTFOOT *[Calmly]* No Go on

[The members of the Cabinet Committee look at one another]

PRIME MINISTER Incidentally, this young man happens to be my nephew I have known him from childhood, and know him to be completely truthful However, since great studies sometimes put a severe strain on the mind, I have consulted the two greatest nerve specialists in the realm, Sir Berkeley Rummel and Sir Henry Hand They have examined my nephew, and both decisively declare him in perfect health, not merely of body, but of mind Now, gentlemen, this may seem to you a curious, a positively unprecedented prelude But what you are going to hear is unprecedented Before introducing Mr Lightfoot, I should like to add three things First, Mr Lightfoot proposes to make a statement only action he leaves to us Second, his is the world of physics, a very complicated world, and accordingly he undertakes to accommodate his exposition to our lay intelligences, craving only your most earnest attention and that indulgence due to youth and inexperience in public affairs Third and last, gentlemen, I—well—I hesitate to say what I was going to say—but— [*Abandoning his professional manner*] Well—many of you are old friends—we've worked together—this morning we have on our hands a problem of such a nature that

briefly, gentlemen, the very thought of it makes me feel my years [*Richard Stapp drops his pencil The Prime Minister gives him a hard glance*] But, gentlemen, with your help—[*His eye sweeps round and rests finally on Evelyn Arthur*] with your help I trust we shall tackle it in that spirit of hopeful resolution for which this Ministry has, we like to believe, made itself famous [*He pauses*] Gentlemen, I present to you my nephew, Mr Francis Lightfoot [*Francis Lightfoot rises Evelyn Arthur whispers to the Prime Minister The Prime Minister arises again*] Mr Arthur suggests that, in view of possible questions, I run rapidly over the names round this table, that my nephew may gather who's who on this Committee, and what Department each represents in the Cabinet [*Pause*] Let's see, I'll take it right to left Evelyn Arthur you know—he's Secretary for Foreign Affairs Mr Grindle, Chancellor of the Exchequer, is next to him Beyond Mr Grindle, Lord Dedham, the Lord Chancellor the enemy of the law's enemies! Then, St John Pascoe, Attorney General

Now we come to the Secretaries of State—I have 'em all, except Evelyn, opposite me, so I can keep my eye on 'em, especially on our Daredevil Dick, Mr Richard Stapp, Secretary of State for War [*Continuing*]—Sir Romilly Blount, Navy—Esme Faulkner, Air—Sir Humphrey Haliburton, Home Office, we usually call him Happy Hal and he hasn't yet jugged us for it Dedham damns 'em, Hal jugs 'em Lord Cossington, the Dominions

That completes the Secretaries of State Mr Dunne, whose proudest boast is that he's an engineer, not a politician, Office of Works—Lord Vivian Vere, Education—and Lord Sunningdale—

SUNNINGDALE [*In great good spirits*] The only man that ever won the Grand National, the Oaks, an' the Derby in the same year

PRIME MINISTER Known on the course as "Old Sunny," but in here he's only Lord Privy Seal [*Laughter The Prime Minister resumes his seat So does Francis Lightfoot The Prime Minister signs for Francis Lightfoot to rise again, but, before he can do so, Lord Dedham intervenes*]

DEDHAM Prime Minister, before Mr Lightfoot begins, I would like to ask

why he honors us with a statement and does not wait for us to take notice of it through the usual channels of the learned societies

ARTHUR [*Deftly*] May I, as a Fellow of the Royal Society, answer that perfectly legitimate enquiry? Mr Lightfoot has his private reasons I am acquainted with some of them they are honorable and painful with Mr Lightfoot's permission I shall be glad to explain them to any one of you subsequently, in private Personally, I consider that Mr Lightfoot does well to disclose his results, the product of immense labor and—I use the word advisedly—genius to disclose his results, whatever they may be, to a body of men whose duty it is to guard and nourish the most varied and numerous confederation of human beings on the globe

DEDHAM Thank you I beg your pardon, Mr Lightfoot Pray proceed

[*Francis Lightfoot rises*]

LIGHTFOOT [*Nervously*] Prime Minister and gentlemen, when I—

BLOUNT One moment Mr Lightfoot's father was, I trust, o' British nationality?

PRIME MINISTER More Cheshire than Cheshire cheese Anything else? No Go on, my boy [*Francis Lightfoot rises again Sotto voce*] Take your time

LIGHTFOOT [*Haltngly*] Gentlemen, when—when I first made the discovery I—I'm going to tell you about, I wondered whom I—I ought to tell about it You see, of course I'm opposed to all governments, for all governments are founded on force—

DEDHAM Eh, what's that? What's that? [*Evelyn Arthur holds up a remonstrative hand Lord Dedham grunts and subsides*]

LIGHTFOOT At first I thought of handing over my discovery to all Mankind through the League of Nations But people say all sorts of things about the League, about its lack of prestige and efficiency, besides, neither the United States, nor even Russia, are members Then, too, you see, I was bothered, because I don't know any of the League's officials Well, the next largest—what d'you call it—political entity representing the maximum variety of races is the British Empire, and you're its representatives You know, I hope you won't mind my saying this, but that bothered me frightfully for, all his life Shelley was opposed to the British Government [*Murmurs*] You see, I look on Shelley as one of the greatest benefactors of Mankind

SUNNINGDALE Shelley?

ARTHUR I share Mr Lightfoot's enthusiasm for Shelley Shall we try to avoid interrupting him?

LIGHTFOOT Of course, today, Shelley is generally recognized, by intelligent people, some of you even took part in his Centenary celebrations [*Laughter, in which Lord Sunningdale joins*] Besides, my mother, though she hated governments—of course she knew most of you—well, just the same, she always used to say that, of all governments, the British used least force in proportion to the members governed, in fact, she used to say that this—this heterogeneous empire's having held together so long was really an extraordinary tribute to its government—that it showed they relied on the good will of Mankind rather on fear Now, the head of this government today is—is my mother's favorite

brother "The only man," she used to say to me, "who had never lied to her" That decided me I told him—about my discovery, I mean Of course he saw at once its terrific importance, and he advised me, ever so strongly, to bring it directly to the Cabinet, or rather to this Cabinet Committee, to you I—I admit I hesitated, I couldn't help thinking of China But finally he did convince me, with many illustrations from history, that there was, on the whole, no community of peoples so devoted to Liberty, Justice, and Humanity as the peoples of the—the British Commonwealth of Nations So here I am And I'm going to give you the chance to prove that my confidence in you isn't—isn't misplaced

VERE Just one question—please Mr Lightfoot, may I ask, did you ever go to a public school?

LIGHTFOOT [*Surprised, but polite*] Yes, my father made me I ran away Why?

VERE In my capacity as Minister of Education, I was just wondering where you—ah—where you—

PRIME MINISTER Mr Lightfoot received his scientific training in private

VERE Thank you

[*Francis Lightfoot seems puzzled and vaguely apprehensive He glances round the faces*]

PRIME MINISTER [*Uneasy*] Go on, Francis Come to the point

LIGHTFOOT [*Rather lamely*] Perhaps I'd better pass over quite a lot that I wanted ever so much to say [*He fingers the papers on the table*] I'll go on to how I made this discovery

SUNNINGDALE We're all attention, young man, all attention

LIGHTFOOT In science there are two main modes by which great conclusions, like mine, are arrived at There's the Commonsense Mode, long and arduous spade-work, by lots of people, followed by a stroke of luck, and there's the Uncommonsense Mode, that depends on a unique combination of gifts in a particular individual—Newton, for instance, or Einstein, or myself People who don't like or understand the Uncommonsense Mode call it Inspired Guessing My own genius is for short cuts And my discovery is a by product of a five-year long short cut in an investigation I'm making—

BLOUNT Here, Mr Lightfoot, or abroad?

ARTHUR I understand Mr Lightfoot's laboratory is in North Wales

LIGHTFOOT This investigation aims at solving the old riddle "What is energy?" [*Warming up to his subject*] So far as we know—we really know nothing—all energy resolves itself at the last analysis into what's popularly known as electricity—though what electricity is well, none of us know However, apparently electricity is the thing-in-itself, just as that mysterious thing we call life, which moves in all of us, in me, and in you, is the thing-in-itself Now, just as life manifests itself in constantly changing structures known as bodies, which tend to perish and be re-created from hour to hour, so electricity manifests itself in the perpetual dance of entities known as negative electrons round a positively charged nucleus Such groups are, in fact, infinitesimally small solar systems, and of the different combinations of these systems all matter is, as far as we know, made up It follows, therefore, that the physicist

has two main interests—first, the varieties of combinations of these solar systems which, being combined, make up the ninety odd elements of which, in varied structure, the substance of the universe is composed. And, second, that force which holds each solar system together, in other words, the thing-in-itself. Now my investigations—

SUNNINGDALE [*With geniality*] Prime Minister, may I? [*Without waiting for an answer*] Thank you [*To Francis Lightfoot*] Now, look here, young man, I believe an', I take it, the others believe, that you know what you're talkin' about. We like you personally—I like you for your sportin' dig at me—an' I'm sure we've all got the greatest respect for your reputation, your labors, an' your learnin'. But we're politicians, God help us, not professors [*With gentle humor*] Be a good feller. Have mercy on a lot of old codgers. Cut the cackle an' come to the hosses.

LIGHTFOOT [*Taken aback*] Lord Sunningdale, I—

HALIBURTON Mr Lightfoot, I knew your mother, and I didn't love her any the less for not understanding one word in six she said. But I'm only an old fashioned country squire, who breeds short horns, and I'm blessed if I can follow all this stuff about infinitesimal solar systems. What's more, I'm a busy man. Parliament's sitting, and I've the deuce of an important deputation, red-hot—I've already put it off twice—coming to see me this morning. Couldn't you explain to the others after I'm gone, and just give us a bare statement, here and now, of *what your discovery is?*

PRIME MINISTER [*Anxious*] Well, Francis?

LIGHTFOOT [*Appealing rather helplessly*] Mr Arthur

ARTHUR I think you'd better do as they suggest. Our duty is not to assimilate expert knowledge but to act on it. And if your statement is going to be of the nature I— [*He breaks off*]

[*Francis Lightfoot passes his hand over his eyes*]

PRIME MINISTER Come, my boy, I know it's hard for you, I feel for your disappointment. But life is short, and we must govern. Don't think we don't appreciate your labors. We do. But you appealed to us. Give up your *results*.

LIGHTFOOT Very well, then, very well. Please let me collect myself a moment [*He sits down, shuts his eyes, and takes his head in his hands as if he felt it spinning. The members of the Committee, except Evelyn Arthur, who sits watching Francis Lightfoot, converse together in low voices. Snatches are overheard*].

GRINDLE [*To Lord Dedham*] So we taught the Bourse its lesson by lowering the Bank rate—

DEDHAM [*In conversation with St John Pascoe*] Depend upon it, once they see we mean business—

COSSINGTON [*To Sir Humphrey Haliburton*] I don't understand—

DUNNE The Boiler-Makers' Union is bound to object.

HALIBURTON Well, we shall overrule them—

PASCOE [*To Richard Stapp*] The trial has caused a good deal of nervousness, eh?

STAPP Only in the Punjab. And General Mitcheson has that well in hand.

BLOUNT The execution takes place next Friday?

PASCOE Yes

BLOUNT No fear of attempts in London?

PASCOE We got the only dangerous man this morning [*To Richard Stapp*]
At your front door

STAPP Oho !

[*Francis Lightfoot suddenly rises The talk dies away, but Sir Humphrey Haliburton and Richard Stapp continue whispering*]

LIGHTFOOT [*With the sudden spasm of a spring released*] Gentlemen, I can control the energy in the atom

[*Evelyn Arthur's monocle falls Francis Lightfoot, palpitating, stares at Sir Humphrey Haliburton and Richard Stapp*]

STAPP [*Breaking off his conversation to the Prime Minister*] I beg your pardon An Oriental gentleman was goin' to take a pot at me this mornin' Naturally I [*To Francis Lightfoot*] Sorry You said ?

LIGHTFOOT [*Staring in front of him, hoarsely*] I said I can control the energy in the atom

[*Evelyn Arthur restores his monocle to its place H G Dunne jumps up*]

DUNNE [*Excitedly*] What! Man alive! Is that the ? [*To the others*]
Gentlemen! D'you realize what that means?

GRINDLE [*Dryly*] No, Mr Dunne, we do not, or perhaps I should say, I do not If you will be so good—we are hoping to hear [*He pulls out his watch*]
My Budget proposals—

DUNNE [*Losing his head*] Damn your Budget proposals! Go ahead, Lightfoot, rub it in Tell 'em what's what!

[*The Prime Minister frowns and raps*]

PRIME MINISTER [*Magisterially*] Mr Dunne, your engineer's training has given you a certain advantage over some of us, but that is no reason I should have to remind you that you are addressing a Cabinet Committee

DUNNE I beg your pardon I beg your pardon, Grindle [*He sits down Weakly, with traces of hysterical laughter*] But if you knew, if you only knew [*Pause Silence*]

PRIME MINISTER [*Turns to Francis Lightfoot*] Go on [*Francis Lightfoot is silent*] Tell them what you told me last night Tell them what it means

LIGHTFOOT [*Patiently, but not without a trace of scorn*] It all seems so elementary to me Well it means that the present, all this, all that you're accustomed to call civilization, is—is relegated at last to its proper place as the confused remembrance of an evil dream of no more account than a child's nightmare Yesterday, Man was a slave, today, he's free Matter obeys him [*The Cabinet Committee is divided between those who glance at each other and those who carefully refrain from doing so*]

DEDHAM [*Indulging his truculence*] Mr Lightfoot, I'm Lord Chancellor, and I've risen to my present position by my obstinate preference for facts as opposed to verbiage Rhapsodies, however eloquent, are not evidence Stick to facts, please [*He snaps his fingers*]

LIGHTFOOT Who the devil d'you think you're talking to?

DUNNE Hear, hear!

PRIME MINISTER Francis—

LIGHTFOOT I've given you facts I've tried to tell you of the miniature solar systems of the atom, but you wouldn't listen Well, perhaps you'll listen to this so far as matter is concerned, what I will to be, will be, and what I will not to be, will not be Is that fact enough?

PRIME MINISTER Francis—

DEDHAM Mr Lightfoot, kindly refrain from indulging your predilection to mystify You are here to explain

DUNNE Order!

ARTHUR [*Sweetly*] Lord Dedham, may I remind you that Mr Lightfoot is here of his own free will?

DEDHAM This is a Cabinet Committee, and—

ARTHUR Lord Dedham, your position and mine in the world of politics simply do not exist, compared with this young man's in the world of science We must be patient Mr Lightfoot, will you permit me to play the part of magician's assistant for a moment? [*There is something so charming and not without a hint of Puck in Evelyn Arthur's glance that Francis Lightfoot smiles assent*] Thank you Now, gentlemen, here we have a table made of—let me see—oak, isn't it? Yes, oak Very well Now, if Mr Lightfoot were so vulgar as to wish to turn this table into gold, hey, presto, he could do so And if he happened to dislike it as much as I do, he could, hey, presto, abolish it Is that clear? [*He smiles, takes out his monocle, puts it back, sits down*]

DEDHAM Look here, what are you up to, Arthur, pulling our legs?

ARTHUR [*With sweet acerbity*] Lord Dedham, you reminded Mr Lightfoot that he was addressing a Cabinet Committee Are you reminding me?

DEDHAM But—

PRIME MINISTER I suggest that we postpone discussion until the end of Mr Lightfoot's statement

[*Lord Dedham retires into the sulks*]

LIGHTFOOT [*Nervously*] Mr Arthur has—has put it a little oddly, but—yes, that's what it means Oh, please, please, don't waste time asking silly questions, consider what you're going to do [*Very earnestly and as if repeating a peroration*] You see—the history of Man up to now has been one long horrible narrative of his slavery to matter Today I put into your hands power over matter, ultimate power over matter, the power of—of a god, to slay and to make alive Incidentally it means food, shelter, abundance, for everyone But that's just incidental Beyond that—a mere matter of organization—rises the New World, the Summer of Mankind, the Golden Age Don't you see, gentlemen? It's—Man's free! And now, now, he can live as the sages of all countries have always dreamed he might live—not—not a feebly struggling parasite, not a thing oppressed by needs and fears, with no security, no leisure, but Man, a Titan, a Prometheus, a Prometheus Triumphant, all his days and nights one long hymn of praise to Beauty and to Truth, the Beauty and the Truth which from hour to hour Man discovers and Man creates! [*Quietly, exhausted*] That's what it means, gentlemen, that's what my discovery means You're the first—except my uncle—to know Now I'm going to leave you to organize That's your job, the new organization I'll come back, a week from today, at the same time Have your plans ready [*He makes as if to withdraw*]

VOICES Stop! One minute! He can't go! Where are you off to?
[Evelyn Arthur, with a gesture, detains him Evelyn Arthur rises The Prime Minister raps]

PRIME MINISTER Mr Arthur

ARTHUR Thank you Gentlemen, we have just heard a statement which will resound down the ages I propose that we tender our thanks—

VOICES Not so fast! Questions! Easy there!

[The Prime Minister raps]

ARTHUR —not only on behalf of our nation but of all humanity—

VOICES One moment! I move— Wait a bit! Prime Minister—

[The Prime Minister raps]

ARTHUR —to the modern Prometheus That is our first duty, and, I may add, our great honor If, after Mr Lightfoot has gone, you gentlemen should desire to ask questions, I think perhaps I might—

VOICES Yes! No! Not at all! Mr Lightfoot—

DEDHAM It's the young man's job Let him answer

ARTHUR Prime Minister I am about to put the vote of thanks Will anyone second me?

VOICES No! Wait! We want more!

DEDHAM Why such a hurry?

[Evelyn Arthur and the Prime Minister briefly confer amid continued clamor]

PRIME MINISTER *[Aloud]* I can't help it *[He raps]* Lord Dedham

DEDHAM I've not yet had my facts—and I'm not the only one Come now, Mr Lightfoot, I'm not trying to bully you—but I want facts, and facts which I as well as Mr Arthur can grasp How, for instance, does this affect my particular interest—the law?

LIGHTFOOT *[A little wearily]* Law well, of course, your system of law ceases to exist

DEDHAM Tch! tch! Come now, talk sense, young man, talk sense

LIGHTFOOT *[Ominously polite]* I am talking sense, Lord Dedham, deadly sense

DEDHAM *[Shortly]* I don't take it

LIGHTFOOT It's quite simple Your system of law relies at bottom on force That's what, at long last, the policeman represents Under the new conditions all displays of force are equally criminal, since one man can quite easily release enough force to destroy civilization

DEDHAM To destroy

LIGHTFOOT Put it this way when either party is equally able to destroy the other, there's stalemate Arbitration follows

DEDHAM Equally able

LIGHTFOOT If you had listened to what Mr Arthur said about this table, you would have understood He said I could abolish it By the use of one small piece of mechanism, constructed according to formulae of which only I am master, one man, any one man, can defy all the policemen in London

DEDHAM What?

LIGHTFOOT All the policemen in the world

DEDHAM How?

LIGHTFOOT He touches a spring, the atoms about the piece of mechanism begin to redistribute themselves at an undreamt of speed—at such a speed that not only he, but his house, his street, his borough, London itself, disappears, if he so wishes

VOICES Eh? Slower Say that again

LIGHTFOOT I said, if he so wishes, London disappears, is blown up, if you like to put it that way—any explosion is only a sudden redistribution of atoms

DEDHAM Come now Tch! tch! surely But anyway, the man wouldn't be allowed that knowledge

LIGHTFOOT Why not? How can you prevent it? The same energy, released at a lower speed, will shortly be driving at a nominal cost every engine in the world

DEDHAM Good God! [*He sits back*] But— [*But before he can begin again, Richard Stapp cries out*]

STAPP Oh! So that means I say! I say! [*His eyes light up*] Now we shall be able to talk to 'em, eh, Blount? England for ever!

LIGHTFOOT I beg your pardon?

STAPP I said—well, no matter Mr Lightfoot, I'm extremely impressed I'd esteem it a favor if you'd call on me at the War Office at ten sharp tomorrow morning Thank you [*He fishes out an engagement book and scribbles in it Francis Lightfoot stares at him*]

COSSINGTON You s-said something about ch changing one sub-ub-ubstance into another Now, what r-r-raw materials does that affect—I mean, apart from Arthur's j-j-joke about the table?

LIGHTFOOT Joke? Lord Cossington—

STAPP [*Intervening*] One thing at a time Ten tomorrow, make it sharp, will you? Thanks

LIGHTFOOT [*To Richard Stapp*] I've not the slightest intention of wasting time in coming to see you Your army doesn't exist [*He turns back to Lord Cossington*] Now

STAPP What's that? Hey, you—

PRIME MINISTER Lord Cossington's question, Stapp

LIGHTFOOT Mr Arthur put it crudely, but I've already said that he was right If I want to change this table into gold, I can

VERE Steady on This question of raw materials—

LIGHTFOOT [*Decisively*] All materials are henceforth raw materials

PASCOE Eh? But the Colonies—

LIGHTFOOT All colonies are henceforth Humanity As sources of raw materials, they cease to exist

PASCOE They cease to exist they is he mad or I?

GRINDLE Mr Lightfoot, this seems a very serious matter, worse, possibly, even than a war You would advise an immediate moratorium for stabilization of credit, I suppose, eh?

LIGHTFOOT Credit? Credit in units of what? Your system, which is founded on gold, has ceased to exist

VERE Rubbish What about Labor?

DUNNE Labor! Tell 'em, Lightfoot

PASCOE [*Laughing*] I suppose he'll say that's ceased to exist!

LIGHTFOOT As it is now, certainly Mining, for instance

COSSINGTON Look here, be s serious, I'm a mine-owner

LIGHTFOOT Well, as a mine-owner—

PASCOE He has ceased to exist Take notice, Cossington, you've ceased to exist
You're abolished! You're re-distributed!

BLOUNT I say! I say! Stapp says—

SUNNINGDALE Look here, young man, I like you, but this joke has gone far
enough A farce is—

LIGHTFOOT [*Fiery, jumping up*] Farce! Farce, gentlemen? It's you who are
making the farce Behave like adults, stop babbling like children about your
departments Wake up All that stuff is totally and for ever scrapped Put it out
of your minds Concentrate on something serious

BLOUNT Serious? Where d'you suppose you an' your crazy experiments 'ud
be, if it weren't for the Navy?

PASCOE You wouldn't exist—you wouldn't exist!

BLOUNT I s'pose you'll tell us the Empire—

LIGHTFOOT Empire? What Empire? I'm talking about Mankind

DEDHAM D'you realize what you're saying?

LIGHTFOOT Of course I do, and it's high time you—

ARTHUR [*Jumping up*] It is indeed!

[*Tumult in which Lord Dedham can be heard hawling—*]

DEDHAM Traitor!

PRIME MINISTER [*Rapping with a heavy ruler*] Quiet! I will have quiet! This
is a Cabinet Committee, not Bedlam! Silence, gentlemen! Silence! Silence!
[*He is evidently very angry The tumult dies away*] Gentlemen, this is a dis-
graceful scene Disgraceful Mr Arthur and I will thank you gentlemen to
listen to him in silence

ARTHUR [*Suavely*] Gentlemen, in the heat of the moment I think we have
tended, as Mr Lightfoot suggests, to overlook the larger issues Our amazement,
concerned, honorably concerned, as we are, with those duties which the State
has entrusted to us, is natural, but we have no time for amazement Has it
struck you, gentlemen, that Mr Lightfoot is in a position to carry this news to
other, and perhaps he would consider, more enlightened groups, either at home
or abroad? I trust he will not do so, I do not think he will, possibly he already
regrets imparting it even to us But I ask Mr Lightfoot to remember that these
implications, which from long familiarity seem so much a matter of course to
him, are an extraordinary, a staggering novelty to us The illimitable hopes so
abruptly revealed are hard to grasp in a moment But, Francis Lightfoot, those
hopes are sublime, and our stupefaction is but the measure of their magnifi-
cence We have done our duty in the past we shall rise to it now Soon the
unfamiliar air of this exalted frontier will become native to us, and, inspired by
your example, *your* achievement, your *trust*, we shall perform *our* task, the task
which you have honored us by setting, and for which we thank you, not only
in our names, but in the name of Humanity [*He holds out his hand*]

LIGHTFOOT [*Moved*] Thank you, Mr Arthur You have understood

ARTHUR Not only I Prime Minister, I call on you to ask this Cabinet Committee to rise in Mr Lightfoot's honor

LIGHTFOOT [*Looking up, covering his eyes with his hands*] No, no, not in mine [*Stretching up his arms*], in honor of the coming glory to Humanity [*Evelyn Arthur on one side, the Prime Minister on the other, signal with frantic but hidden gestures for the Cabinet Committee to rise* The Committee takes the cue Francis Lightfoot, exulting, with his arms yet raised, looks round on them] At this hour, the New World begins [*Pause Francis Lightfoot lowers his arms*] Thank you, gentlemen This day week, at the same time Meanwhile, I undertake to say nothing to anyone else, and you undertake to draw up your program [*He pulls out a paper*] Here are details of time and place for the tests which I have arranged, for you and for any experts you like to bring My assistants will carry them out, I shan't be there demonstrations are so futile However, though they are just simple tests, they will prove without revealing my method, that I can do what I say Good day, gentlemen [*Amid complete and astonished silence he makes for the doors At the doors he turns*] I have called on you to build a House for Man Today week will disclose whether you have risen to your opportunity The responsibility is yours [*He goes out*]

DEDHAM [*Abruptly sitting down*] Well, I'll be— [*There is silence the members of the Committee avoid each other's eyes*] Why so mum? You were noisy enough just now! Telling Cossington his coal-mines didn't exist! Apparently nothing existed for that young fellow Nerve, eh?

STAPP [*With sudden irritation*] Shut up, will you? I want to think

DEDHAM Temper, Daredevil Dick! [*Looking round, and placing one foot on the table*] What the hell's eating you, turned into undertakers or what?

STAPP [*Ruminating*] We did not agree to formulate a program

ARTHUR [*Succinctly*] Exactly

DEDHAM [*Swinging round*] Arthur, I say, Arthur, what induced you to play that absurd comedy of paying honor to an infant gas bag?

ARTHUR Still cross examining, Dedham? I suggest that in future you pitch your key a little lower when addressing Mr Lightfoot

DEDHAM And why should I, Mister Philosopher?

ARTHUR [*Amazed at last*] Why should you?

DEDHAM That's what I said Why d'you stare at me like that? [*He jumps up and makes towards Evelyn Arthur*] Drop that damned eye-glass [*Evelyn Arthur takes it out and advances upon Lord Dedham with a glacial casualness, then taps him on the chest with the monocle*]

ARTHUR My friend, this is no time for schoolboy horse-play [*He raises his voice* The others look up and drift nearer] Kindly realize that every word that young man said is—I am convinced—literally true

COSSINGTON Oh, c-c-come, surely—

ARTHUR [*Throwing the word over his shoulder*] Every word! And I solemnly say to you all, it would be better for that poor young man and for the world had he never been born

CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE *The same*TIME *A week later**The Committee in session Signs of strain, weariness and jangled nerves*

PRIME MINISTER So far, then, we are all agreed—except Mr Stapp

STAPP I merely refrained from votin' I don't oppose

PRIME MINISTER There remains the method of putting our resolution into effect, and the report of the subsidiary experts On that we needn't waste time, it merely confirms what we ourselves have seen, and what progress Charlton and Eldridge

DUNNE [*Suddenly*] Damn Charlton and Eldridge!

STAPP Exactly There we are agreed Damn Charlton and Eldridge

DEDHAM [*To Sir Humphrey Haliburton*] A walking tour, you said?

HALIBURTON A walking tour In Switzerland—Switzerland!

DEDHAM Good God!

COSSINGTON Rather casual of them

STAPP Casual, you wretched ass! It's criminal

PRIME MINISTER Mr Stapp

STAPP I beg your pardon, Prime Minister I beg your pardon, Cossington

COSSINGTON Not at all

DEDHAM [*To Sir Humphrey Haliburton*] Look here, let me get this thing straight

FAULKINER Oh, need we again?

STAPP Monday's hash

PRIME MINISTER If you *please*, Mr Stapp

STAPP Oh, I beg your pardon, I beg your pardon

HALIBURTON The two greatest scientists in England—for the matter of that, in Europe—except, I suppose, this fellow Lightfoot—are asked by the British Government to submit a report on the most important thing that has ever happened They attend the tests, seem quite unmoved, report that the—the impossible—has been accomplished "They don't know how", and then, quietly disappear, vanish

PASCOE They've redistributed their atoms!

FAULKINER Oh, shut up!

PRIME MINISTER Mr Faulkiner

HALIBURTON and the only information we can get—at their homes, anywhere—is that they've "gone to Switzerland on a walking tour"

DEDHAM I never heard such—

HALIBURTON And the Swiss authorities can't trace 'em

DEDHAM I don't like it there's monkey-business somewhere

COSSINGTON I don't understand

ARTHUR None of us understand, Lord Cossington We are merely—faced with facts

BLOUNT Facts! Detonatin' that lump o' sugar an' leavin' a crater as big as St Paul's—

DEDHAM And Sunny's latchkey—transformed into gold—and then—under our very noses—becoming a lump of India rubber

PRIME MINISTER Gentlemen—

FAULKNER Those are nothing that last thing—

VERE Don't speak of it!

DUNNE Appalling!

GRINDLE Blasphemous!

PASCOE And the Chinees turning the thing on as casually as

GRINDLE It isn't natural—it isn't right

DUNNE I suppose I did see that, but sometimes it seems to be a nightmare—as if I'd dreamt—

VERE The devil it does! It haunts *me* like a living thing Ever since, I've felt that all this is a dream and that the only reality

COSSINGTON I'm what the ho! polloi call, I believe, "s-struck all of a 'cap" But, s seriously, d'you know, I don't understand

PRIME MINISTER Shall we get on? Mr Lightfoot has been waiting nearly two hours [*Murmurs of agreement*] Our resolution has been passed There remains the method of carrying that resolution into effect Has anyone any suggestions?

ARTHUR [*Rising*] Prime Minister

PRIME MINISTER Mr Arthur

ARTHUR It seems to me, or, rather, the first move seems to me—comparatively simple, we try to persuade him, we avoid, we carefully avoid, bullying Not counting Mr Stapp, who declares himself in abeyance, so to speak, there are twelve men in this room, adept in world affairs, to deal with one boy, aged twenty-five It does not sound difficult [*He sits down*]

VOICES Hear, hear!

PRIME MINISTER Why should it be? My nephew may be rather a queer young fish, but he's a nice boy and a gentleman [*Murmurs of agreement To Evelyn Arthur*] You'll take charge of the conversation?

ARTHUR Oh, dear, no! Let it happen I stress one point only no bullying [*Murmurs of agreement*]

PRIME MINISTER Very well Shall I send for him?

STAPP Just a moment, Prime Minister [*Rising*] Mr Arthur spoke o' the first move What about the second? [*He sits down*]
[*Simultaneously*]

DEDHAM Exactly

BLOUNT Hear, hear!

PRIME MINISTER [*Puzzled*] I don't follow

ARTHUR [*To Richard Stapp*] Your supposed contingency is ? Well?

STAPP [*Rising*] Take it we don't persuade him what then?

PRIME MINISTER But we will

STAPP Supposin' *he* won't [*He sits down*]

PRIME MINISTER My nephew?

DEDHAM [*Drily*] Mr Lightfoot is then at liberty to proceed elsewhere? [*He clears his throat loudly*]

PRIME MINISTER [*Looking from one to another*] Come now, you don't think that Francis dear, dear! But surely that could very easily be prevented?

STAPP How? [*A pause Rising*] I propose that we do not leave Mr Lightfoot free to go anywhere [*He sits down*]

PRIME MINISTER Mr Stapp!

DEDHAM [*Rising*] I second that [*He sits down*]

DUNNE I say! I say!

COSSINGTON How d'you mean—"Not free"?

ARTHUR [*With a hint of dry distaste*] They mean we arrest Francis [*Sensation*] Well?

PRIME MINISTER But what for?

STAPP Dedham, I dare say, can find some sound legal ground

ARTHUR Dedham, I dare say, can Well?

STAPP Why, then we've got him

ARTHUR To be sure Well?

STAPP Well?

ARTHUR My interest in this young man's history deepens Might one enquire when he comes out? But perhaps he falls into an unforeseen decline has a stroke? Well?

STAPP Damn it, Arthur, do drop those "wells"

ARTHUR, [*Dulcetly*] Does he come out?

STAPP No!

ARTHUR Ah!

PRIME MINISTER But it's preposterous! Young Francis! You can't keep him shut up forever

STAPP Why not? [*Rising*] You all know my opinion you'll never get him on the lines you're takin' An', whether you do or don't, he's a wilkin' bomb shell till he's shut up, shut up tight, an' shut up for keeps But you can't do that people talk If I had my way, d'you know what I'd do?

ARTHUR Something in the grand style

BLOUNT Deceive, an' shoot him?

STAPP Exactly [*He sits down Pause*]

BLOUNT H'm! Not so bad, either! [*Pause*]

DUNNE Some people have damned ugly minds

PRIME MINISTER Shoot Francis?

STAPP That's what I said, Prime Minister

PRIME MINISTER Goodness gracious!

ARTHUR Our Dick is always so decisive

SUNNINGDALE You don't mean that, Stapp?

STAPP I do

COSSINGTON I don't understand

PRIME MINISTER But what on earth—will anybody explain? Lord Dedham, surely you don't?

DEDHAM Shooting no? The rest certainly

PRIME MINISTER Upon my soul—

STAPP Question!

[*Divided murmurs*]

DUNNE Opinion seems against you, Stapp

SUNNINGDALE I should damned well hope so [*Rising*] Prime Minister

PRIME MINISTER Lord Sunningdale

SUNNINGDALE [*Very jovially*] Now then, yer benevolent, bloodthirsty barbarians [*Laughter*] We're in London, not Moscow [*Murmurs of "Hear, hear"*] There's no need ter try an' pull all this Napoleon-Trotsky Mussolini stuff Damned unsportsmanlike, I call it lockin' up an' murderin' and poisonin' a nice young feller whose only fault is he's too full o' faith, hope an' charity The lad's a good lad mettlesome but gentle mouthed He's lookin' ter us an', as Arthur says, if twelve of us old stagers can't put an idealistic colt through his paces on the snaffle—well, it's high time we took ter our beds an' halloed for the parson [*He sits down Applause and opposition*]

DUNNE Hear, hear! Take your fence when you come to it

HALIBURTON H'm! Fear God but keep your powder dry Prime Minister, I move that, if Mr Lightfoot refuse, he be immediately arrested

STAPP An' placed in strict confinement

HALIBURTON [*To Richard Stapp*] Is that necessary?

PASCOE Stapp's afraid Lightfoot'll redistribute his atoms!

STAPP [*Under his breath*] Blasted fool!

PASCOE I beg your pardon?

STAPP Nothin', nothin'! [*To Sir Humphrey Haliburton*] You accept it?

HALIBURTON Oh, all right I take it all this is highly speculative

STAPP [*To Lord Dedham*] You'll second?

DEDHAM [*To the Prime Minister*] Second the motion

PRIME MINISTER Gentlemen, really I am utterly

HALIBURTON [*Soothingly*] Merely provisional We both detest extremes

PRIME MINISTER I don't like it Arrest, perhaps strict confinement, no *The via media*, the golden mean [*Looking round*] But, if I must I shall put the motion We will take a show of hands, please Those in favor [*Certain hands go up, finally Evelyn Arthur's*] Dear me! Not you, Evelyn?

ARTHUR I, Walter

[*Other hands go up*]

PRIME MINISTER Bless my soul very odd Those against [*Counting*] Sunny, Dunne, myself, Cossington The motion is carried I regret it, profoundly [*Rousing himself*] Our order of procedure, then, is first, persuasion, if that should fail—I am convinced it will not—then the matter lies in Lord Dedham's hands Is that correct? [*Murmurs of assent*] Very well then Mr Dunne, will you—

ARTHUR [*Intervening*] May I?—The young man is actuated by three main principles desire for the progress of knowledge, the spirit of good will, and, pre eminently, by pride Do not forget that pride—

PRIME MINISTER Gentlemen? [*Murmurs of assent*] Mr Dunne [*Dunne rises, presses a bell-push near the door, and sits down Pause A Messenger enters*] Ask Mr Lightfoot to do us the honor [*The Messenger goes out Pause The Messenger shows in Francis Lightfoot The Messenger goes out, closing the door Silence Slowly, and in some cases reluctantly, the Committee rises*]

LIGHTFOOT Won't you—won't you please sit down? [*They begin to sit down*]

PRIME MINISTER Sit down here, Francis

LIGHTFOOT I'd rather stand, thanks

PRIME MINISTER I'm sorry we had to keep you waiting

LIGHTFOOT Oh, I didn't mean that That's nothing [*He sticks his hands in his pockets and concentrates on Evelyn Arthur*]

SUNNINGDALE We're still amazed, my boy, you've knocked us groggy

DUNNE Superb! Beyond genius!

DEDHAM It needs no oracle, young man, to—

LIGHTFOOT Yes, yes, of course you're—don't think me rude, but what I want to know is—what's your program?

ARTHUR Ah, precisely, the program [*Pause*]

PRIME MINISTER [*Rising*] Fifteen minutes ago, this Committee passed a resolution, Francis—with no dissentient voice

LIGHTFOOT Yes?

PRIME MINISTER One member did not vote

LIGHTFOOT [*Watchful*] You, Uncle?

PRIME MINISTER No, I am in favor of *that* resolution

LIGHTFOOT You, Mr Arthur?

ARTHUR I proposed it

DUNNE And I seconded it

LIGHTFOOT Good Good Yes?

PRIME MINISTER I will repeat it "His Majesty's Cabinet Members, in Committee assembled, most earnestly and solemnly request and entreat Francis Lightfoot to communicate his overwhelming discovery to no other human being, and to destroy its secret"

LIGHTFOOT What?

PRIME MINISTER "And to destroy its secret"

LIGHTFOOT Destroy destroy my—is—is it a joke?

PRIME MINISTER No, my boy [*He sits down Pause*]

LIGHTFOOT Never! Never, while there are stars in heaven or a man on earth

ARTHUR Has it struck you, Francis, that, if you don't, there may soon be no man on earth, and, quite possibly, one less star in heaven?

LIGHTFOOT No Humanity's not like that It can't be I know it can't my heart tells me it can't

ARTHUR Is that what you judge by in your laboratory? [*Pause*]

LIGHTFOOT [*At a loss*] So that's what you really Thank God, I [*He closes his eyes*]

ARTHUR [*Who has risen, crossing to Francis Lightfoot and offering his hand*] Good-bye, Francis [*Francis Lightfoot opens his eyes and stares at the hand*] Need we part in anger?

LIGHTFOOT Anger? I'm not angry Only it's so unbelievable

ARTHUR [*Very kindly*] Nothing is unbelievable Good-bye, Francis

LIGHTFOOT But good-bye? Have I done anything that—

ARTHUR Not in the least Good-bye, my boy [*He shakes him by the hand, solemnly and gently*] I pray that you may use your *future* knowledge aright

LIGHTFOOT. What d'you mean?

ARTHUR Meanwhile— [*Impressively*] good-bye, and good luck [*He conducts Francis Lightfoot towards the door*] If there's any little point, I'm on the tele-

phone, remember You can always apply to me—I shall be pleased to listen
Good-bye

LIGHTFOOT So you want to be rid of me? The devil you do! I'll tell you something You're jealous of your power—the power of the few over the many You're scared I'll end it Well, I will!

ARTHUR With the aid of—er—the many?

LIGHTFOOT Those you despise—the man in the street!

ARTHUR Indeed? Under the banners of—er—Shelley and Clark Maxwell?

LIGHTFOOT Yes!

ARTHUR Dear me a not inconsiderable undertaking But, with Shelley and Clark Maxwell as guides, doubtless you and the—er—man in the street will make a neat job of it—if he has ever heard of either

LIGHTFOOT [*Scornfully*] If!

ARTHUR Ah! Faith has such advantages over experience

LIGHTFOOT You don't believe he has?

ARTHUR I am platonically curious

LIGHTFOOT Then I'll prove it to you

ARTHUR Impossible How?

LIGHTFOOT I'll—I'll ask the first passers-by

ARTHUR Who Shelley was? What Clark Maxwell did?

LIGHTFOOT Yes! I'll teach you what's what, by God!

ARTHUR Dear Francis, I shall be glad to learn How will you pick them?

LIGHTFOOT I'll—I'll go and bring in the first three men I meet [*He turns to go Sensation He stops*] You come, too then you'll see I'm being square

ARTHUR After you [*Evelyn Arthur ushers Francis Lightfoot out Exit Francis Lightfoot Evelyn Arthur takes out his monocle, glances at the Committee, replaces his monocle, and goes out The tension breaks*]

STAPP Whe-ew!

PASCOE By God, that man should have been a KC Deliberate provocation

FAULKNER I thought I'd pass out when he said good bye "Good-bye, Francis!"

COSSINGTON "If there's any little point you can apply to me"—yes, I *don't* think

SUNNINGDALE And the bunny rolled head over heels into the net

DEDHAM "Take charge o' the conversation? Oh, dear, no Let it happen"

GRINDLE [*Gloomy*] We're not out of the wood, yet, and my Budget proposals

STAPP [*Pleased*] Damn 'em! Damn everythin'! This is life!

VERE Sssh!

PRIME MINISTER Already?

[*The doors open Francis Lightfoot and Evelyn Arthur come in*]

ARTHUR We found two, just outside the front door, going in opposite directions There was no one else in sight, so—er—we agreed that [*To the Prime Minister*] you might ask your secretary to procure the third Would you mind?

PRIME MINISTER Certainly [*Telephoning*] Grantly speaking is that you, Eddie? Would you be so good as to go out on to the Downing Street steps and

ask the first man you meet to come in here for a moment yes, that's what I said Wait a moment Where are the two others?

ARTHUR In the front ante room

PRIME MINISTER [*Telephoning*] Put him in the front ante room you'll find two others there then show them in here, one at a time Don't scare him oh, say we've a little bet on

SUNNINGDALE [*Laughing*] Every Englishman likes a bet Gives him somethin' ter think about

LIGHTFOOT [*Anxious, to Evelyn Arthur*] I'd say the big chap was a plumber?

ARTHUR [*Vaguely*] I haven't the remotest idea but, then, I never have All workmen seem the same to me some smell of onions, some of beer I prefer onions

LIGHTFOOT The other's a clerk, I suppose

ARTHUR [*Dreamily*] A subsidiary ruler, and a subsidiary ruled Yes, our business is with what is Once we lose touch with that, we're done for [*Change of tone*] Shall we sit down? [*They sit*] Tell me, Francis, wasn't it held in Newton's day that the planets marched upon their orbits in accordance with the law of an imperious necessity, which imposed upon each its course? [*Francis Lightfoot nods Dreamily again*] And today it is agreed, I suppose, that the affair is hardly so exalted The planets move upon their course according to the law of least resistance, casually, as it were, taking the easiest path The easiest path Not unlike humanity [*Evelyn Arthur checks Francis Lightfoot, who seems about to speak*] Despite all our talk about progress, the law would seem to be that humanity exerts, not its maximum, but its minimum energy, and progresses only when it is easier to progress than to retrogress or to stand still [*Change of tone*] Civilization cannot be imposed, Francis it can only be induced the art of government consists in making retrogression difficult, stagnation dull, and progress—apparently—easy [*The doors open*] Ah, here's our man [*Quickly to Francis Lightfoot*] Shelley or Clark Maxwell?

LIGHTFOOT [*Similarly*] Shelley for a workingman otherwise Clark Maxwell Is that fair?

ARTHUR I think so

[*Mr Albert Cummins appears in the doorway—a shambling, elderly laborer, who carries his cap in his hand and a bag of tools He is accompanied by a Messenger, who points to the Prime Minister*]

CUMMINS That 'im? [*The Messenger withdraws Mr Albert Cummins stands, sheepish*]

PRIME MINISTER Come in, my man—we want to speak to you [*Mr Albert Cummins advances uneasily*] Your name is ?

CUMMINS Cummins, sir, Albert Cummins

PRIME MINISTER Well, Mr Cummins, we've been having a little discussion and we wish to ask you a question—nothing important—just between friends Did you ever hear of a man called Shelley, Mr Cummins?

CUMMINS Wot was 'e? Hadmiral, sir?

PRIME MINISTER No

CUMMINS Chapel?

PRIME MINISTER Scarcely

CUMMINS Ah, that's a pity yer gotter find the Light o' the World— Can't honestly say I 'ave, sir

PRIME MINISTER Thank you, Mr Cummins Good morning

CUMMINS Thank yer, sir [*As he goes*] This'll be a grand tale for my missus 'Is 'air ain't ser long as they said [*He goes out*]

GRINDLE That's the kind

ARTHUR [*To Francis Lightfoot*] Well? [*No answer*]

[*Mr Hart-Plimsoll, a young gentleman in a short morning coat, enters carrying a despatch case and a black felt hat He is clearly very nervous He stops short*]

HART-PLIMSOLL The secretary said

PRIME MINISTER Pray come in Excuse us troubling you, sir, but we [*He sees the despatch-case*] So, like ourselves, you're a public servant, eh, Mr ?

HART-PLIMSOLL Hart-Plimsoll, sir First Division Clerk in the F O — [*Remembering and seeing Evelyn Arthur*] Foreign Office

ARTHUR Any objection, Francis? Apparently he is one of my myrmidons

LIGHTFOOT That's all right

PRIME MINISTER We want to ask you a question

HART-PLIMSOLL Yes, sir?

PRIME MINISTER Nothing to do with Foreign Affairs A general question

HART-PLIMSOLL [*More nervous than ever*] Yes, sir

PRIME MINISTER Have you ever heard of a man called Clark Maxwell?

HART-PLIMSOLL Clark Maxwell Clark Maxwell um—scientist, wasn't he? Had something to do with magnetism—or was it electric light?

PRIME MINISTER [*Gently*] I'm asking you

HART-PLIMSOLL [*Uneasy*] I seem to remember something

PRIME MINISTER Yes?

HART-PLIMSOLL But I can't remember what—science does seem awfully in human, don't you know, and I do like human beings

ARTHUR Ah, the human comedy, eh? What do you consider—roughly—the most important things? Don't hurry

HART-PLIMSOLL Well, taking life in the large, sir, I should say the two most important things in life are love and Anglo American relations

PRIME MINISTER [*Tickled*] Capital! [*Laughter.*]

ARTHUR I observe you separate the two

HART-PLIMSOLL Oh, no, sir

ARTHUR No?

HART-PLIMSOLL [*Laughing sheepishly*] Well, as a matter of fact, they go together in my case—in every sense

ARTHUR Do they? Say there was a second secretaryship in Washington, would you ?

HART-PLIMSOLL Would I!—I mean, yes, sir

ARTHUR H'm! I'll give you a tip a diplomat should never look surprised, unless it's his game That tip is worth more than a second secretaryship Good morning

HART-PLIMSOLL [*Dejectedly*] Good morning, sir [*He turns to go*]

PRIME MINISTER Please send in the man who's waiting. Thank you very much.

HART-PLIMSOLL Thank you, sir [*He goes*].

PRIME MINISTER [*To Evelyn Arthur*] Ciel Evelyn!

ARTHUR [*Covertly watching Francis Lightfoot*] Must teach 'em. And he'll get that second secretaryship [*Glancing toward the door*] Hello.

[*Mr Taggart, a red-headed little man of about thirty-five, stands in the door. He wears a check overcoat, too big for him, a red tie and a felt hat*].

TAGGERT [*On the offensive-defensive*] So yer sent for me—eh?

PRIME MINISTER [*Sizing him up*] Yes. My colleagues and I wish to ask you a question, if we may. Nothing important.

TAGGERT That's all very well, but you're a ring o' Capitalist bosses, an' I'm a Socialist.

PRIME MINISTER [*Mildly*] When I, as Prime Minister, want to ask a Socialist a question, I ask the Leader of the Opposition. Now I'm only one man addressing another, Mr. ?

TAGGERT My name's Taggart. T, A, double G, E, R, T.

PRIME MINISTER The question we want to ask you, Mr. Taggart, is this: did you ever hear of a man called Shelley?

TAGGERT Shelley? Livin'?

PRIME MINISTER No.

TAGGERT H'm Shelley. Let me see. Revolutionary poet, wasn't he?

LIGHTFOOT Ah!

PRIME MINISTER Yes.

TAGGERT That's about all I know. Not strong on poetry. Give me fax—Marx is my line. That's a real revolutionary.

HALIBURTON [*Genuinely*] By real, you mean addicted to the use of bombs, eh?

TAGGERT [*On his subject*] Much is deep 'stir as I understand 'm, 'e don't suggest bombs. All 'e says is, that when things is as they is, bombs will 'appen. But you're supposed ter be eddicated—you should know w'ether 'e says bombs or no. Wot wi' the crying o' the baby, an' me leavin' school ser young an' w'in' been brought up on tin foods an' bein' a man of only sharpish parts at best, I really couldn't say, not fer certain. Maybe bombs would be a good argument.

HALIBURTON [*Genuinely*] A moving one, anyway.

TAGGERT Too movin' p'raps—an' I don't say that cos you're you an' I'm me [*Confidentially*]. You know 'ow it is—lately I come ter feel it ain't as simple as all that—nothin' is. You asked me a 'ard, 'ard question, an' I don't rightly know 'ow ter answer it, but by an' large I should say wot this country needs is eddication, an' more eddication, an' more eddication still, an' not Latin an' Greek neither—an' not only outside this room [*Laughter*].

PRIME MINISTER Excellent! Perhaps, if you will leave your address, Lord Vivian here, the President of the Board of Education. Lord Vivian Vere, Mr. Taggart.

VERE How do you do?

TAGGERT Same ter you.

PRIME MINISTER Lord Vivian may be able to assist you toward pursuing your studies.

TAGGERT Nothin' doin'! I don't want ter owe nothin' ter nobody I'm class conscious, I am

PRIME MINISTER Alas!

VERE We have our Adult Education Bill

TAGGERT Milk fer bibes! We knows yer

PRIME MINISTER [*Soothingly*] We do our best And what we have heard from you today, Mr Taggert, and our appreciation of your character and independence, will encourage us to do better Good morning, Mr Taggert

TAGGERT Good day ter you [*He makes to depart He halts*] Cor! If that ain't ole Sunny—Lord Sunningdale, I mean [*To the rest*] 'Scuse me a minute [*He takes off his hat and leans across the table*] Knew yer by yer carnation, m'lord One good turn deserves another, as the sayin' is May I ask yer somethin'?

SUNNINGDALE Certainly, Mr Taggert

TAGGERT Well—I won't let on outside—but I *would* like ter know, is that li'l 'oss o' yours goin' ter win termorrow?

SUNNINGDALE Things, Mr Taggert, as you yourself have observed, are not so simple as they seem I think my horse will win, but I've hedged my bets

TAGGERT Thank yer, comrade

SUNNINGDALE When it comes to sport, we're all comrades, I hope

TAGGERT Sport's sport, anywhere Ser long [*The door closes behind him Exit Taggert*]

SUNNINGDALE Damme, I like that chap

ARTHUR Well, Francis?

LIGHTFOOT Well?

ARTHUR They were not intimately acquainted with your two friends

LIGHTFOOT No But

ARTHUR [*Easily*] We are the representatives of millions such, we are no better, no worse, certainly luckier, possibly more knowledgable, but representative We

LIGHTFOOT I've got it! Not knowledge! There's something more important And they all had it Goodwill!—That's right, smile! I wouldn't have your heart for—you're the mummy whose hand kills!

SUNNINGDALE Easy, boy, easy

PRIME MINISTER Francis! To my oldest friend—

LIGHTFOOT I don't care, he shall not sit there, gentle, courteous, pitying I know him—history knows him—Antichrist! What can you know of Humanity, if you don't love it?

ARTHUR I beg your pardon for smiling, Francis But—how can you love humanity, if you don't know it?

LIGHTFOOT I trust it, and love begins with trust

ARTHUR Are you quite sure love doesn't begin with forgiveness?

LIGHTFOOT Never! Despair always says that There's the body of common goodwill

[*Pause*]

BLOUNT Young man, you said you went to a Public School?

LIGHTFOOT Yes

BLOUNT And you ran away?

LIGHTFOOT Yes

BLOUNT Why? Was it because o' the body o' common goodwill? If it's so general, why am I at this table? Why's Lord Dedham, Sir Humphrey Hali burton, Esme Faulkner, Richard Stapp?

LIGHTFOOT Because you don't trust, or hope, or believe

ARTHUR We trust as we dare, Francis, we hope as we may, we believe as we can

DEDHAM [*Harshly*] Government's not here to trust or hope or believe We're here to govern

LIGHTFOOT [*Rising*] You're here to believe and, by God, I'll make you!

BLOUNT [*Half rising*] You'll make ?

ARTHUR [*Quietly*] Francis, do you believe?

LIGHTFOOT [*Standing*] Yes, absolutely

ARTHUR [*Very gently*] Poor boy! [*Pause*]

PRIME MINISTER Francis, you spoke of the body of common goodwill You were right It exists, and all government is founded on it But it takes many forms, and some of them issue in abnegation In the splendor of youth we sometimes despise abnegation, but old hearts understand it, and prize it more every year To you, we may seem ignoble in our disillusion, but I know, and all here know, if we know nothing else, that we have to die for Man before we can live for him, so that our death may increase the honor and might of the only god left living, that unknown god whom, as the Scripture says, "we ignorantly worship"

LIGHTFOOT Whose name is Compromise!

PRIME MINISTER It is the gods who are most abused who survive My boy, you are not the first to suffer the highest heroism begins with just such abnegation and there is probably not one man in this room who has not laid down some ideal on the altar of the common goodwill

LIGHTFOOT What ideal has a fellow like Sir Romilly Blount ever sacrificed?

BLOUNT You're addressin' me, young man? [*He rises*] Did you ever hear o' the Minotaur class o' battleship?

LIGHTFOOT No

BLOUNT Then I'll tell you The keels o' the Minotaur class were on the slips They'd 'a' been the handsomest, the grandest ships ever known What your physics is to you, those ships were to me I foresaw 'em, I planned 'em, I toiled for 'em, I fought for 'em, an', when somebody I loved died, I prayed for 'em, knowin' as they alone could keep my heart from breakin' in my body An' then, at this table, sittin' where I am now, I had to listen to these new disarmament proposals, an' the general feelin' was—they had to go You may think it funny, young man, you may sneer at me, but every night for three nights I had to wrestle in prayer to be delivered from the temptation to speak up for my ships, I had to take the part of a Christ I didn't believe in, against the part of a Jehovah, god of battles, in whom I did An' I came back, an' I sat down here, an' I never said a word, an', when they'd voted 'em away, I fell with my head on this table, as Esme Faulkner here can tell you, an' your uncle—he was at the Home Office then—came an' patted me on the back an' led me home An' I never come into this room but I see the ghosts o' those ships

before me floatin' above this table You're young, my boy, an' you think you know a lot, but an old salt like me can tell you there's bitterer waters swallowed in this room than can be found in all the seven seas [*Silence Sir Romilly Blount sits down*]

LIGHTFOOT I beg your pardon, sir [*Change of voice*] Just the same, if *he* can live up to that ideal, surely the world

VERE Damn it, boy, the mass of mankind is still unimaginably ignorant One must do what one can

LIGHTFOOT Rubbish! One must do what one can't That's why I tackled the atom

VERE We're not all genuses And the man of today who's not quite ignorant has lost his old beliefs without acquiring new ones A man without belief won't take responsibility, and it's responsibility you're trying to thrust on him Besides, in even the best there's the residuum of the savage Teach it no new ways to evil

LIGHTFOOT All knowledge is always knowledge of good and evil

HALIBURTON [*Genially*] Life's a penny i'-the-slot machine, my boy Put in happiness, and you get out happiness, put in discontent, and you get discontent out Everybody's got his limit and is happy or unhappy up to it Let folks be comfortable their own way

LIGHTFOOT Comfortable!

HALIBURTON Yes, my boy, comfortable Live and let live

LIGHTFOOT Such living is death

HALIBURTON Well, Nature's for it—breeds 'em by the million

SUNNINGDALE [*Even more genially*] Why this itch ter make folks better, sonny? You fellers'll never admit a pippin's juicy, if it ain't off yer own tree Damme, a blood-horse, all fire an' satin skin, is as satisfyin' as—as any highbrow kafoozelum You brainy birds are all bilious bodies Everythin' that's good of its kind is all right, an' failures are only stuff that's tryin' to be itself an' ain't succeedin'

LIGHTFOOT It's because I want them to succeed

SUNNINGDALE An' if they did, my son, they wouldn't have the qualities that's theirs [*Applause*]

GRINDLE These are temporal things I deal in eternal The universe is a phantasmal flux our task is to redeem it to a temporary concreteness Don't make that task easy in its terror lies the sole dignity of a race of phantoms

PRIME MINISTER You have required us to build a House for Man a wrong analogy We politicians are not architects Our task is more homely—that of a gardener We seek only to fertilize, to sow, to prune the rest depends on the qualities of the plant And let me draw your attention to this fact half a gardener's work is done upon his knees

GRINDLE [*Harshly*] Where you ought to be, young man Like too many in this modern world—like most of my colleagues—you're a pagan My doctrine is very old fashioned It begins with God's Will and end with His Grace And he who has Grace, and lives by and for it, needs nothing this world can give, for Grace is opportunity enough, since, however hard the worldly lot, the path of Grace leads to the throne of God

LIGHTFOOT Then what are you doing here?

GRINDLE In all humility, bringing God into the Cabinet [*Pause*]

COSSINGTON I object on higher grounds s You're up s-setting the balanc-s of Nature There's-s no progress without s-struggle, unceas-sing s struggle [*Suppressed titters*]

STAPP I called Lord Cossington a fool just now so he is—a damned fool but, for once, he's talkin' sense Life is strife what's more, strife is life

LIGHTFOOT I suppose you mean—the battlefield!

BLOUNT An' I s'pose *you* think a man's a fool an' a knave, when he fights for his country?

LIGHTFOOT I'm fighting for mine now

BLOUNT Cloudcuckooland!

LIGHTFOOT Yes cloudcuckooland a world of light and wings!

FAULKNER A world of light and wings I've fought in it Sopwith vs Fokker Lightfoot, I believe that, if in this life we strive hard enough, we shall live again You want to make the world safe for democracy—a cushy place I want for Man the immortality of heroes

LIGHTFOOT The murder of the first born! [*Murmurs*]

STAPP Listen to me, Francis Lightfoot If you'd been a fightin' soldier in March 'eighteen, when the Germans rolled over us, you'd understand I went out on a lone reconnaiss-ance an' got so beat to the wide I went to sleep in a shell-hole I woke up to find the German barrage droppin' behind me, our tellers gone, an' the Germans advancin' I came on a machine gun post with yesterday's dead round it, an' it struck me I could either surrender or stand I stood An' d'you know why? For my country? Rats! For immortality, the dignity o' the human race, like Esme Faulkner here? Be damned! Shall I tell you? I did it for the satisfaction of my soul Yes, that's why An' d'you know what I owe that determination to? Classic tags at Harrow in Cambridge You think I've been against you, don't you? Well, you're wrong I'm the feller who didn't vote on this resolution I've fought these chaps for the last two days an' nights—the only one among 'em who cursed their "Safety First" Why? Because the battle's to the strong an' with this weapon the Americans an' ourselves could be cock o' the wulk an' teach all other peoples on the globe where they got off

LIGHTFOOT [*With fascinated loathing*] And when you'd won?

STAPP We shouldn't Civilization would have had to begin again But we'd have realized ourselves in tryin' An' those moments o' realization are the only everlasting present, the classical idea, the flower o' life, the game for the game's sake [*Pause*]

LIGHTFOOT Sooner or later, another civilization would rediscover the secret And, when *that* civilization had won, what *then*?

STAPP The age o' milk and water A sort o' Shaw Wells Utopia A soda-pop paradise, YMCA owned They put it to me that we *might* win—an' that's what stopped me Now, d'you understand?

LIGHTFOOT Yes, I understand coward!

STAPP Eh?

LIGHTFOOT Coward! And not only you [*He rises*] All of you! Cowards!

Maybe you've courage to die but not one of you've courage to live [*Angry murmurs*]

PRIME MINISTER Francis! The fact that your ideas and ours do not chime

LIGHTFOOT Ideas! The very substance of our beings doesn't chime Yours is the Spirit of Yesterday mine is the Spirit of Tomorrow [*Murmurs*] Must I tell you what every Board school urchin knows?—that among the myriad orbs of the Milky Way there gyrates, in a minor solar system, a negligible planet, and that on this pea of a planet creeps a race of parasites? But parasites who know themselves for what they are! Isolated! Isolated between the abyss of the unimaginably small, the atom, and the abyss of the unimaginably great, the night about us In that isolation, what refuge have we but one another? what future but the future of all? what ethic but the good—not of one person, or of one nation—but of Mankind? Answer me that, you can't! The day of the Takers is over, I tell you, the day of the Givers dawns And I inaugurate it—with the greatest of all possible gifts mastery over matter At last, Man is free to enlarge the Kingdom of the Spirit, and so, whether the Sum of Things is justified or not, to justify himself And do you think, because the Spirit of Yesterday in *you* is afraid, the Spirit of Tomorrow in *me* will run away? [*Pause*]

ARTHUR Then you refuse to destroy the secret?

LIGHTFOOT Utterly!

PRIME MINISTER Francis! [*Silence*] I beg you [*Silence*] We have been very patient [*He looks toward Lord Dedham*]

DUNNE [*Intervening*] One moment Lightfoot, I'm not a politician I'm an engineer, your uncle told you Yes, and what's more, I'm one of your "Board school urchins" [*Glancing about the Cabinet*] I came from the gutter Well, I planned a great scheme—perhaps you heard of it—the hydro electrification of the Balkans?

LIGHTFOOT [*Interested*] Yes [*He sits down*]

DUNNE My object was peace in the Balkans, by giving them prosperity I was on the eve of carrying the thing out—when pressure was put on me—this government, that government, all over Europe—yes, and Asia, and America, too—but, above all, *this* government I told 'em what you've told 'em—the Spirit of Tomorrow, Hope, Courage—against their vicious circle of sophistry and despair And, in the end, I left 'em talking, and I went ahead In three weeks an international crisis had developed, which, if I hadn't given way, would have led to another war and wrecked civilization That taught me my lesson They asked me here—I was useful—to join the Cabinet And I've been useful! The Dunne Internal Transportation Scheme—you know Take my advice, Lightfoot, they know better than you or me the nature of the medium they work in [*Pause*]

PRIME MINISTER I have the concurrence of my colleagues, Francis, in saying that, if you will—er—grant our request, we will put every possible facility for research at your disposal [*Cries of "Hear, hear"*] Your sphere of usefulness—to humanity—will be incalculable And our facilities are only equalled by our—er—resources [*Applause*]

LIGHTFOOT [*With a queer laugh*] You're trying to bribe me? Me—the master of the atom How—how frightfully funny! [*Angry murmurs*]

PRIME MINISTER Francis!

LIGHTFOOT [*Suddenly serious he pushes his chair back, and rises*] To hell with the lot of you [*He starts to go*]

DEDHAM Mr Lightfoot, I advise you not to leave this room

LIGHTFOOT Ho-ho! This begins to be interesting First you cajole, then, you bribe, now, you threaten

DEDHAM I don't know what you're talking about I am merely warning you

LIGHTFOOT Warning I see not threatening, warning Why b-bother about p-procedure, Lord Dedham? Which is it to be p-penal servitude, or the b-black cap?

PRIME MINISTER Francis! We have no desire to proceed

LIGHTFOOT "To extreme measures, but, none the less, with all the respect in the world"—I know it by heart before you say it

DEDHAM You have displayed an unparalleled obstinacy Civilization has the right to protect itself against such enemies as you If you force us to choose between your good and the world's good

LIGHTFOOT "We shall know how to choose" Where's your wig, man, where's your wig?

DEDHAM Levity will not aid you

LIGHTFOOT "Levity!" Dedham on levity to the Lord of the Atom! [*Cocking his head*] I wonder which is the uglier, you or Blount Snout for snout God, I do hate ugly men!

PRIME MINISTER Francis, I'm ashamed of you Submit with grace

LIGHTFOOT Don't be ridiculous, Uncle, d'you suppose I take Dedham seriously?

DEDHAM Mr Haliburton, would you be kind enough to ring for Inspector Forster

[*Sir Humphrey Haliburton rises*]

ARTHUR Just a moment [*Pause*]

LIGHTFOOT Ah, the h-hesitating Mr Arthur. From d delicacy?

ARTHUR [*With all his charm, offering both hands*] Francis, for my sake

LIGHTFOOT [*Quietly*] Mr Arthur, all along I have felt you to be wicked Now I know it

ARTHUR Wicked? Perhaps

LIGHTFOOT I suppose you think the Master of the Atom is as bankrupt as you are [*Looking round*] And you're all in it Genuinely wicked

DEDHAM Ring the bell, Haliburton

LIGHTFOOT Yes! L-lean on the b bell—push, s-start every bell in Europe [*Sir Humphrey Haliburton again moves toward the bell Evelyn Arthur again stops Sir Humphrey Haliburton, with a gesture*]

ARTHUR Francis! we know the game—and that one must have the courage even for that But

LIGHTFOOT The game! So that's your secret; the secret of all your hearts You *all* think it's a game—it's your way of evading responsibility Very well then, if it's a game, let's play it By God, if there's to be world-drama here,

I'll play Caesar When I first took my place among you, by right, as the greatest benefactor Mankind has ever known, the first word my uncle spoke was "War" And since then "War, Death, Despair"—to me who bring Love, Life, and Hope Only one man among the lot of you wanted my gift—and what for? Humanity? No To be "cock of the walk" the game for the game's sake" You've dragged me down—you've made me fight—very well then, by God, I'll meet you on your own atrocious level Dedham, you death's head, summon your policeman [*He shoves his hands into his pockets and sits down*]

DEDHAM [*Unimpressed*] Mr Haliburton

[*Sir Humphrey Haliburton again goes toward the bell*]

PRIME MINISTER [*To Francis Lightfoot*] You understand what this means, Francis?

[*Sir Humphrey Haliburton stops*]

LIGHTFOOT B-better than you, perhaps

DEDHAM Don't get the idea that you'll make speeches in the dock, you'll never reach it, I'll see to that

LIGHTFOOT In-f-flexible D Dedham!

DEDHAM Still funny, eh? Young man, you see that sunlight? Look well at it, for you're not likely to see it again

LIGHTFOOT [*With the nasal laugh of Mr Punch*] Ha-ha! the blood and thunder touch at last! I was afraid we weren't going to have it

PRIME MINISTER Francis, have you taken leave of . . . ?

DEDHAM Haliburton, ring that bell [*Sir Humphrey Haliburton is about to do so Matthew Grindle, with whom Evelyn Arthur has been conferring, whispers urgently to him Sir Humphrey Haliburton stops*] Go on, Haliburton, ring [*Sir Humphrey Haliburton reaches for the bell*]

ARTHUR One moment [*Sir Humphrey Haliburton stops*]

LIGHTFOOT Such h-hesitation, M-mister Arthur, almost amounts to d dila-toriness [*Up:oar*]

ARTHUR [*Sharply*] Prime Minister, I ask for silence, please [*Silence falls To Francis Lightfoot*] Just now, you informed us that we were bankrupt and you were not May I ask to what currency you referred?

LIGHTFOOT Your own! What else is valid here?

ARTHUR I am sorry you should think so You are not Prometheus, after all, you are only another technician who has lost his temper [*He sits down disdainfully*] Ring down the curtain, Hal, on another dismal comedy

[*Sir Humphrey Haliburton again reaches for the bell*]

LIGHTFOOT Stop!

ARTHUR Why should we stop? Those who cannot rise must sink

LIGHTFOOT Stop, I say!

ARTHUR Gentlemen, Olympians must be patient [*To Francis Lightfoot*] You have an announcement to make? Make it, if you have the courage.

LIGHTFOOT Have you the courage to hear?

ARTHUR Not Prometheus, only his understudy

LIGHTFOOT His understudy, eh? [*To the rest*] Listen, you Last week, I came here—a boy, full of hope today I stand here—a man whose despair almost equals your own, But one learns in this room Last week, when I left here, my

heart knew—though my brain refused to believe—your wickedness And I made my preparations

VOICES What's he mean? What's he talking about?—'Preparations'

LIGHTFOOT My preparations! Aren't I to be shot at dawn? or buried alive? Understand this either, by *noon* tomorrow, you will be prepared to formulate, under my supervision, a constructive program satisfactory to *me*, or at *one o'clock tomorrow* England ends [*Upioar*] Where this island was, will be a whirlpool of disintegrating atoms [*He turns to go*]

VOICES Stop him! He's mad! Arrest him!

LIGHTFOOT [*Dominating them*] If—if I am interfered with in the slightest degree, or if, in the meantime, [*Quietly*] I should come to an unlooked-for—and convenient—end, no power at present known to man, can avert that catastrophe [*Smiling*] That accident will guarantee the detonation

PRIME MINISTER Can you do that?

LIGHTFOOT I can

PRIME MINISTER Will you do that?

LIGHTFOOT I will Good morning, gentlemen

FAULKNER How?

LIGHTFOOT That's my affair But I assure you that, with this brain these hands, I can destroy England, Europe, the entire planet—today, tomorrow, at any moment

BLOUNT What d'yer mean? A bomb?

LIGHTFOOT Nature is not as simple as you, First Lord, nor, I may add, am I

BLOUNT Damned puppy!

LIGHTFOOT Besides, most of all, when they're sentimental, I don't like men with warts on their noses

BLOUNT [*Going for him*] You'll pay for that, you little [*Evelyn Arthur, Richard Stapp and others hold him back*]

LIGHTFOOT [*To Evelyn Arthur*] So the understudy *can* talk to the Olympians? Clever of you to remember [*Blowing across the palm of his hand*] that, if he blows, you—vanish

PASCOE I don't believe you

LIGHTFOOT You don't, don't you? Dear, dear If you don't believe me, [*He takes out his watch—a large Hunter—opens and looks at it*] by noon tomorrow [*Closes the watch with a click*] Good day [*Again he starts to go*]

ARTHUR [*Between him and the door*] In all sincerity, don't be so hard Forgive Man for being what he is

LIGHTFOOT My hardness will make Man what he might be

ARTHUR Have pity

LIGHTFOOT Where your pity ends, my love begins

ARTHUR Your pride!

LIGHTFOOT My love's pride

ARTHUR My boy, you don't know what love is If you did, you would know right and wrong

LIGHTFOOT [*Hesitating*] Right and wrong? [*Proudly*] Your right and wrong are Yesterday's, mine are Tomorrow's

ARTHUR Then you will crucify Man on the cross of your impossible hopes?

LIGHTFOOT I will raise Man, though it be upon a cross, and crown him, though it be with thorns [*Francis Lightfoot goes out*]

STAPP Quick, Hal—your men—after him—watch him, every moment, don't let him know they're following him, and, for God's sake, *tell them not to touch him*

QUICK CURTAIN

ACT III

SCENE *The same*

TIME *The next day*

The Committee assembled Profound depression on every face save Evelyn Arthur's which is calm and stern Silence A Messenger enters

MESSENGER Mr Lightfoot is here, sir

PRIME MINISTER Already! Ask him to come in [*Exit Messenger*] Eleven forty He's early Gentlemen, I never thought I should live to despair, yet I despair now We have done our best, may God have mercy on us and all men

And on this tyrant who knows not what he does [*The Messenger opens the door Silence Francis Lightfoot enters A very different person from the young man who assumed the green tie, his dress is untidy, his hair not brushed, his face haggard, he drags his legs like a man who has tramped far, he appears crushed He holds the volume of Shelley He makes his way to one of the pillars and leans against it like a weary Samson The Messenger goes out, closing the door Silence Prime Minister, continuing*] You are early

LIGHTFOOT Yes [*Silence*]

PRIME MINISTER Our answer is brief with one dissentient [*He glances at Evelyn Arthur*]—we capitulate

LIGHTFOOT [*Wearily*] You capitulate?

PRIME MINISTER Yes, we are beaten

LIGHTFOOT [*Without raising his head, stilly*] No, gentlemen, I am beaten I capitulate

PRIME MINISTER What?

LIGHTFOOT I capitulate [*Silence*]

PRIME MINISTER So you will destroy the secret?

LIGHTFOOT [*Absently*] Something Evelyn Arthur said has entered my heart and, as far as this world is concerned, has broken it He told me I had no knowledge of right and wrong [*To the Prime Minister*] What did you say? "Destroy the secret?" [*With wearied and subdued scorn*] How can it be destroyed? Have I the right to wrong the Mind of Man and destroy it? Where action is, Right and Wrong are, and both are implacable And, if I did destroy it, what use would that be? Hundreds of men are working on this thing What has been surrendered to genius may be granted to labor At this very moment, while the world, in you [*His unconscious gesture includes the audience*]—its representatives—listens, somewhere on the globe a group of men may be bent over a paper which contains the solution And, when that solution is once more found, the decision between Right and Wrong *must* be taken

But how can it be taken when I, the furtherest reach of Man's Mind, cannot take it? [*Bitterly*] I, the furthest Reach! [*Quietly and sally as stating a fact*] Man has not yet sufficiently evolved to face life, nor I to decide whether I have the right to force Man to face it

ARTHUR [*Profoundly stirred*] Then you despair—and out of that despair springs humility, and out of humility that modicum of modest hope which alone is useful to man [*Softly, affectionately, but with firmness*] Faith, dear Francis, is only the shadow, not the substance of things hoped for The House of Man is not to be built upon the quicksands of hope—they will only engulf him and his Build, as I do, upon the rock of despair It is a process, harder, less romantic, so slow that time itself hardly notices the accretions Thus to build, demands patience and tenacity, and, above all, courage But on these foundations the House of Man, however humble, can endure

LIGHTFOOT [*Raising his head, almost radiant*] You speak of hope and humility, of time and courage [*With mysterious exaltation*] I, too, have hope, but my hope is wider than yours, for it is not personal, my humility is deeper than yours, for it was born of the contemplation of night and the stars, my trust in time is stronger than yours, my courage stouter, for it is Nature's own [*Drawing himself up*] Now I am dangerous, for I am with Her I am her Sibyl and I speak from the recesses of her heart [*Ominously*] Do you not even now feel her gather her forces? Man will be delivered from his burden

ARTHUR Francis!

LIGHTFOOT Yes, Evelyn Arthur?

ARTHUR Yes you are an angel, with an angel's pride

LIGHTFOOT [*Nodding gravely*] Not I, but She And, as I have some shadow of her capacity, so I have some fragment of her courage You have guessed, I thought you might [*To the others, strangely, as if pronouncing an elegy*] Gentlemen, there was a planet called the Earth After inconceivable millenniums, sentience emerged from that planet's slime Again aeons passed, and unimaginable agonies, and at last that sentience, which was now none other than the Mind of Man—of you, gentlemen, and of me—earned the right to such an intensity of apprehension that it seemed on the brink of unriddling the profoundest enigma of the universe, with that unriddling, the universe would have become conscious of itself Suddenly, every dream was shattered, not by a sidereal accident, but by the very constitution of Man himself But the genius of Nature is inexhaustible on another star that consciousness will be accomplished, and, to hasten that process and to assist Nature correct one of her casual blunders I, who gave Man his opportunity, am about to take it away In a brief moment, this planet and all upon it, with all its history, its hopes, and its disillusionings, will be wiped out [*Sensation*] You see that clock? When the two arms of that clock coincide on noon, I will return to stand among you, a man among his fellows, and with you pass away, even as all men and this very globe itself will pass away Our midget has spun long enough I give it fifteen minutes more—fifteen minutes for you to come to terms with your gods

DEDDHAM He's raving!

LIGHTFOOT I have cause enough to rave, the fear in your face supplies it

PASCOE Haven't you any thought, man, for your own life, if not for ours?

LIGHTFOOT Day by day, for years, I have faced death in my laboratory

[Several start to speak at once]

ARTHUR *[Butterly]* Let him alone He has forgotten Right and Wrong

LIGHTFOOT Right and Wrong? Man's inventions Just as Man is Nature's invention And Nature has had enough of all such inventions *[He turns to go He opens the door]*

PRIME MINISTER Where are you going?

LIGHTFOOT To look at the narcissi in the Park *[He picks up the book and looks at the clock]* In fourteen minutes I shall return to die among my friends Man, the enemy *[Exit Francis Lightfoot]*

SUNNINGDALE Good God!

HALIBURTON He doesn't in the least mind obliterating the entire earth, but he hates to be parted from his blasted rhyme book Well, I'll be— *[Words fail him]*

PASCOE You're damned cool, Arthur, blast you, damned cool!

ARTHUR *[Wearily]* I utterly fail to see how it will help to be anything else There has been one Ice Age, this young man is merely saving us the trouble of waiting for another *[He sits down and pulls out a book from his pocket]*

PASCOE *[Going over]* But I say—

ARTHUR Go away

PASCOE But, Arthur, Arthur, you surely don't mean—?

ARTHUR *[Dryly]* I usually mean what I say Please go away I see I have one chapter left, and I hope to have time to finish it

PASCOE *[Pushing up the book to see the title]* Benedetto Croce! Philosophy! In the face of the futility of everything

ARTHUR *[With patient irony]* And what else is philosophy for, if not to reconcile us to that futility? *[He screws in his monocle and begins to read]*

PASCOE Gods! You're inhuman! I say—Arthur's being inhuman—says he really thinks—but that fellow can't—I mean—it's—don't laugh, you fellows *[They are not laughing]*—but—but it's ludicrous, I mean—here we are and—I say, listen—do listen! My God, look at 'em all looking at the door *[Raises his voice]* I say! What's the matter with 'em? *[St John Pascoe comes up to Sir Humphrey Haliburton and pulls him by the arm No result As to a deaf man]* Look here—my God—I say, d'you understand what I'm saying? Arthur says that fellow means it—that he'll blow the—blow the—but it's absurd—blow the— *[St John Pascoe pulls Sir Humphrey Haliburton's arm again Sir Humphrey Haliburton shakes him off St John Pascoe pulls desperately at his sleeve and begins again, as though he were reciting a set speech he had memorized]* Look here—look here—I say, d'you understand what I'm saying? Arthur says that fellow means it—that he'll blow the—blow the—but it's absurd—blow the—

HALIBURTON When you've quite finished babbling, will you kindly leave go of my sleeve and let me sit down? *[He sits down absently]* I must think—I must think

[The Prime Minister peers at the clock short sightedly, then goes to the windows, where he stares out into the garden, watching The others cease staring at the door and drift away into various positions, some sit down]

in chaus, others prop themselves on the edge of the table or against the pillars Lord Cossington goes to the window waggles the curtain, and then stands regarding it listlessly]

COSSINGTON [*Dully*] I say, there's a policeman out there Why do they always carry their macs rolled up that way? [*No answer*] I say

GRINDLE What?

COSSINGTON Nothing I thought—nothing

GRINDLE [*Testily*] If you've nothing to say, don't say it

COSSINGTON But I have I know what I thought I didn't think the end of the world would be like this

DUNNE Didn't you? Well it is [*Pause*]

GRINDLE Tch!

COSSINGTON Twelve minutes to twelve

PASCOE We know that [*Several sighs*]

DEDHAM Can't you fellows do anything but sigh? Like a lot of plunging sea lions!

STAPP [*Hitting the table*] We must do something!

SUNNINGDALE I was waitin' for that Come on, Stapp, bang the table, strike in attitude, blow out yer chest Short o' breath? Gettin' fat, Daredevil Dick, gettin' fat!

STAPP [*Off his guard*] What the hell—?

HALIBURTON [*Getting up heavily*] Yes, we must do something WHAT?

SUNNINGDALE [*Amiably*] When yer stood by me on the platform yer said exactly the same, only you took longer to say it But yer didn't do anythin' Yer never have done anythin', an' now yer never will Have a cigar?

HALIBURTON Thanks, old boy, but I hate your fat cigars Wh'it's more, I hate your buttonhole, your stock, your collar, your red cheeks, everything about you But what's it matter? You're just a broad-ribbed, breezy, beefy-faced, old fraud

SUNNINGDALE Am I? Dear, dear! Well, perhaps I am But what with my buttonhole, red cheeks, et cetera, nobody's found it out I often wondered whether I'd stay the course Well, now, I suppose I shall Got a match? [*Sir Humphrey Haliburton supplies him*]

STAPP [*Pounding again*] We must do something

PASCOE Try the other fist

STAPP Prime Minister!

VERE That's the first time I ever heard Stapp appeal to the Prime Minister [*He laughs half-heartedly*]

PASCOE Stappy's got the pip,

He's lost the Premiership

STAPP [*Savagely*] Shut up! Prime Minister!

[*The Prime Minister crosses to peer at the clock, and returns to the window*]

COSSINGTON [*Quietly*] That policeman, one, two, one, two—

STAPP Shut up! Isn't there anybody with guts? Hal! Dedham! Dunne! Dunne! [*H G Dunne pays no attention*] Faulkner! Blount! Form a quorum!

PASCOE Form a quorum! Dress by the right for the last trump! Delegation to God!

PRIME MINISTER [*To himself in anguish*] Marjorie!

COSSINGTON [*Counting*] One, two, three, four, turn one, two
 STAPP Now then, you fellers, if you've still got some wits— [*They get to
 gether*] What shall we do? Faulkner, you're a technician Can he do this? I
 suppose he can, eh?

FAULKNER Yes

STAPP Think so, Blount?

BLOUNT Dimmed it I know S'pose so [*The others agree*]

STAPP How? Clockwork thing, hidden somewhere?

FAULKNER Must be We know he's speeded it up

STAPP Hm Follows he must control it? How?

BLOUNT Where's he hidden it?

HALIBURTON I've got my men watching him Since yesterday Searched his
 room while he was at dinner, only that infernal Shelley under his pillow

BLOUNT Damn Shelley Hope I never hear of him again

HALIBURTON The chances are you won't

STAPP Anythin' else?

HALIBURTON Got the valet to bring down his clothes while he was asleep
 Nothing but what anybody might have—except a notebook of mathematical
 symbols, a faded snap of his mother, and that old turnip of a watch

DEDHAM I'll be damned!

BLOUNT Looks like the end

DEDHAM Blast it, such things don't happen!

STAPP Then why's your eye on the clock?

FAULKNER I do hate this helpless feeling

[*The Prime Minister crosses to peer at the clock, and returns to the window*]

STAPP Dunne! Dunne! Dunne, you're an engineer What do you make of it?

DUNNE Nothing Flatly, I think he can do it

STAPP How?

DUNNE Damned if I know

FAULKNER Perhaps he won't come back Perhaps he's simply standing out
 there laughing at us

BLOUNT Hell, I do hate his laughter!

HALIBURTON [*Going to the window and beckoning*] No, he isn't There—
 see? Beyond the car—my men are in that—next to the soldier in khaki

FAULKNER By the railings?

HALIBURTON Feeding the swan

DUNNE Look!

BLOUNT Well, I'll be damned! Emptyin' his pockets buyin' sweets from
 the ex-service man givin' 'em ter the children!

DEDHAM Murderer! Blast him!

FAULKNER Seems to be telling the kids to hurry

[*Pause They glance at each other The Prime Minister crosses to peer at the
 clock and returns to the window*]

STAPP An' now he's quite still, lookin' at the narcissi Phew! [*He wipes his
 forehead*]

BLOUNT Arrest him, Hal!

DEDHAM Touch him, and the damned thing goes off!

DUNNE Dished! Got us cold!

[*They turn away Sir Humphrey Haliburton remains at the window*]

STAPP But how? How?

DUNNE God knows Can't we all feel it? He's all round us, over us, under us outside there, and yet—somehow—in this room It's foul having nothing to pray to

STAPP He MUST control it an' our job is to get hold o' the control

BLOUNT Catch him lettin' us

FAULKINER You bet he's popped it somewhere, and it's ticking away

HALIBURTON He can't have My men are watching

DUNNE He may have left it in the house, on the way out—

BLOUNT Or slipped it into the ex-service man's basket—

DEDHAM Or the children's bags of sweets—

BLOUNT Or given it to the swan—

STAPP [*Savagely*] Or swallowed it!

HALIBURTON Even if you got it, you wouldn't know how to use it

PASCOE [*With sepulchral mirth*] The Agenda having been read and a resolution passed, the Committee adjourned [*Singing*]

“The Committee then adjourned, ha, ha!

The Committee then adjourned”

[*No one replies The Prime Minister crosses to look at the clock and returns to the window*]

COSSINGTON One, two, three, four [*Suddenly*] I say, oughtn't we to warn the Palace?

DUNNE Damn the Palace

COSSINGTON Mr Dunne! Well, yes-s . . . by and large . . . all my life S-s certainly, Mr Dunne, damn the Palace! One, two, three

STAPP [*Loud addressing the Prime Minister*] I'm goin' home

DEDHAM What for?

STAPP To see my wife [*Exit Richard Stapp*]

COSSINGTON One, two, three, four, turn . . . one, two, three, four, turn [*He begins to sway*]

GRINDLE My white darling . . . Yes, I will, too

DEDHAM Your white darling? You fatuous ass—she's mine!

CRINDLE What?

DEDHAM Didn't you know? That's funny! [*Seeing Matthew Grindle's incredulous stare*] The mole on her right hip! [*Matthew Grindle steps in his direction*] The old Adam still strong in the churchman, eh? Come on, then! Let's go to glory together!

GRINDLE [*Sitting down*] Churchman . . . you might have spared me that Everything's collapsing . . . if I hadn't known . . . I might have . . . I was going to die happy . . . with her

DEDHAM What do I care? Chance rules! I broke the bank before the bank broke me I've had my fun Bow-wow! Let's spill the beans! Vere, your Education Bill's a highbrow fake! Blount, you ruined a better man to get those battle ships, and didn't get 'em. Cossy, you're an asinine fop! Pascoe, you're a prig

and a fool! [*The Prime Minister crosses to peer at clock and returns to the window*] Grantly, you're the feeblest Prime Minister ever known

HALIBURTON Stop that baby bloodhound, somebody

PASCOE I may be a prig, but I'm not scared

DEDHAM Who's scared? Who says I'm scared?

HALIBURTON Bow wow! Why bay, then? You're just a double-dyed bounding blackguard with the wind up

DEDHAM Bah! Sime to you! Who's scared? Eh?

HALIBURTON You're Too much fizz Too many women! It's found you out Your nerves can't stand it

DEDHAM [*Suddenly almost in tears*] Can yours?

HALIBURTON If Pascoe's can, mine can I wouldn't have your conscience—

PASCOE [*Coming up to Lord Dedham and speaking close to his face*] Liai Bully Cheat Fornicator [*He strikes him across the face*] Strike back if you dare Cad [*He pushes him into a chair*] Sit down, since you can't stand up I'm one of the men you stepped up over I may be a prig and a fool, but I give thanks I can face things without making an offensive exhibition of myself I can die like a simple, honest, upright English gentleman [*He trembles so much that he drops his prince nez*]

DUNNE Honest! English! Gentleman! The number of times from slum to Cabinet I've heard those words! Personally I only feel like a man, and a helpless one

VERE Who cares what you feel? [*The Prime Minister crosses to peer at clock and returns to the window*] Oh, God, my poor son! I contradicted him at breakfast

DUNNE [*Taking off his coat*] Tch! It's hot in here

PASCOE Hot? I'm shivering

DUNNE [*Pushing by the Prime Minister*] Excuse me, sir I must have air [*He tries to push up the window*]

PRIME MINISTER [*Softly*] Go away

DUNNE But I tell you— [*The Prime Minister points out into garden*] Oh, your granddaughter All right [*He pushes it up very softly*] Thanks Odd, saying thanks when

ARTHUR [*Lowering the book*] This beastly print—

PASCOE Human after all!

ARTHUR I trust you do not represent humanity! [*He resumes his book*]

COSSINGTON One, two, three, four

PASCOE Stop it Worse than Big Ben

COSSINGTON Big Ben! Big Ben! One, two, three, four

CRINDLE [*To himself*] That never fails. [*Aloud*] I shall say the Lord's Prayer

HALIBURTON The devil you will! A cigar, someone [*He finds himself facing Lord Sunningdale*] O Lord! All right [*He takes one*]

CRINDLE "Our Father—" Who'll join me?

PASCOE "Are you saved?" Don't all speak at once

[*Matthew Grindle elbows desperately set on table, does his best to pray Lord Sunningdale, going in search of a spare chair, stumbles across the feet of Esme Faulkner, who is seated with legs stretched out*]

SUNNINGDALE [*Festily*] Damn yer—take yer legs away, can't yer? [*Absent minded, as he pulls up a chair on the seat of which he places the pack of cards he draws from his capacious pocket*] No manners—nowadays [*He squares his shoulders to a game of patience*]

DUNNE [*Coat over arm, head up*] The big gesture! Meet it standing! The ship of humanity sinking

BLOUNT Humanity be damned! Be British! [*Puts something in his mouth*]

PASCOE Chewing gum? That's Yankee

BLOUNT Hebrew-Greek for all I care

[*H G Dunne pulls on his coat again and sits disgustedly down*]

GRINDLE [*To himself*] It's no good [*Standing up, with a would-be gallant air*] Won't anybody sing "Rock of Ages"?

BLOUNT Rats "Rule Britannia"

PASCOE Try jazz "I Wanta be Happy" [*He step dances grotesquely*]

GRINDLE [*All his piteous bravery knocked from under him*] O God, stop him stop him!

FAULKNER [*Suddenly rising and shouting*] Valhalla! Valhalla! I shall see him again!

[*Enter Richard Stapp unobtrusively*]

VERE [*Softly*] Wasn't she in?

STAPP No [*He sits at the table's end, hands thrust in pockets sardonically*]

FAULKNER A man I burned in the air [*Dreamily*] A German ace [*Harshly*] A brave son of-a-gun, by God [*Savagely*] Not a bleeding politician! If only there was something to shoot at! [*He plumps disgustedly into a chair and takes up the stance of a pilot of a single seater fighter. Suddenly, imitating a machine gun*] Tat-tat Ratta-tat-tat Down in flames Phew [*He pulls the plane up*] Loop, barrel-roll, cart-wheel right I'm in a spin—room's going round [*He slumps out of the chair on to the ground*]

[*Richard Stapp makes a movement, then sits back. The Prime Minister crosses to peer at clock and returns to the window*]

STAPP [*To Sir Humphrey Haliburton*] What's he doin'?

HALIBURTON [*Without turning, he has gone back to the windows*] Still reading

PASCOE [*Viciously*] Shelley, I suppose

BLOUNT Damn! [*He tears the paper off another piece of chewing gum*] Silence]

DUNNE [*Softly*] What are you thinking of, Vere?

VERE [*In reverse*] The Chorus of Priests in the "Magic Flute" Mozart knew—to think I shall never hear that again

[*Far off a barrel organ has begun to play "The Minstrel Boy" Esme Faulkner pulls himself back into his chair and sits staring. Sometimes he makes passes with his hands*]

FAULKNER Blast that barrel-organ, it puts the tune out of my head [*The barrel-organ's tune becomes clearer*] Mozart! Mozart! [*He buries his face in his hands. Pause*]

DUNNE Hal, I thought you'd stopped them playing round here

HALIBURTON It's farther off—the other side of Whitehall, I must see about it

PASCOE "See about it!" "The Minstrel Boy to the War has gone!" [*He laughs hysterically*]

PRIME MINISTER Gentlemen, for the last time, I exert my authority Silence, please [*He crosses to peer at the clock*] We have seven minutes left If you can pray, pray for the soul of that deluded boy and give thanks for the beauty and bravery that have been on earth, failing that, at least preserve man's dignity by silence [*He turns to the window again Pause The barrel-organ stops Pause*]

GRINDLE [*Looking up, blanched, panicky*] How loud the buses sound! Shaking the foundations See things as they are Concentrate Concentrate [*He remains staring with hands clenched*]

[*The barrel-organ starts again, a new tune "Nearest, My God, to Thee" They speak heavily, impersonally, as in a dream*]

DUNNE Now I know I shall find the thing, whatever it is, I've always missed

PASCOE [*Without looking round*] You'll find—ping! nothing

DUNNE It's the waiting hurts [*Desperately*] God, be kind and end it

PASCOE [*Laughing crazily*] Conversion of an eminent engineer! [*Absently*] What a lot of fool faces—blank as fly papers [*As if slightly puzzled*] I must have been drunk to believe in God [*Solemnly*—or is He drunk and this His d t's [*Inconsequently*—Lord, I'm thirsty

SUNNINGDALE [*His last card poised*] Just a chance—

VERE Not to know why I—why any of us—have lived And now no one ever to know I give it up

SUNNINGDALE [*Dully, shaking his head, as he gazes at the cards*] No, apparently An' yet

COSSINGTON [*Stuffing*] Big Ben! Tick, tock! My head! My head!

[*The Prime Minister crosses to peer at clock and returns to the window*]

GRINDLE [*Softly, solving it*] An idle dream at best Why can't my heart believe what my head has always known? [*He gives a little shiver*] At last! And to think I thought I believed!

VERE [*Whispering, groping with his hands*] Are you there, mother, are you there?

SUNNINGDALE [*Slowly*] Neither now, nor ever [*Silence Very gradually Lord Sunningdale pushes the cards, a few at a time, off the chair, staring at his spread hands all the while, till, at the end of the barrel organ's refrain, no cards are left The refrain ends*]

[*Evelyn Arthur rises, gaunt, towering*]

ARTHUR [*Quceily, stretching out his arms*] "Even though it be a cross "
[*He hurls the book away The sound rouses them just sufficiently for all—save Richard Stapp, who sits tense—to turn dull eyes upon him He speaks low rapidly, and distinctly*] Prime Minister, colleagues, I must testify to the truth before I go This boy is right Nature, not he, has put Humanity on trial, and, because we have failed to evolve a faith adequate to our opportunities she rejects us for new experiments That is the truth, and I am glad to have come to it

[*The Prime Minister crosses to peer at the clock and returns to the window*]

STAPP [*Tilting his chair back, defiantly*] To the devil with your "Truth, Faith, Humanity!" Man can live without 'em

ARTHUR Tell that [*Points toward the window*]—to the destroying angel [*He sits down, stern-faced with his back to Richard Stapp*]

STAPP [*Jumping up*] So the great Evelyn Arthur's whipped! Well I'm not! Now perhaps you'll listen to me Yesterday, this joy boy said he'd destroy England at one o'clock today he's speeding it up an' finishin' the world at noon Consequently he has a control

DUNNE Oh, we've had all that out—

STAPP Shut up He's not been out o' sight o' Hal's men since yesterday so the control's on him I'm goin' to get it

DEDHAM You can't touch him!

STAPP That's just why I will That *proves* he's got it

VERE But—

STAPP Shut up While you old women've been ditherin I've been actin [*His hand goes to his hip pocket Vehemently banging the table*] Man is in' always has been the slave o' force! Blessed are the strong, for they shall inherit the earth! [*He whips out a revolver and flourishes it above his head Lamenting it*] Now then [*He covers them Most of them rise*] You all in your hearts want him dead Very well Gimme a clear field o' fire Don't any o' you piss before or behind me once he enters this room [*He moves round to the back of the table The Prime Minister crosses to peer at the clock and returns to the window*] Stand away there [*He takes up his position his whole attitude murderous*] This is the life! Dedham, you open the door Do what I say! [*Lord Dedham obeys*] Now hold it The moment he stands in that doorway, I shoot, n' shoot to kill

HALIBURTON [*Still at window*] He's up He's coming this way [*Confused movement*]

STAPP Keep still [*Through his teeth*] An' don't you make any mistake I'm n't doin' this for humanity but for myself, the old original Sit in your seat so ashamed of [*He raises the revolver to aim's length Slowly growling*] Through—his—heart [*He carries the revolver back to the level of his aim pit*]

COSSINGTON [*Suddenly clutching the curtains*] Look out! [*He staggers all but drops, hiding his face with his hands*] Good God, the lorry!

STAPP [*Without turning, stilly*] What is it?

HALIBURTON [*Who has turned back to Lord Cossington*] Stand up man [*Lord Cossington vaguely gestures*] What? [*Lord Cossington slumps against the wall Sir Humphrey Haliburton suddenly pushes up the window sashes then he turns grave'y*] Lightfoot has been run over [*Tumult Both left hand windows fill Lord Cossington staggers to a chair and sits down*]

STAPP [*To Lord Dedham*] Stay where you are [*Silent pause while Lord Cossington cranes at the windows*]

BLOUNT [*Suddenly*] By God, he's lied He's been touched, it hasn't gone off—we're safe!—we're safe! We're safe again! [*An uproar of delight*]

DEDHAM Good old lady luck!

[*Matthew Grindle, who has remained seated, suddenly laughs harshly and stares at Lord Dedham. Darkness of hate comes into his face. He laughs again.*]

DUNNE They're picking him up

VERE Killed

[*Lord Cossington looks up, wipes sweat from his face, recovers.*]

FAULKNER Looks like it

VERE See that arm hanging down?

DUNNE Dead!

COSSINGTON [*Suddenly rubbing his hands and walking up and down.*] Well, well, that's—that Hooray! Glad we didn't warn the Palas

PRIME MINISTER [*With authority.*] Everything that has been spoken in this room during the last twenty minutes is to be forgotten

HALIBURTON Yes, he's dead all right. They've taken off their hats. They're bringing him this way

[*Richard Stapp, turning, places the revolver on the table, and crosses to the window. Matthew Grindle, watching Lord Dedham, covertly appropriates the revolver.*]

STAPP Who's that older man comin' on ahead?

PRIME MINISTER It looks like—

VERE It's Sir Henry Hand

CRINDLE [*Taking Lord Dedham by the arm.*] Dedham, see this? [*He shows him the revolver.*] It's for you. Monday morning, seven thirty, Calais sands

DEDHAM Riis! [*Disconcerted.*] Pooh, where's your Christianity, man?

GRINDLE [*Menacingly close.*] On the junk heap—where you're going

DEDHAM Don't be a fool. Very well, I'll let daylight into you, if you insist—Monday morning—what?

CRINDLE Monday, seven thirty, Calais [*Breaking the revolver.*] Till then [*He pockets the cartridges.*]

VERE They're coming in here through the garden

HALIBURTON That's Forster, the Superintendent. He has a key

[*Enter Sir Henry Hand hurriedly.*]

HAND Excuse me, where's the Prime Minister?

DEDHAM Over there

HAND Oh, Mr. Grantly, I am sorry to say there has been an accident

PRIME MINISTER Yes

HAND I was in my car going to the Ministry of Health. Your nephew

PRIME MINISTER Yes

HAND A lorry caught him, he never even knew it—he was crossing the road, putting a book into his pocket, some problem, I suppose

PRIME MINISTER Is he—?

HAND Virtually. Ribs stove in, punctured lungs, leg broken—a matter of moments. I told them to bring him in here

PRIME MINISTER [*With difficulty.*] Certainly

STAPP [*Looking for revolver.*] Where the devil

PASCOE [*To Richard Stapp.*] Saved you the trouble

HAND [*To Prime Minister.*] He's unconscious. It isn't likely he'll

STAPP [*To himself*] Where is it?

DUNNE [*Generally*] Best clear the table

PASCOE [*To Richard Stapp*] Don't be an ass, he's

STAPP [*To St John Pascoe*] I don't trust him

[*Busy hands clear the table, and Richard Stapp is swept away*]

DEDHAM [*At door*] Here they come

[*A hush falls. A Superintendent of Police enters, followed by figures carrying the body of Francis Lightfoot. Francis Lightfoot is laid on the table. All draw away from the table, save Sir Henry Hand, the Prime Minister Evelyn Arthur and Richard Stapp. The Superintendent stands resolute.*]

PRIME MINISTER [*To Superintendent*] Thank you [*To the others*] Thank you, Gentlemen [*They go out*]

HAND [*To the Prime Minister*] We can do nothing—a matter of moments

STAPP [*To Sir Henry Hand*] Are you quite sure he is unconscious?

HAND My opinion, Mr Stapp, is not usually disputed. He may just possibly have a moment of consciousness before the end, but it's not likely. [*To the Prime Minister*] Don't let him move or sit up, or the blood will enter his ruptured lung, and drown him instantaneously. [*Glancing at the clock*] Good gracious! is that the time—a minute to twelve, twenty minutes late already. Good bye, Mr Grantly. A great loss to science, you have my sympathy. A genius and a charming young man. [*Sir Henry Hand goes. Silence. Francis Lightfoot unconscious, murmurs mathematical symbols.*]

LIGHTFOOT $D^2 \text{ chi by } D^2 T \text{ squared minus } C \text{ delta squared chi equals naught}$

STAPP Gibberish, eh?

ARTHUR No. Clark Maxwell's formulation of the Theory of Light, pure beauty.

STAPP Pure bunk.

DEDHAM [*Tugging Richard Stapp's sleeve*] Dick, old man. [*Richard Stapp turns. Lord Dedham beckons him away, and they confer together. Lord Dedham covertly pointing to Matthew Grindle, whispers to Richard Stapp, and in pantomime, taps his own pocket. Richard Stapp glances covertly at Matthew Grindle. Francis Lightfoot murmurs again.*]

ARTHUR [*With profound grief*] "Qualis artifex pereo!" [*He turns away to the mantelpiece.*]

BLOUNT [*Who has been hovering*] You didn't fancy the wart on my nose, but I'll say this for you, young man, you had guts. [*He blows his nose, turning away.*]

[*The Prime Minister sinks to his knees. All the others turn their backs. The Prime Minister bows his head in prayer. Silence.*]

COSSINGTON [*Suddenly squealing*] My God, I understand. It'll go off! Blount's wrong. He's set it! It'll go off! Anyway, in ten seconds!

[*Panic, uproar. With a small pinging sound the clock begins to strike twelve. At the first stroke, a deathly silence falls. Francis Lightfoot moves his head a little. With the striking clock, sentience comes into his face, which now, for the first time, is seen ghastly and streaked with blood. Slowly from the waist, like a marionette, he begins to sit up.*]

LIGHTFOOT [*Low*] Farewell, hapless humanity

STAPP [*Appalled*] God! [*Suddenly he leaps at Matthew Grindle, seizes the revolver from his pocket, and fires at Francis Lightfoot. The lock clicks on the empty barrels, the revolver falls from his hand.*]

[*The clock continues striking. Francis Lightfoot's hand, already in his bosom, draws out his watch.*]

LIGHTFOOT [*Louder, unaware of Richard Stapp*] Hail, new dimensions! [*Aloud*] We go to the Eternal Mind! [*He sits up, violently, holds up the watch, falls back.*]

ARTHUR [*Jumping*] Catch it! [*He catches the watch. All move. Evelyn Arthur holds the watch forward at arm's length. Last three strokes of the clock. Silence. The tension breaks. Evelyn Arthur passes his hand across his forehead.*]
A narrow squeak, gentlemen, a damned uncommonly narrow squeak.

COSSINGTON and STAPP [*Simultaneously*] I told you s so, that ass S Stapp—
—I told you so, that ass Grindle.

HALIBURTON What is it, Arthur?

ARTHUR [*Blandly*] Nothing, now.

DUNNE Dead?

ARTHUR Yes [*Pause*].

COSSINGTON Are you quite s-sure? But I don't understand, let's s-see [*He tries to take the watch from Evelyn Arthur.*]

FAULKNER [*Pulling Lord Cossington back*] Keep back, you fool!

COSSINGTON You don't think—?

ARTHUR [*Sweetly*] Like me to try?

SUNNINGDALE This ain't the time for humor, Arthur.

ARTHUR Here, Faulkner, you're a technician [*He makes to hand him the watch.*]

HALIBURTON Carefully, man, carefully.

FAULKNER [*Taking it*] You bet.

DUNNE What do you make of it?

FAULKNER [*Turning it over*] A dummy watch. H'm, let's see [*He makes to open it.*]

DEDHAM Lord, man, don't open it.

FAULKNER It's ticking, I don't trust it [*Sensation*].

PASCOE For God's sake, be careful.

FAULKNER [*Opening the back*] By Jove, a pretty piece of work [*H G Dunne leans over his shoulder.*] Ah! I've got it—wireless!

DUNNE Yes, by God, a wireless.

FAULKNER [*Explanatorily*] A wireless set, similar to those by which we direct aeroplanes from the ground. Long-distance control.

BLOUNT Where's his current?

FAULKNER Generated by the release of a microscopic speck of atomic energy—yes, that must be it. There's a tiny bit of apparatus here, of which I can make nothing [*He peers.*]

SUNNINGDALE Easy, easy!

FAULKNER All right, now for the control [*H G Dunne points.*] Yes, I'll have to work by inference. Let me see [*He peers.*]

COSSINGTON But I

DUNNE Ssh! [*The "ssh" spreads All are silent and attentive*]

FAULKNER I have it [*Explanatorily*] There are two controls—one for *what* he will destroy, the other for *when* he will destroy it We know the machine is set for *world*-destruction, so that's that Now for the *when* There are only three possible positions for a time control, one—*instantaneous*, but it didn't go off *instantaneously*—our presence here proves it, two, *safety*, three, a *timed explosion*, and this pointer [*To Dunne*]*—see?*

DUNNE Isn't that beautiful?

SUNNINGDALE Beautiful! Good God!

FAULKNER This pointer indicates that the machine is now set for a *timed explosion* [*Alarm*] But you need not be alarmed, the pointer points exactly to noon It is now [*Looking at the clock*] four minutes past, therefore, though the *machine* is set for a *timed explosion*, the *control* is not in operation Why? The thing's not out of order, it's going There is only one alternative left the control is in the only other position it is physically possible for it to occupy Francis Lightfoot wished to go from time to *instantaneous*, his great final gesture—death froze his fingers in mid-journey—where? at *safety* [*The tension breaks Applause*]

COSSINGTON I understand It's very s-simple

FAULKNER Simple as death itself If, however, he had lived one split second more [*He completes the statement with a gesture*] Gentlemen, a control with only an eighth of an inch to travel is a delicate thing allow me [*He places the watch on the mantelpiece*]

DUNNE We'll get Charlton and Eldridge on that

ARTHUR I think not How deep is the Atlantic, Blount?

[*A Messenger enters with an envelope*]

PRIME MINISTER Yes? [*The Messenger gives him the envelope*]

BLOUNT Some miles

ARTHUR Very well "Deeper than ever plummet sounded

CRINDLE Well, that's over, thank heaven [*With a look at Lord Dedham*] At least Now for my Budget, Mr Grantly

PRIME MINISTER One moment [*To the Messenger*] "Urgent" Who brought it?

MESSANGER I don't know, sir A tall, authoritative-looking gentleman, dark—said you must have it at once

PRIME MINISTER Very well [*The Messenger goes Prime Minister opens the envelope*] What's this nonsense? Some new Trade Union, I suppose [*Reading*] "From the Guild of United Brain-Workers of the World" What's that, Dunne?

DUNNE Never heard of it

PRIME MINISTER Here [*Hands it to H G Dunne*]

ARTHUR [*Dreamily*] The clock, to the great scandal of all hopeful souls, having been set back, the tortoise humanity will now cover its inch during the ensuing century

DUNNE, [*Excited*] I say! I say!

PRIME MINISTER Well?

DUNNE But it's

PRIME MINISTER Read it

DUNNE To the Prime Minister and Cabinet of Great Britain, from the Guild of United Brain-Workers of the World, secretly assembled in Geneva The Guild informs the Prime Minister that it is aware that a scientist outside the Guild has proved he can control the atom "

DEDHAM What? How did they know?

HALIBURTON Geneva!

FAULKNER Charlton and Eldridge!

DUNNE "The Guild hereby gives notice that this secret has, owing to the co ordination of immense labors, been known to it for three years The Guild has prepared its program And it serves notice that it requires the attendance of the Prime Minister and such of his associates as he shall select, at Geneva, immediately Their function will be purely advisory, not executive, their employment will only continue until the individuals already in training, under the Guild's supervision, are ready to take over The Guild, obviously, is in a position to enforce its demands A similar notice is being served simultaneously on every Chancellor of every civilized country in the world " [*He pauses*] It's signed by every imaginable scientist [*Inconsequently*] My God, what queer names those beggars do have

STAPP [*Peering over H G Dunne's shoulder*] Charlton and Eldridge at the head of the list!—Hello, there's a postscript

[*The drone of aeroplanes is faintly heard*]

DUNNE [*Reading*] "Six aeroplanes are over you as you read this They contain atomic bombs Such bombs hang over the capitals of every civilized country "

FAULKNER What?

STAPP Ssh! Listen! [*The drone of aeroplanes grows louder and louder Richard Stapp dashes to the window*] Green! Enormous! They're right over us [*All, save Evelyn Arthur, crowd to the windows*]

HALIBURTON [*At the back of the crowd*] Damn them, they're as bad as Lightfoot

ARTHUR [*Softly to the corpse*] Five minutes past twelve The clock cannot be set back If not you, Francis another

DEDHAM Give me room, don't crowd so!

[*The sound of the aeroplanes dies down*]

ARTHUR Nature doesn't often give us a second chance [*He glances at the mantelpiece To the corpse, in reverie*] Perhaps She believes in us, even if we don't believe in ourselves

STAPP I can't see, they're in the sun

PRIME MINISTER Gentlemen, those wings even now sound over Europe Are we with them or against them?

ARTHUR [*To the corpse*] Thank you, Francis [*He bends down, kisses the face closes the eyes Then he takes the watch from the mantelpiece*]

PRIME MINISTER What is our reply?

[*Evelyn Arthur makes for the door As he looks at the unconscious backs of his colleagues, a last flicker of Puck comes over him He raises his arm, as if to throw the watch like a bomb Richard Stapp turns about*]

STAPP Hello! Where are you off to?

ARTHUR [*Fiddling with the lock, tersely*] Geneva! [*They gape*]

DEDHAM [*Sarcastically*] Advisory or executive?

ARTHUR We shall see [*The door slams behind him*]

DUNNE [*Running after Evelyn Arthur*] Arthur, wait for me! I, too, have hope [*He rattles the door*] Locked!

FAULKNER My God, he's taken it!

HALIBURTON Taken what?

STAPP It! the thing! the Watch! [*Striking his breast*] Oh, God damn! why didn't I get it?

[*The roar of a car's cut-out*]

HALIBURTON [*At the window, highly excited*] There he goes! Out past the Admiralty Stepping on the gas like a kid! [*Most crowd again to the windows*]

FAULKNER Croydon aerodrome at sixty an hour!

HALIBURTON By God, I love that man!

SUNNINGDALE Hooray! Good luck to him! Hooray!

DEDHAM [*Savagely*] Idiot! Geneva! Between them, the end!

DUNNE [*In a ringing voice*] No, gentlemen, between them, if Man can find faith, the Beginning!

[*Richard Stapp continues staring at the empty mantelpiece The Prime Minister, bending down, gazes wistfully into his dead nephew's face All the rest advance to the windows in varying attitudes, some scowling, with hands thrust into pockets, as if expectant of calamity some with hands raised as if to welcome a supreme hope The roar of aeroplanes fills the entire theater*]

CURTAIN

*The Enjoyment
of Poetry*

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The Enjoyment of Poetry

THE REASONS FOR POETRY

Poetry has been many things to many men, and its appraisal may be as varied as the appraisers. It can be an art, a diversion, a release of feeling, a pattern of metrical forms and technical devices, a heightening of observation, or something so far beyond observation that it requires the ultimate reach of the imagination. But it is first of all—and possibly last of all—an expression of deep emotion, a reflection of passion in some definite form. And it is more than an expression, it is a communication. Whenever a man falls in love, whether with a pair of eyes, a sunset, or a cause, he must communicate his feelings or his convictions to some other human being. It may be to one particular person or it may be to a multitude, but he cannot rest until he has infected some one else with his passion. This wish to spread the contagion of beauty, whether it be the play of fancy or the emanation of truth, is the deepest reason for poetry.

The poetic impulse by no means is confined to those who create poems. Its existence in all men explains their reasons for reading poetry. Every time a poem is read it is remade, the reader becomes a collaborator and, for the time being, a creator. Sharing the excitement of the creative process, fired by the imagination and power of the maker, the reader is so stimulated that he cannot help identifying himself with the poet.

And what is a poet? As William Wordsworth memorably put it in his preface to *Lyrical Ballads*:

He is a man speaking to men: a man, it is true, endowed with more lively sensibility, more enthusiasm and tenderness, who has a greater knowledge of human nature, and a more comprehensive soul, than are supposed to be common among mankind, a man pleased with his own passions and volitions, and who rejoices more than other men in the spirit of life that is in him, delighting to contemplate similar volitions and passions as manifested in the goings on of the universe, and habitually impelled to create them where he does not find them.

In the attempt to define the thing itself, Wordsworth went on to say that poetry is "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity." Yet this, like most definitions of an abstraction, fuled to define. Modern commentators have become increasingly dissatisfied with it, one of them, T. S. Eliot, objected:

We must believe that "emotion recollected in tranquillity" is an inexact formula. For it [poetry] is neither emotion nor recollection nor, without a distortion of meaning, tranquillity. It is a *concentration* and a new thing resulting from that concentration, of a great number of experiences—a concentration which does not always happen consciously.

It may be said, in somewhat more formal and pseudo-legalistic terms, that poetry is the rhythmical (and usually regular) pattern expressing deeply felt emotions, experiences, or intuitions. In his intent to show the range of the gamut from the casual to the ecstatic Carl Sandburg wrote, "Poetry is the synthesis of hyacinths and biscuits." Such attempts to confine the spirit in a phrase are desperate and futile. Edwin Arlington Robinson has expressed it rightly: "Poetry has two outstanding characteristics: it is undefinable—and it is unmistakable."

THE KINDS OF POETRY

If poetry cannot be defined, it is equally true that it cannot be limited. It will not be restricted by any given form, any set of rules, any limitation of subject-matter. It is false to say, as the ultra-conservatives maintain, that propaganda cannot be used in poetry, it is no less false to assume, as the extreme left insists, that unless a modern poem breathes the spirit of propaganda it is not good poetry. Poetry escapes categories. It includes the extremes of music and meaning, ranging from the sheerly mystical and sometimes incomprehensible lyrics of William Blake to the purely intellectual couplets and rhymed essays of Alexander Pope. It leaps, undefinable and unmistakable, from such lines as

When the stars threw down their spears
And water'd heaven with their tears,
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

It declares itself in such epigrammatic, sharply delivered conclusions as Pope's

All nature is but art unknown to thee,
All chance, direction, which thou canst not see,
All discord, harmony not understood,
All partial evil, universal good
And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
One truth is clear, *Whatever is, is right*

It may be found in the emotionally naive and structurally simple stanzas of Burns's

Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun,
And I will love thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run

It is equally recognizable in the full-throated utterance and complicated rhythms of Whitman's

Press close, bare-bosom'd night—press close magnetic nourishing night!
Night of south winds—night of the large few stars—
Still nodding night—mad naked summer night
Smile, O voluptuous cool breath'd earth!
Earth of the slumbering and liquid trees!
Earth of departed sunset—earth of the mountains misty topt!

Earth of the vitreous pour of the full moon just tinged with blue!
 Earth of shine and dark mottling the tide of the river!
 Earth of the limpid grey of clouds brighter and clearer for my sake!
 Far swooping elbow'd earth—rich apple blossom'd earth!
 Smile, for your lover comes

The line may proceed as mellifluously, and almost as meaninglessly, as the rhymes in Swinburne's chorus

For winter's rains and ruins are over,
 And all the season of snows and sins,
 The days dividing lover and lover,
 The light that loses, the night that wins,
 And time remember'd is grief forgotten,
 And frosts are slain and flowers begotten,
 And in green underwood and cover
 Blossom by blossom the spring begins

Or it may move as spasmodically, interrupted and distorted, as Browning's

"Were you happy?"—"Yes"—"And are you still as happy?"—"Yes And you?"
 —"Then, more kisses!"—"Did I stop them, when a million seemed so few?"—
 Hark, the dominant's persistence till it must be answered to!

It is expressed in the affirmative confidence of Tennyson's

Yet I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose runs,
 And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns

It is no less vigorous in the grim pessimism of Housman's

We for a certainty are not the first
 Have sat in taverns while the tempest hurled
 Their hopeful plans to emptiness and cursed
 Whatever brute and blackguard made the world

It is obvious that no one form can set the pattern of any vital work. The blank verse of Shakespeare, Wordsworth, and Browning may have the form in common, but the verse, the very movement, is as different as the poets themselves. The patterns shift beneath the eyes of the reader. The history of all art shows the pendulum swinging from one extreme to the other, from rigidly governed formalism to unchecked experiment. The precise and artificial patterns of the Elizabethan lyricists provoked the huge and even ungainly structure of Milton's "Samson Agonistes", the sophistication and scholarliness of the seventeenth century metaphysicians found their natural opposites in the clairvoyant simplicities of Thomas Traherne.

Nor is subject matter the test of poetry. A good poem rises free of topic and timeliness. John Davies' "Nosce Teipsum" charted human psychology in verse, Drayton's "Polyolbion" is a metrical geography of England, William Vaughn Moody's "Ode in Time of Hesitation" is a polemic, a protest against turning a military victory into commercial gain. Yet we do not read Davies for psychology, nor Drayton for geography, nor Moody for the part America played in the Philippines. We read them for the quality independent of the theme,

for the exaltation or the imagination, for the *concentration*—and the thing that happens within ourselves as a result of that concentration “The poet is always our contemporary,” wrote Virginia Woolf in “How Should One Read a Book?”, an essay which might serve as a basic introduction to literature “The impact of poetry is so hard and direct that for the moment there is no other sensation except that of the poem itself Our being for the moment is centered and constricted as in any violent shock of personal emotion”

THE OBJECTS OF POETRY

After the beat of rhythm and the pulse of rhyme die down, the reader is aware of the essence of the poem still stirring his imagination The mood persists, the essential core, not easily shaken from the mind It is here that the potency of a poem establishes itself and its object is revealed It exists in the lulling reiterations of a slumber song and in the rhythms of a march, it compels the brooding mind, as in Wordsworth’s “Ode on the Intimations of Immortality,” and rouses “the cadence of consenting feet” in the ballads of Kipling and the democratic chants of Whitman It can soothe with the “pure” poetry of inspired nonsense, from Lewis Carroll to Swinburne, and it may provoke to thought—and even to action—with the protest in Edwin Markham’s “The Man with the Hoe”

But the chief object of poetry is to separate the reader from his ordinary getting and spending self, and to lift him into a world of larger dimensions and wider horizons Entering the poet’s mind, the reader’s mind becomes increasingly enriched and enlarged The landscape vibrates with richer colors, human beings are touched with greater understanding, lost ideals are restored, the flying moment is held, the dream is liberated Everything assumes greater proportion, more significant shape, for poetry deals essentially with significant things Matthew Arnold felt that the object of poetry was a criticism of life This view is no longer popular Contemporaries rarely consider poetry as a criticism, but as an interpretation, an intensification of life The poet introduces the reader into an old world which, somehow, is made new He looks upon every face or flower as though it were observed for the first time, as though it never existed until the moment of his scrutiny The poet’s element is surprise His object may well be to make the familiar seem new and the new seem familiar As George Herbert Palmer put it in *Formative Types in English Poetry*, “Rightly are poets called seers He who rejects their illuminating aid moves stupidly through life with half-closed eyes”

THE CHANGES IN POETRY

The spirit of poetry is constant, the form of poetry is continually changing Nothing is more short-lived than a fashion, whether in dress or in literature The revolt of one generation becomes the convention of the next, the convention, in turn, breeds the revolt The luxuriance and ornate conceits of the

Elizabethans were followed by the clipped precision of Pope and the eighteenth century Classicists. Pope's over concern with polish and his too edged satires ("At every word a reputation dies") were greatly responsible for the kinder world of Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Keats. The cold order of the Classicists gave way to the ardent experiments of the Romanticists. Revolution was in the air. In far off America, as well as in neighboring France, new ideas were abroad, new values were being asserted. The Romanticists turned from a generalized Mankind to consider the ordinary man, the aristocratic convention gave way to a democratic theory of art. They left the artificial background of salons and city life to adventure in the country. Nature became more than a pretty prop, a decorative background, it became the important scene of man's activities. More than that, Nature was vitalized to such an extent that it, too, became an actor, and no unimportant one in the human drama. The scientific approach of the eighteenth century was discarded in favor of a deeper and less rationalistic method. Mystery returned to earth. Wonder was dominant.

Reflecting these changes the form of poetry was altered. Instead of the tight couplets and almost mechanical perfection of ten syllabled iambic stanzas hampered down with hard pointed rhymes, the Romanticists introduced a new flexibility. Their couplets were looser, the rhymes often ran over, the movement of the line was continually varied. No one pattern dictated the mode. The sonnet was restored to favor, and variations in the Shakespearean and Miltonic models were permitted. Blank verse came back and was given fresh audiences. The ballad was revived and narrative verse was again popular.

Another revolt was inevitable, and the pendulum swung from the Romanticists to the Realists. Tired with what they considered a false glamor and softening of life, the Realists were unflinching in their observation and appraisal. They did not scorn the inexplicable, the brutal, or the sordid. Thomas Hardy concerned himself with the facts of a seemingly purposeless universe and the satires of circumstance. John Masefield, influenced by the rich coarseness of Chaucer, celebrated the vital vulgarity of man. Edgar Lee Masters dissected the anatomy of small town life, exposing every nerve of gossip and hypocrisy. Siegfried Sassoon was one of the first soldier poets to reveal the casual horrors of war and record its unspeakable actualities.

The extremes of the realistic attitude could not be maintained. Reacting from unrelieved actuality, the poets sought a compromise. Even such keen observers as Masefield and Sassoon transcend reality in their later work. The poets of the early twentieth century did not reject the actual world. They accepted its facts and its implications, but they sought something beyond the fact. Modern machinery had not banished mystery, the greater man's accomplishment, the greater the wonder. A new phase—a *romantic realism*—came into existence through the work of Rudyard Kipling and A. E. Housman in England, and Robert Frost, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Vachel Lindsay, Carl Sandburg, and Edna St. Vincent Millay, among others, in America.

The World War marked an end of an epoch, the insecure and fearful peace which followed was almost equally disastrous. The arts were not slow to show unhappy effects. Many creators went off into wild flights of experiments, others escaped into private worlds of their own, others ceased creating alto-

gether Faithfully continuing to reflect life, literature registered the apprehensions, the loss of ideals, and the attempted substitution of temporary panaceas. The post-war poets were particularly sensitive. Some of them echoed the early work of T. S. Eliot with its abrupt transitions of mood and general air of futility, some of them repudiated his despair. But all of them were influenced by his technique—which he, in turn, had borrowed from the French Symbolists, particularly from Laforgue—and his power of communicating the shaken faith, the bewilderment, and nervous exhaustion of an age.

Thus within the span of the last century and a half there have been five significant movements. The following pages attempt to deal with these changes, and the poets responsible for them, in some detail.

COLOR AND ROMANCE

As implied in a preceding paragraph, the political revolutions in France and America found reverberations in English art and literature, in the work of the Romantic writers the revolution extended to poetry. The change was complete—a change in tone, taste, technique, background, and subject matter. Color and intensity came back into English verse. The element of surprise grew increasingly important. But the poets of the new persuasion realized that the sensibilities of the reader should be quickened by the flash of recognition, not by astonishment at the writer's artistry. Rapport and recognition were especially stressed by Keats, who wrote, "I think poetry should surprise by a fine excess and not by singularity—it should strike the reader as a wording of his own highest thoughts, and appear almost a remembrance." At another time Keats amplified this conclusion by saying, "Poetry should be great and unobtrusive, a thing which enters into one's soul, and does not startle it or amaze it with itself, but with its subject."

This desire to startle, not by technique or singularity, but by vision, by the light of recognition, had already been explained by Wordsworth. Wordsworth had insisted that men carry about with them unacknowledged appreciation of daily life, and that it was not only the poet's privilege but his function to wake man to the color and romance of ordinary existence. Wordsworth insisted that in order to achieve a full response, the poet must use the language of the people, discarding the elaborate tropes and unnatural inversions, the poet would be the people's true, democratic spokesman. He would be, as Keats implied, making the inarticulate articulate by voicing their unspoken poems. Wordsworth did not even fear, as many of his contemporaries feared, the encroachment of science. Science was not really opposed either to religion or to poetry. In the famous preface to *Lyrical Ballads* Wordsworth wrote

Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge, it is the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all science. If the labors of men of science should ever create any material revolution, direct or indirect, in our condition and in the impressions which we habitually receive, the poet will sleep then no more than at present, but he will be ready to follow the steps of the man of science, not only in general indirect effects, but he will be at his side, carrying sensation into the

midst of the objects of the science itself. The remotest discoveries of the chemist, the botanist, or mineralogist, will be as proper objects of the poet's art as any upon which it can be employed, if the time should ever come when these things shall be familiar to us, and the relations under which they are contemplated by the followers of these respective sciences shall be manifestly and palpably material to us as enjoying and suffering beings. If the time should ever come when what is now called science, thus familiarized to men, shall be ready to put on, as it were, a form of flesh and blood, the poet will lend his divine spirit to aid the transfiguration, and will welcome the being thus produced, as a dear and genuine inmate of the household of man. The man of science seeks truth as a remote and unknown benefactor, he cherishes and loves it in his solitude; the poet, singing a song in which all human beings join with him, rejoices in the presence of truth as our visible friend and hourly companion.

For Coleridge this was insufficient. He had always agreed with Wordsworth on the two cardinal points of poetry: the power of rousing the reader's sympathy by a faithful adherence to the basic truth of nature, and the power of giving common things the air of novelty by the intensifying of the imagination. But he differed from Wordsworth concerning the functions of science and art. Coleridge must have had the Wordsworth passage just quoted in mind when he wrote in his *Biographia Literaria*, "A poem is that species of composition which is *opposed* to works of science by proposing for its immediate object pleasure, not truth." Coleridge continued, amplifying the theme:

The poet, described in ideal perfection, brings the whole soul of man into activity, with the subordination of its faculties to each other, according to their relative worth and dignity. He diffuses a tone and spirit of unity, that blends, and (as it were) fuses, each into each, by that synthetic and magical power to which we have exclusively appropriated the name of imagination.

Supplementing each other, Wordsworth and Coleridge made possible the revival of romance and color which was so strongly to influence the romantic rebels—Byron, Keats, and Shelley—a few years later. Complementing the natural with the supernatural, Wordsworth and Coleridge emphasized the beauty of things of everyday, and directed the mind's attention to the "loveliness and wonders of the world—an inexhaustible treasure." No one explored this treasure and revealed more of its "loveliness and wonders" than John Keats.

JOHN KEATS

John Keats, son of a hostler in a livery stable, was born in October, 1795, in Finsbury, a small section of London. As a boy he was physically robust and intellectually precocious, he was equally interested in literature and the many facets of ordinary life. Before he was ten he began translating the *Æneid*, but he was no less fond of fighting, and his later use of sensory effects is seen in his childhood love of "goldfinches, tomtits, minnows, mice, ticklebacks, dace, cock-salmons, and all the whole tribe of the bushes and the brooks." His father died in 1804, his mother in 1807, and in 1809 Keats was apprenticed to a surgeon. Three years later he fell in love with the poetry of the Elizabethan Spen-

ser, imitated it, severed his connection with the surgeon, and went to London to serve as an interne

Once in London, literature claimed him In 1816 he met Leigh Hunt, who introduced him to Shelley, Wordsworth (who dampened the young poet's ardor by calling his "Hymn to Pan" a "pretty piece of Paganism"), the painter Haydon, and others By the end of the year Keats had determined to live by poetry alone His first volume, severely entitled *Poems* (1817), was published when he was scarcely twenty-two years old It was received with complete indifference by the public and by the critics Worse was to come A year later, *Endymion* was published (1818) and met an unexpected storm of abuse Keats did not know that his friendship with Hunt, who had made many enemies, was greatly responsible for the attack He could not account for the savagery of the tone in *Blackwood's Magazine*, and the sneers of the *Quarterly Review* are said to have caused him much suffering

Disquieting influences were all about him His brother George had departed with his bride to America, a violent cold caught in the summer of 1818 was aggravated by nursing his brother Tom through consumption, Tom died toward the end of 1818, and Keats's persistent sore throat developed definitely and rapidly into consumption, he was financially troubled, and, as a final increase to his excitability, he was passing through an unhappy love affair with Fanny Brawne Yet it was in this period—1818-20—that he wrote the very poems by which he is most remembered In the one year 1819 Keats composed "The Eve of St Agnes," "Ode to Psyche," "La Belle Dame Sans Merci," "Ode to a Nightingale," "To Autumn," "Lamia," and "Ode on a Grecian Urn"

At the beginning of 1820 his illness took a fatal turn He tried the seashore of England without avail, removed to Wentworth Place to be nursed by Fanny Brawne and her mother, sailed for Italy in September in the hope that the milder climate would improve his condition But the end was near He wrote his last sonnet on board ship, his last letter from Rome in November He died February 23, 1821, and was buried in the Protestant Cemetery near the tomb of Caius Cestius, in Rome

The two most important as well as the most interpretative biographies of Keats are *John Keats His Life and Poetry* by Sidney Colvin (revised edition, 1925), and the large and enthusiastic, though not always accurate, *John Keats* by Amy Lowell (1925)

Keats's third and last volume, *Lamia, Isabella, The Eve of St Agnes, and Other Poems* (1820), and his posthumous works reveal a poet not only enamored of beauty but one who was able to register every aspect of its changing forms He was especially happy in communicating the sensual richness of things, no poetry, except Shakespeare's, has been so lavish with the feel of textures, with the minute felicities of taste, with physical intensity The opening of the first stanza of "The Eve of St Agnes" sends a chill from the printed page

St Agnes' Eve—Ah, bitter chill it was!
The owl, for all his feathers, was a cold,
The hare limped trembling through the frozen grass,
And silent was the flock in woolly fold
Numb were the Beadsman's fingers, while he told

His rosary, and while his frosted breath,
Like pious incense from a censer old—

The effect of cold is cumulatively achieved by the owl hunched in his feathers, the hare limping, 'trembling through the frozen grass,' the flock huddled silent in the fold, the Beadsman's fingers numb, even though he is within doors, finally the climax is attained in the picture of the frosted breath visible in the cold air "The Eve of St Agnes" is one of the most romantic love-poems in the language. The note of high passion blends with sensory appeals to make it not only graphic but gripping. Keats elaborated the old legend that St Agnes allowed young girls a vision of their future husbands if certain rites were performed on St Agnes' Eve, which occurs on January 20—hence the appropriately chill beginning. It is interesting to note that Keats tacitly acknowledged his debt to Spenser by writing this exquisite poem in the majestic nine-line stanza invented by Spenser and known ever since as the Spenserian stanza.

THE EVE OF ST AGNES

St Agnes Eve—Ah, bitter chill it was!
The owl, for all his feathers, was a cold
The hare limped trembling through the
frozen grass,
And silent was the flock in woolly fold
Numb were the Beadsman's fingers, while
he told 5
His rosary, and while his frosted breath,
Like pious incense from a censer old,
Seemed taking flight for heaven, without
a death,
Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his
prayer he saith

His prayer he saith, this patient, holy man,
Then takes his lamp, and riseth from his
knees, 11
And back returneth, meager, barefoot, wan,
Along the chapel aisle by slow degrees
The sculptured dead, on each side, seem
to freeze,
Emprisoned in black, purgatorial rails 15
Knights, ladies, praying in dumb orat'ries,
He passeth by, and his weak spirit fails
To think how they may ache in icy hoods
and mails

Northward he turneth through a little
door,
And scarce three steps, ere Music's golden
tongue 20

Flattered to tears this aged man and poor,
But no—already had his deathbell rung,
The joys of all his life were said and sung
His was harsh penance on St Agnes' Eve
Another way he went, and soon among 25
Rough ashes sat he for his soul's reprieve,
And all night kept awake, for sinners' sake to
grieve

That ancient Beadsman heard the prelude
soft,
And so it chanced, for many a door was
wide,
From hurry to and fro Soon, up aloft, 30
The silver, snarling trumpets 'gan to chide
The level chambers, ready with their pride,
Were glowing to receive a thousand guests
The carved angels, ever eager-eyed,
Stared, where upon their heads the cornice
rests, 35
With hair blown back, and wings put cross
wise on their breasts

At length burst in the argent revelry,
With plume, tiara, and all rich array,
Numerous as shadows haunting fairly
The brain, new stuffed, in youth, with
triumphs gay 40
Of old romance These let us wish away,
And turn, sole-thoughted, to one Lady
there,
Whose heart had brooded, all that wintry
day,

On love, and winged St Agnes' saintly
care,
As she had heard old dames full many times
declare 45

They told her how, upon St Agnes' Eve,
Young virgins might have visions of de-
light,
And soft adorings from their loves receive
Upon the honeyed middle of the night,
If ceremonies due they did aright 50
As, supperless to bed they must retire,
And couch supine their beauties, lily white,
Nor look behind, nor sideways, but require
Of Heaven with upward eyes for all that they
desire

Full of this whim was thoughtful Made-
line 55
The music, yearning like a God in pain,
She scarcely heard her maiden eyes divine,
Fixed on the floor, saw many a sweeping
train
Pass by—she heeded not at all in vain
Came many a tiptoe, amorous cavalier, 60
And back retired, not cooled by high dis-
dain,
But she saw not her heart was other-
where
She sighed for Agnes' dreams, the sweetest
of the year

She danced along with vague, regardless
eyes,
Anxious her lips, her breathing quick and
short 65
The hallowed hour was near at hand she
sighs
Amid the tumbrels, and the thronged resort
Of whisperers in anger, or in sport,
'Mid looks of love, defiance, hate, and
scorn,
Hoodwinked with faery fancy, all amost, 70
Save to St Agnes and her lambs unshorn,
And all the bliss to be before tomorrow morn

So, purposing each moment to retire,
She lingered still Meantime, across the
moors,
Had come young Porphyro, with heart on
fire 75
For Madeline Beside the portal doors,

Buttressed from moonlight, stands he, and
implores
All saints to give him sight of Madeline,
But for one moment in the tedious hours,
That he might gaze and worship all un-
seen, 80
Perchance speak, kneel, touch, kiss—in sooth
such things have been

He ventures in let no buzzed whisper tell
All eyes be muffled, or a hundred swords
Will storm his heart, Love's fev'rous
citadel
For him, those chambers held barbarian
hordes, 85
Hyena foemen, and hot blooded lords,
Whose very dogs would execrations howl
Against his lineage not one breast affords
Him any mercy, in that mansion foul,
Save one old beldame, weak in body and in
soul 90

Ah, happy chance, the aged creature came,
Shuffling along with ivory headed wand,
To where he stood, hid from the torch's
flame,
Behind a broad hall pillar, far beyond 94
The sound of merriment and chorus bland
He startled her, but soon she knew his
face,
And grasped his fingers in her palsied
hand,
Saying, "Mercy, Porphyro! hie thee from
this place,
They are all here tonight, the whole blood
thirsty race!"

"Get hence! get hence! there's dwarfish
Hildebrand, 100
He had a fever late, and in the fit
He curs'd thee and thine, both house and
land
Then there's that old Lord Maurice, not a
whit
More tame for his gray hairs—Alas me!
flit!
Flit like a ghost away"—"Ah, Gossip
dear, 105
We're safe enough, here in this armchair
sit,
And tell me how"—"Good Saints! not
here, not here,

Follow me, child, or else these stones will be
thy bier"

He followed through a lowly archèd way,
Brushing the cobwebs with his lofty plume,
And as she muttered "Well a day!" 111
He found him in a little moonlight room,
Pale, latticed, chill, and silent as a tomb
"Now tell me where is Madeline," said he,
"O tell me, Angela, by the holy loom 115
Which none but secret sisterhood may see,
When they St Agnes' wool are weaving
piously"

"St Agnes! Ah! it is St Agnes' Eve—
Yet men will murder upon holy days
Thou must hold water in a witch's sieve,
And be liege lord of all the Elves and Fays,
To venture so, it fills me with amaze 122
To see thee, Porphyro!—St Agnes' Eve!
God's help! my lady fair the conjurer plays
This very night good angels her de
ceive! 125
But let me laugh awhile, I've mickle time to
grieve"

Feebly she laugheth in the languid moon,
While Porphyro upon her face doth look,
Like puzzled urchin on an aged crone
Who keepeth closed a wond'rous riddle
book, 130
As spectacled she sits in chimney nook
But soon his eyes grew brilliant, when she
told
His lady's purpose, and he scarce could
brook
Tears, at the thought of those enchant
ments cold,
And Madeline asleep in lap of legends old

Sudden a thought came like a full-blown
rose, 136
Flushing his brow, and in his pained heart
Made purple riot then doth he propose
A stratagem, that makes the beldame start
"A cruel man and impious thou art 140
Sweet lady, let her pray, and sleep, and
dream
Alone with her good angels, far apart
From wicked men like thee Go, go!—
I deem
Thou canst not surely be the same that thou
didst seem"

"I will not harm her, by all saints I
swear," 145
Quoth Porphyro "O may I ne'er find
grace
When my weak voice shall whisper its last
prayer,
If one of her soft ringlets I displace,
Or look with ruffian passion in her face
Good Angela, believe me by these tears, 150
Or I will, even in a moment's space,
Awake, with horrid shout, my foemen's
ears,
And beard them, though they be more
fanged than wolves and bears"

"Ah! why wilt thou affright a feeble soul?
A poor, weak, palsy stricken, churchyard
thing,— 155
Whose passing bell may ere the midnight
toll,
Whose prayers for thee, each morn and
evening,
Were never missed"—Thus plaining, doth
she bring
A gentler speech from burning Porphyro,
So woeful, and of such deep sorrowing, 160
That Angela gives promise she will do
Whatever he shall wish, betide her weal or
woe

Which was, to lead him, in close secrecy,
Even to Madeline's chamber, and there
hide
Him in a closet, of such privacy 165
That he might see her beauty unespied,
And win perhaps that night a peerless
bride,
While legioned fairies paced the coverlet,
And pale enchantment held her sleepy
eyed
Never on such a night have lovers met, 170
Since Merlin paid his Demon all the mon
strous debt

"It shall be as thou wishest," said the
dame
"All cates and dainties shall be storèd there
Quickly on this feast night by the tambour
frame
Her own lute thou wilt see no time to
spare, 175
For I am slow and feeble, and scarce dare

On such a catering trust my dizzy head
 Wait here, my child, with patience, kneel
 in prayer
 The while Ah! thou must needs the lady
 wed,
 Or may I never leave my grave among the
 dead " 180

So saying, she hobbled off with busy fear
 The lover's endless minutes slowly passed,
 The dame returned, and whispered in his
 ear
 To follow her, with aged eyes aghast
 From fright of dim espial Safe at last, 185
 Through many a dusky gallery, they gain
 The maiden's chamber, silken, hushed, and
 chaste,
 Where Porphyro took covert, pleased
 amain
 His poor guide hurried back with agues in
 her brain

Her falt'ring hand upon the balustrade, 190
 Old Angela was feeling for the stair,
 When Madeline, St Agnes' charmed maid,
 Rose, like a missioned spirit, unaware
 With silver taper's light, and pious care,
 She turned, and down the aged gossip
 led 195
 To a safe level matting Now prepare,
 Young Porphyro, for gazing on that bed,
 She comes, she comes again, like ring dove
 frayed and fled

Out went the taper as she hurried in,
 Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine,
 died 200
 She closed the door, she panted, all akin
 To spirits of the air, and visions wide
 No uttered syllable, or, woe betide!
 But to her heart, her heart was voluble,
 Paining with eloquence her balmy side, 205
 As though a tongueless nightingale should
 swell
 Her throat in vain, and die, heart stifled, in
 her dell

A casement high and triple arched there
 was,
 All garlanded with carven imag'ries
 Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of
 knot grass, 210

And diamonded with pines of quaint de
 vice,
 Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,
 As are the tiger moth's deep damasked
 wings,
 And in the midst, 'mong thousand herald
 ries,
 And twilight saints, and dim emblazon
 ings, 215
 A shielded scutcheon blushed with blood of
 queens and kings

Full on this casement shone the wintry
 moon,
 And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair
 breast,
 As down she knelt for heaven's grace and
 boon,
 Rose bloom tell on her hands, together
 pressed, 220
 And on her silver cross soft amethyst,
 And on her hair a glory, like a saint
 She seemed a splendid angel newly
 dressed,
 Save wings, for heaven — Porphyro grew
 faint
 She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from
 mortal taint 225

Anon his heart revives her vespers done,
 Of all its wreathed pearls her hair she
 frees,
 Unclasps her warmed jewels one by one,
 Loosens her fragrant bodice, by degrees
 Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees
 Half hidden, like a mermaid in seaweed,
 Pensive a while she dreams awake, and sees,
 In fancy, fair St Agnes in her bed 233
 But dares not look behind, or all the charm
 is fled

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly
 nest, 235
 In sort of wakeful swoon perplexed she
 lay,
 Until the popped warm of sleep op
 pressed
 Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued away,
 Flown, like a thought, until the morrow
 day,
 Blissfully havened both from joy and
 pain, 240

Clasped like a missal where swart Paynims
pray,
Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,
As though a rose should shut, and be a bud
again

Stol'n to this paradise, and so entranced,
Porphyro gazed upon her empty dress, 245
And listened to her breathing, if it chanced
To wake into a slumberous tenderness,
Which when he heard, that minute did he
bless,
And breathed himself then from the closet
crept,
Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness, 250
And over the hushed carpet, silent, stepped,
And 'tween the curtains peeped, where, lo!—
how fast she slept

Then by the bedside, where the faded
moon
Made a dim, silver twilight, soft he set
A table, and, half anguished, threw
thereon 255
A cloth of woven crimson, gold, and jet —
O for some drowsy Morphean amulet!
The boisterous, midnight, festive clarion,
The kettle drum, and far heard clarionet,
Affray his ears, though but in dying
tone — 260
The hall door shuts again, and all the noise
is gone

And still she slept an azure lidded sleep,
In blanchèd linen, smooth, and lavendered,
While he from forth the closet brought
a heap
Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and
gourd, 265
With jellies soother than the creamy curd,
And lucent syrups, tinct with cinnamon,
Manna and dates, in argosy transferred
From Fez, and spiced dainties, every one,
From silken Samarcand to cedared Leb-
anon 270

These delicacies he heaped with glowing
hand
On golden dishes and in baskets bright
Of wreathèd silver sumptuous they stand
In the retired quiet of the night,

Filling the chilly room with perfume
light — 275
"And now, my love, my seraph fair,
awake!"

Thou art my heaven, and I thine eremite
Open thine eyes, for meek St Agnes' sake
Or I shall drowse beside thee, so my soul
doth ache "

Thus whispering, his warm, unnerved
arm 280
Sank in her pillow Shaded was her dream
By the dusk curtains — 'twas a midnight
charm
Impossible to melt as iced stream
The lustrous salvers in the moonlight
gleam,
Broad golden fringe upon the carpet
lies 285

It seemed he never, never could redeem
From such a steadfast spell his lady's eyes,
So mused awhile, entailed in woofed phan-
tasies

Awakening up, he took her hollow lute,—
Tumultuous,—and, in chords that tender-
est be, 290

He played an ancient ditty, long since
mute,

In Provence called, "La belle dame sans
merci,"

Close to her ear touching the melody,—
Wherewith disturbed she uttered a soft
moan

He ceased—she panted quick—and sud-
denly 295

Her blue affrayèd eyes wide open shone
Upon his knees he sank, pale as smooth
sculptured stone

Her eyes were open, but she still beheld,
Now wide awake, the vision of her sleep
There was a painful change, that night
expelled 300

The blisses of her dream so pure and deep,
At which fair Madeline began to weep,
And moan forth witless words with many
a sigh,

While still her gaze on Porphyro would
keep,

Who knelt, with joined hands and piteous
eye, 305

Fearing to move or speak, she looked so dreamingly

'Ah, Porphyro!" said she, "but even now Thy voice was at sweet tremble in mine ear,

Made tunable with every sweetest vow And those sad eyes were spiritual and clear 310

How changed thou art! how pallid, chill, and drear!

Give me that voice again, my Porphyro, Those looks immortal, those complainings dear!

Oh, leave me not in this eternal woe, For if thou diest, my Love, I know not where to go" 315

Beyond a mortal man impassioned far At these voluptuous accents, he arose, Ethereal, flushed, and like a throbbing star Seen 'mid the sapphire heaven's deep repose,

Into her dream he melted, as the rose 320 Blendeth its odor with the violet,—

Solution sweet meantime the frostwind blows

Like Love's alarum, pattering the sharp sleet

Against the window panes, St Agnes' moon hath set

'Tis dark quick pattereth the flaw blown sleet 325

"This is no dream, my bride, my Madeline!"

'Tis dark the iced gusts still rave and beat "No dream, alas! alas! and woe is mine! Porphyro will leave me here to fade and pine —

Cruel! what traitor could thee hither bring? 330

I curse not, for my heart is lost in thine, Though thou forsakest a deceived thing,— A dove forlorn and lost with sick unpruned wing "

"My Madeline! sweet dreamer! lovely bride!

Say, may I be for aye thy vassal blest? 335 Thy beauty's shield, heart shaped and vermeil dyed?

Ah, silver shrine, here will I take my rest After so many hours of toil and quest, A famished pilgrim,—saved by miracle Though I have found, I will not rob thy nest 340

Saving of thy sweet self, if thou think st well

To trust, fair Madeline, to no rude infidel

"Hark, 'tis an elfin storm from faery land, Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed Arise—arise! the morning is at hand,— 345 The bloated wassailers will never heed — Let us away, my love, with happy speed, There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see,— Drowned all in Rhenish and the sleepy mead

Awake! arise! my love, and fearless be, 350 For o'er the southern moors I have a home for thee "

She hurried at his words, beset with fears, For there were sleeping dragons all around, At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready spears—

Down the wide stairs a darkling way they found — 355

In all the house was heard no human sound

A chain drooped lamp was flickering by each door,

The arras, rich with horseman, hawk, and hound,

Fluttered in the besieging wind's uproar, And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor 360

They glide, like phantoms, into the wide hall,

Like phantoms, to the iron porch they glide,

Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl, With a huge empty flagon by his side

The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook his hide, 365

But his sagacious eye an inmate owns By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide —

The chains lie silent on the footworn stones,—

The key turns, and the door upon its hinges groans

And they are gone aye, ages long ago 370
 These lovers fled away into the storm
 That night the Baron dreamt of many a
 woe,
 And all his warrior-guests, with shade and
 form
 Of witch, and demon, and large coffin
 worm,

Were long be nightmared Angela the
 old 375
 Died palsy twit'ed, with meager face de-
 form,
 The Beadsman, after thousand av'ers told,
 For aye unsought for slept among his ashes
 cold

In "The Eve of St Agnes" Porphyro wakes his Madeline by singing "an ancient ditty, long since mute," entitled "La Belle Dame Sans Merci." Enthrall'd by the suggestion, Keats turned the old French poem into a typically English ballad. There are definite overtones here of the border ballad, "True Thomas." Both poems are similar in form, both are pitched in the same eerie tone, both concern a mortal (in one a poet, in the other a knight) bewitched and ravished away by a beautiful enchantress.

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

O what can ail thee, knight at arms,
 Alone and palely loitering?
 The sedge has withered from the lake,
 And no birds sing

"She found me roots of relish sweet, 25
 And honey wild, and manna dew,
 And sure in language strange she said—
 'I love thee true'

O what can ail thee, knight at-arms, 5
 So haggard and so woe-begone?
 The squirrel's granary is full,
 And the harvest's done

"She took me to her elfin grot,
 And there she wept, and sighed full sore, 30
 And there I shut her wild, wild eyes,
 With kisses four

I see a lily on thy brow
 With anguish moist and fever dew, 10
 And on thy cheeks a fading rose
 Fast withereth too

"And there she lulled me asleep,
 And there I dreamed—ah! woe betide!—
 The latest dream I ever dreamed 35
 On the cold hill's side

"I met a lady in the meads,
 Full beautiful—a faery's child,
 Her hair was long, her foot was light, 15
 And her eyes were wild

"I saw pale kings and princes too,
 Pale warriors, death-pale were they all,
 Who cried—'La Belle Dame Sans Merci
 Hath thee in thrall!' 40

"I made a garland for her head,
 And bracelets too, and fragrant zone,
 She looked at me as she did love,
 And made sweet moan 20

"I saw their starved lips in the gloam,
 With horrid warning gaped wide,
 And I awoke, and found me here
 On the cold hill's side

'I set her on my pacing steed,
 And nothing else saw all day long,
 For sideways would she lean, and sing
 A faery's song

"And this is why I sojourn here, 45
 Alone and palely loitering,
 Though the sedge is withered from the lake,
 And no birds sing"

Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn" has caused no little controversy. Thomas Hardy thought he knew the very urn which Keats described, but it is commonly believed that the inspiration for this poem came from no particular object but from a study of the Elgin marbles in the British Museum. Although the urn may be imaginary, the details are rendered with such loving exactness—the mysterious priest leading the heifer "lowing at the skies," the little procession leaving the town for the temple, the maiden just eluding her lover, the flute player piping his songs beneath the boughs of spring—that this urn, more famous than any actual exhibit, is immortal.

The structure of this poem is particularly interesting. Each of the four great odes following the ode "To Psyche" is built on a stanza made of a Shakespearean quatrain followed by a Petrarchan sestet. This invention of Keats's is a combination of two sonnet forms, and the blend achieves the best of both. It avoids the monotony of the Shakespearean sonnet, with its three repeated quatrains and sudden sledge-hammer couplet, and, by shifting the rhyme-schemes it brings a new unexpectedness and suspense to the more flexible Petrarchan model.

ODE ON A GRECIAN URN

Thou still unravished bride of quietness,
 Thou foster child of silence and slow time,
 Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
 A flowery tale more sweetly than our
 rhyme
 What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy
 shape 5
 Of deities or mortals, or of both,
 In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
 What men or gods are these? What maidens
 loth?
 What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
 What pipes and timbrels? What wild
 ecstasy? 10
 Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
 Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play
 on,
 Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,
 Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone
 Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not
 leave 15
 Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare,
 Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
 Though winning near the goal—yet, do not
 grieve,
 She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy
 bliss,

Forever wilt thou love, and she be
 fair! 20

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
 Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu
 And, happy melodist, unwearied,
 Forever piping songs forever new,
 More happy love! more happy, happy love! 25
 Forever warm and still to be enjoyed,
 Forever panting, and forever young,
 All breathing human passion far above,
 That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and
 cloyed,
 A burning forehead, and a parching
 tongue 30

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
 To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
 Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies
 And all her silken flanks with garlands
 dressed?
 What little town by river or sea shore, 35
 Or mountain built with peaceful citadel,
 Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn?
 And, little town, thy streets for evermore
 Will silent be, and not a soul to tell 39
 Why thou art desolate, can e'er return

O Attic shape! Fair attitude with brede
 Of marble men and maidens over-wrought,
 With forest branches and the trodden weed,

Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
 As doth eternity Cold Pastoral! 45
 When old age shall this generation waste,
 Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe

Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou
 say'st,
 "Beauty is truth, truth beauty"—that is all
 Ye know on earth, and all ye need to
 know 50

"Ode to a Nightingale" is possibly the most exquisite as well as the most carefully elaborated of all Keats's poems. It is magic throughout, in picture as well as in emotional persuasion. Early in 1819 Keats was staying with his friend Charles Armitage Brown at Bedhampton. Brown gives this account of the genesis of the famous ode:

In the spring of 1819 a nightingale had built her nest near my house. Keats felt a tranquil and continual joy in her song, and one morning he took his chair from the breakfast table to the grass plot under a plum tree, where he sat for two or three hours. When he came into the house, I perceived he had some scraps of paper in his hand, and these he was quietly thrusting behind the books. On inquiry, I found those scraps, four or five in number, contained his poetic feeling on the song of our nightingale. The writing was not well legible, and it was difficult to arrange the stanzas on so many scraps. With his assistance I succeeded, and this was his "Ode to a Nightingale."

In connection with this poem readers are advised to examine Kipling's "Wireless," one of his most effective short tales with an uncanny over-tone. Speaking of the "magic casements" lines and referring to three from Coleridge's "Kubla Khan," Kipling dwells on the sorcery of Keats, saying, "Remember that in all the millions permitted there are no more than five—five little lines—of which one can say, 'These are the pure Magic. These are the clear Vision. The rest is only poetry.'"

ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness
 pains
 My sense, as though of hemlock I had
 drunk,
 Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
 One minute past, and Lethe wards had
 sunk
 'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot, 5
 But being too happy in thine happiness,—
 That thou, light winged Dryad of the
 trees,
 In some melodious plot 8
 Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
 Singest of summer in full throated ease
 O for a draught of vintage! that hath been
 Cooled a long age in the deep delvèd earth,

Tasting of Flora and the country green,
 Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt
 mirth!
 O for a beaker full of the warm South, 15
 Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
 With beaded bubbles winking at the
 brim,
 And purple stained mouth,
 That I might drink, and leave the world
 unseen,
 And with thee fade away into the forest
 dim 20
 Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
 What thou among the leaves hast never
 known,
 The weariness, the fever, and the fret
 Here, where men sit and hear each other
 groan,

Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray
hairs, 25
Where youth grows pale, and specter thin,
and dies,
Where but to think is to be full of sor
row
And leaden eyed despairs,
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous
eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to
morrow 30

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes and re
tards
Already with thee! tender is the night, 35
And haply the Queen Moon is on her
throne,
Clustered around by all her starry Fays,
But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes
blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding
mossy ways 40

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the
boughs,
But, in embalmèd darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree
wild, 45
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglan
tine,
Fast fading violets covered up in leaves,
And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on sum
mer eves 50

Darkling I listen, and, for many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Called him soft names in many a musèd
rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath,
Now more than ever seems it rich to die, 55
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul
abroad
In such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in
vain—
To thy high requiem become a sod 60

Thou wast not born for death, immortal
Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down,
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown
Perhaps the self same song that found a
path 65
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick
for home,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn,
The same that oft times hath
Charmed magic casements, opening on the
foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn 70

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is famed to do, deceiving elf
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades 75
Past the near meadows, over the still
stream,
Up the hill side, and now 'tis buried
deep
In the next valley glades
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music—Do I wake or
sleep? 80

The "Ode on Melancholy," no less popular than the others, is technically one of the most interesting. Here Keats communicates an effect of heaviness by the grave and measured movement of the line. The effect of slowness is further enhanced by the skillful repetition of heavy vowels and the continual barrier of weighty consonants.

One of the shortest, it is one of the most poignant of the odes.

ODE ON MELANCHOLY

No, no! go not to Lethe, neither twist
 Wolf's bane, tight rooted, for its poisonous
 wine,
 Nor suffer thy pale forehead to be kissed
 By nightshade, ruby grape of Proserpine,
 Make not your rosary of yew berries, 5
 Nor let the beetle, nor the death moth be
 Your mournful Psyche, nor the downy
 owl
 A partner in your sorrow's mysteries,
 For shade to shade will come too drowsily,
 And drown the wakeful anguish of the
 soul 10

But when the melancholy fit shall fall
 Sudden from heaven like a weeping cloud,
 That fosters the droop-headed flowers all,
 And hides the green hills in an April
 shroud,
 Then glut thy sorrow on a morning rose, 15

Or on the rainbow of the salt sand wave
 Or on the wealth of globed peonies,
 Or if thy mistress some rich anger shows,
 Emprison her soft hand, and let her rave,
 And feed deep, deep upon her peerless
 eyes 20

She dwells with Beauty—Beauty that must
 die,
 And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips
 Bidding adieu, and aching Pleasure nigh,
 Turning to poison while the bee-mouth
 sips
 Aye, in the very temple of Delight 25
 Veiled Melancholy has her sovran shrine,
 Though seen of none save him whose
 strenuous tongue
 Can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine
 His soul shall taste the sadness of her
 might,
 And be among her cloudy trophies
 hung 30

"To Autumn" is one of Keats's purely pictorial poems, it has none of the heightening of feeling and little of the profundity of the great odes. It is, as Amy Lowell said, "a picture and no more, here the poet is merely an exquisite sensitive recording medium." Restraining his emotions, Keats allows nothing to come between the reader and the scene which he wishes to reveal in its own colors.

TO AUTUMN

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
 Close bosom friend of the maturing sun,
 Conspiring with him how to load and bless
 With fruit the vines that round the thatch
 eaves run,
 To bend with apples the mossed cottage
 trees, 5
 And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core,
 To swell the gourd, and plump the
 hazel shells
 With a sweet kernel, to set budding more,
 And still more, later flowers for the bees,
 Until they think warm days will never
 cease, 10
 For Summer has o'erbrimmed their
 clammy cells

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?
 Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find
 Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
 Thy hair soft lifted by the winnowing
 wind, 15
 Or on a half reaped furrow sound asleep,
 Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while
 thy hook
 S pares the next swath and all its twined
 flowers
 And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
 Steady thy laden head across a brook, 20
 Or by a cider press, with patient look,
 Thou watchest the last oozy hours by
 hours
 Where are the songs of Spring? Aye, where
 are they?

Think not of them, thou hast thy music
 too,—
 While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying
 day, 25
 And touch the stubble plains with rosy
 hue,
 Then in a wailful choir the small gnats
 mourn
 Among the river shallows, borne aloft

Or sinking as the light wind lives or
 dies,
 And full grown lambs loud bleat from hilly
 bourn, 30
 Hedge crickets sing, and now with treble
 soft
 The red breast whistles from a garden
 croft,
 And gathering swallows twitter in the
 skies

Little remains to be said of Keats's sonnets. Much ink has been spilled because of his confusion of Balboa with Cortez in "On First Looking Into Chapman's Homer," but the slip—if slip it was—was probably unintentional. It certainly is unimportant. What is important is that Keats, paying a tribute to a translation from the Greek, has transported not only himself but his readers into "realms of gold."

"Bright Star," sometimes known as "Last Sonnet," is doubly pathetic because it expresses Keats's hopeless longing for Fanny Brawne and because these are supposed to be his last lines, written on a blank page in Shakespeare's *Poems* facing "A Lover's Complaint."

ON THE GRASSHOPPER AND CRICKET

The poetry of earth is never dead
 When all the birds are faint with the hot sun,
 And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run
 From hedge to hedge about the new mown mead,
 That is the Grasshopper's—he takes the lead 5
 In summer luxury,—he has never done
 With his delights, for when tired out with fun
 He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed
 The poetry of earth is ceasing never
 On a lone winter evening, when the frost 10
 Has wrought a silence, from the stove there shrills
 The Cricket's song, in warmth increasing ever,
 And seems to one in drowsiness half lost,
 The Grasshopper's among some grassy hills

TO ONE WHO HAS BEEN LONG IN CITY PENT

To one who has been long in city pent,
 'Tis very sweet to look into the fair
 And open face of heaven,—to breathe a
 prayer
 Full in the smile of the blue firmament
 Who is more happy, when, with heart's
 content, 5

Fatigued he sinks into some pleasant lair
 Of wavy grass, and reads a debonair
 And gentle tale of love and languishment?

Returning home at evening, with an ear
 Catching the notes of Philomel,—an eye 10
 Watching the sailing cloudlet's bright career,
 He mourns that day so soon has glided by
 E'en like the passage of an angel's tear
 That falls through the clear ether silently

JOHN KEATS

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER

Much have I traveled in the realms of gold,
And many goodly states and kingdoms
seen,
Round many western islands have I been
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told 5
That deep browed Homer ruled as his
demesne,
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and
bold
Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken, 10
Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes
He stared at the Pacific—and all his men
Looked at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien

BRIGHT STAR

Bright star! would I were steadfast as thou
art—
Not in lone splendor hung aloft the night,
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like Nature's patient sleepless Eremité,
The moving waters at their priestlike task 5
Of pure ablution round earth's human
shores,
Or gazing on the new soft fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the
moors—
No—yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,
Pillowed upon my far love's ripening
breast, 10
To feel forever its soft fall and swell,
Awake forever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender taken breath,
And so live ever—or else swoon to death

ALFRED TENNYSON

Two torch-bearers illuminated the nineteenth century, Alfred Tennyson and Robert Browning. Their unusually long lives almost spanned the century—a longevity in startling contrast to the brief meteoric careers of Shelley and Keats—and, though their work shows great differences in theory and practice, it throws a brilliant light on the thought of their day. The Victorian standards, the gradual change from stern Puritanism to priggishness and from priggishness to liberalism, the shift from abstract moral judgments to analytical speculation may be traced in Tennyson's sixty years of creative work.

Alfred Tennyson was born August 6, 1809, in the Lincolnshire village of Somersby, where his father, the Reverend Dr. George Clayton Tennyson, was rector. There he grew to manhood, the level, low lying scenery with its small sand hills rolling to the coast a dozen miles away—a landscape which Tennyson never ceased to love—is continually painted in his work. As a boy Tennyson showed unusual precocity. At eight he was composing blank verse, between ten and eleven he wrote "hundreds and hundreds of lines in the regular Popeian meter", at twelve he made an analysis of Milton's "Samson Agonistes". At seventeen he broke into print. Together with his brother, Charles Tennyson, he determined to be a poet and the collaborators issued *Poems by Two Brothers* in March, 1827, an immature volume which reveals the influence of Scott, Moore, and, most of all, Byron, then the idol of his day.

A year later Tennyson matriculated at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he remained two and a half years, and where his fellow undergraduates acclaimed him not only as a poet, but as *the* poet philosopher of the new age. For

a rector's son he had a strangely gypsy-like countenance, and his combination of strong will and strange wavewardness won him immediate regard. At Cambridge he formed a close friendship with Arthur Hallam, son of the famous historian, a friendship which turned to overwhelming grief when Hallam died in Vienna ("In Memoriam" is a record of that grief). While still an undergraduate, Tennyson published a small collection, *Poems, Chiefly Lyrical* (1830), and the few critics who saw it were perturbed by the slight metrical innovations.

Tennyson's first significant volume, *Poems* (1832), was handled with what today seems unaccountable roughness. The same critic who attacked Keats in the *Quarterly Review* charged at the new poet and his occasional slips in taste. He sneered at Tennyson as a self-assured prodigy, "another star in that galaxy of poetry of which the lamented Keats was the harbinger." The attack is the more incredible since this volume contained some of Tennyson's best poems, "The Lotos-Eaters," "The Lady of Shalott," "The Miller's Daughter," "Ænone," "The Palace of Art," and "A Dream of Fair Women," among others. The sensitive Tennyson was astonished and affronted, a few months later Hallam, who had become engaged to Tennyson's sister, died. The two blows cost Tennyson more than we know. He withdrew from society, he fell into fits of melancholy, he lost his property because of a foolish investment, he refused to publish. It was all of ten years before he decided to issue another collection of poems.

When the new *Poems* appeared in 1842 the tide began to turn. Wordsworth acclaimed him as "decidedly the first of our living poets," and he was awarded a pension of two hundred pounds. Tennyson's climactic year was 1850. After many obstacles and postponements, he married Emily Sellwood, with whom he had fallen in love at his brother's wedding fourteen years before, he published "In Memoriam," which made a profound impression, he was appointed poet-laureate. His position as England's most popular poet was now secure. He entered his third period (1850-1870) in high spirits and at the peak of his powers, he turned to longer narratives and social studies. His reputation increased with *Idylls of the King* (1859), *Enoch Arden* (1864), and *The Holy Grail* (1869). He produced seven dramas, the last of which was completed by 1879. Between 1880 and 1891 he brought out several new collections of poems. He was often invited to read to Her Majesty, and it was said that to Queen Victoria he assumed the place in poetry that Disraeli occupied in politics, in 1884 he was raised to the peerage. He died October 6, 1892.

The Victorian era, with its academic questions and tea-pot tempests, has passed, the poetry remains. The intellectual conflicts of the nineteenth century are not ours, but it is interesting to see how quickly the social concerns, as well as the scientific doctrines, are reflected in its verse. Tennyson was particularly sensitive to the rapid changes. He was interested in the emancipation of women, the evolutionary theory of Darwin found an echo in "In Memoriam," in "Locksley Hall," and in "Maud"; his later works reflect the practical politics of his day and the "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington" is not only the record of his political affiliations but of his faith.

Against this there may be cited the views of his detractors. Tennyson was, they claim, a prophet who fought for comfort rather than for causes, a philosopher who accepted the easy philosophies of the moment without questioning, a poet of prettiness, even pathos, but no real passion. Many, indeed, have pictured him as a combination of Traditional Minstrel and Maiden Aunt. In defense of Tennyson it must be maintained that tastes, as well as attitudes, must change, that the worst of a poet dies with the worst of his age, and that if Tennyson lacked a sense of tingedness no recent poet has had a greater sense of style and a finer feeling for verbal music. The landscape lives in his verse as it does in the lines of only a few, it actually crowns the work. As F. L. Lucas wrote in *Eight Victorian Poets*:

Claribel is forgotten for the bee and the beetle that hum above her mossed headstone. Who was she? We neither know nor care. It is not Mariana we remember, but the far lowing of the oxen in the fen, the drone of summer flies, the poplar shadow in the low moonlight, the cold winds of dawn about Moated Grange. In the same way CEnone's is only a painted grief upon a painted mountain, and yet what painting!

CEnone was a nymph of Mount Ida and the beloved of Paris, whose abduction of Helen brought about the Trojan War. After his death, CEnone returned to her native hill and there committed suicide. A true daughter of Tennyson, as Lucas points out, she too seems almost "to sorrow less for her lost lover than for the mountain-pines he felled to fetch her rival from beyond the sea." Rarely has the physical scene—the grasshopper silent in the grass, the golden bee lily-cradled, the thick autumn rains flashing in the pools, the dead sounds at night "like footsteps upon wool," the narrow moonlit slips of silver cloud—been so memorably summoned.

CENONE

Hither came at noon

There lies a vale in Ida, lovelier
Than all the valleys of Ionian hills
The swimming vapor slopes athwart the glen,
Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine to
pine,
And loiters, slowly drawn. On either hand 5
The lawns and meadow ledges midway down
Hang rich in flowers, and far below them
roars
The long brook falling through the cloven
ravine
In cataract after cataract to the sea
Behind the valley topmost Gargarus 10
Stands up and takes the morning, but in
front
The gorges, opening wide apart reveal
Troas and Ilion's columned citadel,
The crown of Troas

Mournful CEnone, wandering forlorn 15
Of Paris, once her playmate on the hills
Her cheek had lost the rose, and round her
neck
Floated her hair or seemed to float in rest
She, leaning on a fragment twined with vine,
Sang to the stillness, till the mountain shade
Sloped downward to her seat from the upper
cliff 21

"O mother Ida, many fountained Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die
For now the noonday quiet holds the hill,
The grasshopper is silent in the grass, 25
The lizard, with his shadow on the stone,
Rests like a shadow, and the winds are dead
The purple flower droops, the golden bee
Is lily cradled. I alone awake
My eyes are full of tears, my heart of love, 30

My heart is breaking and my eyes are dim,
And I am all aweary of my life

"O mother Ida, many fountained Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die
Hear me, O earth, hear me, O hills, O caves
That house the cold crowned snake! O moun-
tain brooks, 36

I am the daughter of a River God,
Hear me, for I will speak, and build up all
My sorrow with my song, as yonder walls
Rose slowly to a music slowly breathed, 40
A cloud that gathered shape, for it may be
That, while I speak of it, a little while
My heart may wander from its deeper woe

"O mother Ida, many fountained Ida,
Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die 45
I waited underneath the dawning hills,
Aloft the mountain lawn was dewy dark,
And dewy dark aloft the mountain pine
Beautiful Paris, evil hearted Paris,
Leading a jet black goat, white horned, white
hooved, 50
Came up from reedy Simois all alone

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die
Far off the torrent called me from the cleft,
Far up the solitary morning smote
The streaks of virgin snow With down
dropped eyes 55
I sat alone, white breasted like a star
Fronting the dawn he moved, a leopard skin
Drooped from his shoulder, but his sunny
hair
Clustered about his temples like a God's,
And his cheek brightened as the foam bow
brightens 60
When the wind blows the foam, and all my
heart
Went forth to embrace him coming ere he
came

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die
He smiled, and opening out his milk white
palm
Disclosed a fruit of pure Hesperian gold, 65
That smelled ambrosially, and while I looked
And listened, the full flowing river of speech
Came down upon my heart

'My own CEnone,
Beautiful-browed CEnone, my own soul,

Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind in
graven 70
For the most fan, would seem to award it
thine,
As lovelier than whatever Oread haunt
The knolls of Ida, loveliest in all grace
Of movement, and the charm of married
brows'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die 75
He pressed the blossom of his lips to mine,
And added, 'This was cast upon the board,
When all the full faced presence of the Gods
Ranged in the halls of Peleus, whereupon
Rose feud, with question unto whom 'twere
due, 80

But light foot Iris brought it yester eve,
Delivering, that to me, by common voice
Elected umpire, Here comes today,
Pallas and Aphrodite, claiming each 84
This meed of fairest Thou, within the cave
Behind yon whispering tuft of oldest pine,
Mayst well behold them unbeheld, unheard
Hear all, and see thy Paris judge of Gods'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die
It was the deep midnight, one silvery cloud
Had lost his way between the piny sides 91
Of this long glen Then to the bower they
came,
Naked they came to that smooth swarded
bower,
And at their feet the crocus brake like fire,
Violet, amaracus, and asphodel, 95
Lotos and lilies, and a wind arose,
And overhead the wandering ivy and vine,
This way and that, in many a wild festoon
Ran riot, garlanding the gnarled boughs
With bunch and berry and flower through
and through 100

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die
On the tree-tops a crested peacock lit,
And o'er him flowed a golden cloud, and
leaned
Upon him, slowly dropping fragrant dew
Then first I heard the voice of her to whom
Coming through heaven, like a light that
grows 106
Larger and clearer, with one mind the Gods
Rise up for reverence She to Paris made
Proffer of royal power, ample rule

Unquestioned, overflowing revenue 110
 Wherewith to embellish state, 'from many a
 vale
 And river sundered champaign clothed with
 corn,
 Or labored mine undrainable of ore
 Honor,' she said, 'and homage, tax and toll,
 From many an inland town and haven large,
 Mast thronged beneath her shadowing citadel
 In glassy bays among her tallest towers' 117

"O mother Ida, harken ere I die
 Still she spake on and still she spake of power,
 'Which in all action is the end of all, 120
 Power fitted to the season, wisdom bred
 And throned of wisdom—from all neighbor
 crowns

Alliance and allegiance, till thy hand
 Fail from the scepter staff Such boon from
 me,

From me, heaven's queen, Paris, to thee king-
 born, 125

A shepherd all thy life but yet king born,
 Should come most welcome, seeing men, in
 power

Only, are likest Gods, who have attained
 Rest in a happy place and quiet seats
 Above the thunder, with undying bliss 130
 In knowledge of their own supremacy'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die
 She ceased, and Paris held the costly fruit
 Out at arm's length, so much the thought of
 power

Flattered his spirit, but Pallas where she
 stood 135

Somewhat apart, her clear and barèd limbs
 O'erthwarted with the brazen headed spear
 Upon her pearly shoulder leaning cold, 138
 The while, above, her full and earnest eye
 Over her snow cold breast and angry cheek
 Kept watch, waiting decision, made reply
 'Self reverence, self knowledge, self control,
 These three alone lead life to sovereign power
 Yet not for power (power of herself
 Would come uncalled for) but to live by law,
 Acting the law we live by without fear, 146
 And, because right is right, to follow right
 Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence'

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die
 Again she said 'I woo thee not with gifts

Sequel of guerdon could not alter me 151
 To fairer Judge thou me by what I am,
 So shalt thou find me fairest

Yet, indeed,
 If gazing on divinity disrobed 154
 Thy mortal eyes are frail to judge of fair,
 Unbiased by self profit, O, rest thee sure
 That I shall love thee well and cleave to thee,
 So that my vigor, wedded to thy blood, 158
 Shall strike within thy pulses, like a God's,
 To push thee forward through a life of shocks,
 Dangers, and deeds, until endurance grow
 Sinewed with action, and the full-grown will,
 Circled through all experiences, pure law,
 Commensure perfect freedom'

Here she ceased,
 And Paris pondered and I cried, 'O Paris,
 Give it to Pallas!' but he heard me not, 166
 Or hearing would not hear me, woe is me!

"O mother Ida, many fountained Ida,
 Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die
 Idalian Aphrodite beautiful, 170
 Fresh as the foam, new bathed in Paphian
 wells,

With rosy slender fingers backward drew
 From her warm brows and bosom her deep
 hair 173

Ambrosial, golden round her lucid throat
 And shoulder, from the violets her light foot
 Shone rosy white, and o'er her rounded form
 Between the shadows of the vine bunches
 Floated the glowing sunlights, as she moved

"Dear mother Ida, harken ere I die
 She with a subtle smile in her mild eyes, 180
 The herald of her triumph, drawing nigh
 Half whispered in his ear, 'I promise thee
 The fairest and most loving wife in Greece'
 She spoke and laughed, I shut my sight for
 fear,

But when I looked, Paris had raised his arm,
 And I beheld great Here's angry eyes, 186
 As she withdrew into the golden cloud,
 And I was left alone within the bower,
 And from that time to this I am alone,
 And I shall be alone until I die 190

"Yet, mother Ida, harken ere I die
 Fairest—why fairest wife? am I not fair?
 My love hath told me so a thousand times
 Methinks I must be fair, for yesterday, 194

When I passed by, a wild and wanton pard,
Eyed like the evening star, with playful tail
Crouched fawning in the weed Most loving
is she?

Ah me, my mountain shepherd, that my arms
Were wound about thee, and my hot lips
pressed

Close, close to thine in that quick falling dew
Of fruitful kisses, thick as autumn rains 201
Flash in the pools of whirling Simois!

"O mother, hear me yet before I die
They came, they cut away my tallest pines,
My tall dark pines, that plumed the craggy
ledge 205

High over the blue gorge, and all between
The snowy peak and snow white cataract
Fostered the callow eaglet—from beneath
Whose thick mysterious boughs in the dark
morn

The panther's roar came muffled, while I sat
Low in the valley Never, never more 211
Shall lone Cœnone see the morning mist
Sweep through them, never see them overlaid
With narrow moonlit slips of silver cloud,
Between the loud stream and the trembling
stars 215

"O mother, hear me yet before I die
I wish that somewhere in the ruined folds,
Among the fragments tumbled from the glens,
Or the dry thickets, I could meet with her
The Abominable, that uninvited came 220
Into the fair Peleian banquet hall,
And cast the golden fruit upon the board,
And bred this change, that I might speak
my mind,
And tell her to her face how much I hate
Her presence, hated both of Gods and men

"O mother, hear me yet before I die 226
Hath he not sworn his love a thousand times,

In this green valley, under this green hill,
Even on this hand, and sitting on this stone?
Sealed it with kisses? watered it with tears?
O happy tears, and how unlike to these! 231
O happy heaven, how canst thou see my face?
O happy earth, how canst thou bear my
weight?

O death death death, thou ever floating
cloud,

There are enough unhappy on this earth, 235
Pass by the happy souls, that love to live,
I pray thee, pass before my light of life,
And shadow all my soul, that I may die
Thou weighest heavy on the heart within
Weigh heavy on my eyelids, let me die 240

"O mother, hear me yet before I die
I will not die alone, for fiery thoughts
Do shape themselves within me, more and
more,

Whereof I catch the issue, as I hear
Dead sounds at night come from the inmost
hills, 245

Like footsteps upon wool I dimly see
My far off doubtful purpose, as a mother
Conjectures of the features of her child
Ere it is born Her child!—a shudder comes
Across me never child be born of me 250
Unblest, to vex me with his father's eyes!

"O mother, hear me yet before I die
Hear me, O earth I will not die alone,
Lest their shrill happy laughter come to me
Walking the cold and starless road of death
Uncomforted, leaving my ancient love 256
With the Greek woman I will rise and go
Down into Troy, and ere the stars come forth
Talk with the wild Cassandra, for she says
A fire dances before her, and a sound 260
Rings ever in her ears of armed men
What this may be I know not, but I know
That, whereso'er I am by night and day,
All earth and air seem only burning fire"

Cœnone illustrates Tennyson's love for the ancient myths and his power of reanimating them "Tithonus," "The Lotos Eaters," and "Ulysses" are among the most colorful, as well as the most romantic, of his "Greek" poems Tithonus, son of Laomedon, King of Troy, was beloved by Aurora, Goddess of the Dawn She obtained for him the boon of immortality, but she forgot to ask the gods to bestow eternal youth as well, upon her lover Tithonus grew old and with-

ered into a grasshopper The slow aging, the pervading decay, the general air of misery are sounded in the opening lines and concluded with cold but exquisite despair

TITHONUS

The woods decay, the woods decay and fall
 The vapors weep their burthen to the ground,
 Man comes and tills the field and lies beneath,
 And after many a summer dies the swan
 Me only cruel immortality 5
 Consumes I wither slowly in thine arms,
 Here at the quiet limit of the world,
 A white hair'd shadow roaming like a dream
 The ever silent spaces of the East,
 Far folded mists, and gleaming halls of morn 10

Alas! for this gray shadow, once a man—
 So glorious in his beauty and thy choice,
 Who madest him thy chosen, that he seem'd
 To his great heart none other than a God!
 I ask'd thee, "Give me immortality " 15
 Then didst thou grant mine asking with a smile,
 Like wealthy men who care not how they give
 But thy strong Hours indignant work'd their wills,
 And beat me down and marr'd and wasted me,
 And tho' they could not end me, left me maim'd 20
 To dwell in presence of immortal youth,
 Immortal age beside immortal youth,
 And all I was, in ashes Can thy love,
 Thy beauty, make amends, tho' even now,
 Close over us, the silver star, thy guide, 25
 Shines in those tremulous eyes that fill with tears
 To hear me? Let me go take back thy gift
 Why should a man desire in any way
 To vary from the kindly race of men,
 Or pass beyond the goal of ordinance 30
 Where all should pause, as is most meet for all?

A soft air fans the cloud apart there comes
 A glimpse of that dark world where I was born
 Once more the old mysterious glimmer steals
 From thy pure brows, and from thy shoulders pure, 35
 And bosom beating with a heart renew'd
 Thy cheek begins to redden thro' the gloom,
 Thy sweet eyes brighten slowly close to mine,
 Ere yet they blind the stars, and the wild team
 Which love thee, yearning for thy yoke, arise, 40
 And shake the darkness from their loosen'd manes,
 And beat the twilight into flakes of fire

Lo! ever thus thou growest beautiful
 In silence, then before thine answer given
 Departest, and thy tears are on my cheek 45

Why wilt thou ever scare me with thy tears,
 And make me tremble lest a saying learnt,
 In days far off, on that dark earth, be true?
 "The Gods themselves cannot recall their gifts"

Aye me! aye me! with what another heart 50
 In days far off, and with what other eyes
 I used to watch—if I be he that watch'd—
 The lucid outline forming round thee, saw
 The dim curls kindle into sunny rings,
 Changed with thy mystic change, and felt my blood 55
 Glow with the glow that slowly crimson'd all
 Thy presence and thy portals, while I lay,
 Mouth, forehead, eyelids, growing dewy-warm
 With kisses balmier than half opening buds
 Of April, and could hear the lips that kiss'd 60
 Whispering I knew not what of wild and sweet,
 Like that strange song I heard Apollo sing,
 While Ilion like a mist rose into towers

Yet hold me not for ever in thine East
 How can my nature longer mix with thine? 65
 Coldly thy rosy shadows bathe me, cold
 Are all thy lights, and cold my wrinkled feet
 Upon thy glimmering thresholds, when the steam
 Floats up from those dim fields about the homes
 Of happy men that have the power to die, 70
 And grassy barrows of the happier dead
 Release me, and restore me to the ground,
 Thou seest all things, thou wilt see my grave
 Thou wilt renew thy beauty morn by morn,
 I earth in earth forget these empty courts, 75
 And thee returning on thy silver wheels

"The Lotos-Eaters" is one of Tennyson's most curious successes. It is a mixture of pure fancy and feeling, a blending of the real and the unreal. The wish to escape pain, which is the essence of the poem, the desire to be free of weariness is a deeply human one. But the setting itself is unhuman, the scene is like a landscape in a dream. Apart from the central idea, the piece is notable for the music of its verse, for the rising and falling cadences, and for the harmonic progressions of its choric song.

THE LOTOS EATERS

"Courage!" he said, and pointed toward the land,
 ' This mounting wave will roll us shoreward soon '
 In the afternoon they came unto a land
 In which it seemed always afternoon
 All round the coast the languid air did swoon,
 Breathing like one that hath a weary dream
 Full faced above the valley stood the moon,
 And like a downward smoke, the slender stream
 Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did seem

5

A land of streams! some, like a downward smoke,
 Slow dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did go,
 And some thro' wavering lights and shadows broke,
 Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below
 They saw the gleaming river seaward flow
 From the inner land far off, three mountain tops,
 Three silent pinnacles of aged snow,
 Stood sunset flush'd and, dew'd with showery drops,
 Up clomb the shadowy pine above the woven copse

10

15

The charmed sunset linger'd low adown
 In the red West thro' mountain clefts the dale
 Was seen far inland, and the yellow down
 Border'd with palm, and many a winding vale
 And meadow, set with slender galingale,
 A land where all things always seem'd the same!
 And round about the keel with faces pale,
 Dark faces pale against that rosy flame,
 The mild eyed melancholy Lotos eaters came

20

25

Branches they bore of that enchanted stem,
 Laden with flower and fruit, whereof they gave
 To each, but whoso did receive of them,
 And taste, to him the gushing of the wave
 Far far away did seem to mourn and rave
 On alien shores, and if his fellow spake,
 His voice was thin, as voices from the grave,
 And deep asleep he seem'd, yet all awake,
 And music in his ears his beating heart did make

30

35

They sat them down upon the yellow sand,
 Between the sun and moon upon the shore,
 And sweet it was to dream of Fatherland,
 Of child, and wife, and slave, but evermore
 Most weary seem'd the sea, weary the oar,
 Weary the wandering fields of barren foam
 Then some one said, "We will return no more,"

40

And all at once they sang, "Our island home
Is far beyond the wave, we will no longer roam "

45

CHORIC SONG

I

There is sweet music here that softer falls
Than petals from blown roses on the grass,
Or night dew on still waters between walls
Of shadowy granite, in a gleaming pass,
Music that gentlier on the spirit lies,
Than tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes,
Music that brings sweet sleep down from the blissful skies
Here are cool mosses deep,
And thro' the moss the ivies creep,
And in the stream the long leaved flowers weep,
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs in sleep

50

55

II

Why are we weigh'd upon with heaviness,
And utterly consumed with sharp distress,
While all things else have rest from weariness?
All things have rest why should we toil alone,
We only toil, who are the first of things,
And make perpetual moan,
Still from one sorrow to another thrown
Nor ever fold our wings,
And cease from wanderings,
Nor steep our brows in slumber's holy balm,
Nor hearken what the inner spirit sings,
"There is no joy but calm!"
Why should we only toil, the roof and crown of things?

60

65

III

Lo! in the middle of the wood,
The folded leaf is woo'd from out the bud
With winds upon the branch, and there
Grows green and broad, and takes no care,
Sun steep'd at noon, and in the moon
Nightly dew fed, and turning yellow
Falls, and floats adown the air
Lo! sweeten'd with the summer light,
The full-juiced apple, waxing over-mellow,
Drops in a silent autumn night
All its allotted length of days,
The flower ripens in its place,
Ripens and fades, and falls, and hath no toil,
Fast-rooted in the fruitful soil

70

75

80

IV

Hateful is the dark blue sky,
 Vaulted o'er the dark blue sea 85
 Death is the end of life, ah, why
 Should life all labor be?
 Let us alone Time driveth onward fast,
 And in a little while our lips are dumb
 Let us alone What is it that will last? 90
 All things are taken from us, and become
 Portions and parcels of the dreadful Past
 Let us alone What pleasure can we have
 To war with evil? Is there any peace
 In ever climbing up the climbing wave? 95
 All things have rest, and ripen toward the grave
 In silence, ripen, fall and cease
 Give us long rest or death, dark death, or dreamful ease

V

How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream,
 With half shut eyes ever to seem 100
 Falling asleep in a half-dream!
 To dream and dream, like yonder amber light,
 Which will not leave the myrrh bush on the height,
 To hear each other's whisper'd speech,
 Eating the Lotos day by day, 105
 To watch the crisping ripples on the beach,
 And tender curving lines of creamy spray,
 To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
 To the influence of mild minded melancholy,
 To muse and brood and live again in memory, 110
 With those old faces of our infancy
 Heap'd over with a mound of grass,
 Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an urn of brass!

VI

Dear is the memory of our wedded lives,
 And dear the last embraces of our wives 115
 And their warm tears but all hath suffer'd change,
 For surely now our household hearths are cold
 Our sons inherit us our looks are strange
 And we should come like ghosts to trouble joy
 Or else the island princes over bold 120
 Have eat our substance, and the minstrel sings
 Before them of the ten years' war in Troy,
 And our great deeds, as half forgotten things
 Is there confusion in the little isle?
 Let what is broken so remain 125
 The Gods are hard to reconcile
 'Tis hard to settle order once again

There *is* confusion worse than death,
 Trouble on trouble, pain on pain,
 Long labor unto aged breath, 130
 Sore task to hearts worn out with many wars
 And eyes grown dim with gazing on the pilot-stars

VII

But, propt on beds of amaranth and moly,
 How sweet (while warm airs lull us, blowing lowly)
 With half dropt eyelids still, 135
 Beneath a heaven dark and holy,
 To watch the long bright river drawing slowly
 His waters from the purple hill—
 To hear the dewy echoes calling
 From cave to cave thro' the thick twined vine— 140
 To watch the emerald color'd water falling
 Thro' many a wov'n acanthus-wreath divine!
 Only to hear and see the far off sparkling brine,
 Only to hear were sweet, stretch'd out beneath the pine

VIII

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak 145
 The Lotos blows by every winding creek
 All day the wind breathes low with mellower tone
 Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone
 Round and round the spicy downs the yellow Lotos dust is
 blown
 We have had enough of action, and of motion we, 150
 Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard, when the surge was
 seething free,
 Where the wallowing monster spouted his foam fountains
 in the sea
 Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an equal mind,
 In the hollow Lotos land to live and lie reclined
 On the hills like Gods together, careless of mankind 155
 For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts are hurl'd
 Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are lightly
 curl'd
 Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleaming
 world
 Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted lands,
 Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring deeps
 and fiery sands, 160
 Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships, and
 praying hands
 But they smile, they find a music centered in a doleful song
 Steaming up, a lamentation and an ancient tale of wrong,
 Like a tale of little meaning tho' the words are strong,
 Chanted from an ill used race of men that cleave the soil, 165
 Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with enduring toil,
 Storing yearly little dues of wheat, and wine and oil,

Till they perish and they suffer—some, 'tis whisper'd—
down in hell

Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian valleys dwell,
Resting weary limbs at last on beds of asphodel
Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the shore
Than labor in the deep mid ocean, wind and wave and oar,
Oh, rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more

170

"Ulysses" is one of Tennyson's highest peaks. The courage is contagious, the heroism which has "enjoyed greatly, suffered greatly," that has accepted thunder and sunshine with "a frolic welcome," communicates a personal warmth. The reader is tempted to join the hero and sail beyond the sunset, "beyond the utmost bound of human thought." The Tennysonian impulse to moralize is not absent, but it is lifted to an exalted plane with its triumphant conclusion

that which we are, we are,

One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield

"To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield"—it is no mean motto, especially for a prim and unheroic age

ULYSSES

It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
Matched with an aged wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know
not me

5

I cannot rest from travel, I will drink
Life to the lees. All times I have enjoyed
Greatly, have suffered greatly, both with those
That loved me, and alone, on shore, and when
Through scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
Vexed the dim sea. I am become a name,
For always roaming with a hungry heart
Much have I seen and known,—cities of men,
And manners, climates, councils, govern-
ments,

14

Myself not least, but honored of them all,—
And drunk delight of battle with my peers,
Far on the ringing plains of windy Troy
I am a part of all that I have met,
Yet all experience is an arch wherethrough
Gleams that untraveled world, whose margin
fades

20

Forever and forever when I move
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,

To rust unburnished, not to shine in use!
As though to breathe were life! Life piled
on life

Were all too little, and of one to me
Little remains but every hour is saved
From that eternal silence, something more,
A bringer of new things, and vile it were
For some three suns to store and hoard my
self,

25

And this gray spirit yearning in desire
To follow knowledge like a sinking star,
Beyond the utmost bound of human thought

30

This is my son, mine own Telemachus,
To whom I leave the scepter and the isle—
Well loved of me, discerning to fulfill
This labor, by slow prudence to make mild
A rugged people, and through soft degrees
Subdue them to the useful and the good
Most blameless is he, centered in the sphere
Of common duties, decent not to fail

40

In offices of tenderness, and pay
Meet adoration to my household gods,
When I am gone. He works his work, I mine

There lies the port, the vessel puffs her sail,
There gloom the dark broad seas. My mar-
iners,

45

Souls that have toiled, and wrought, and
 thought with me,—
 That ever with a frolic welcome took
 The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
 Free hearts, free foreheads,—you and I are
 old,
 Old age hath yet his honor and his toil 50
 Death closes all, but something ere the end,
 Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
 Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods
 The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks,
 The long day wanes, the slow moon climbs,
 the deep 55
 Moans round with many voices Come, my
 friends,
 'Tis not too late to seek a newer world
 Push off, and sitting well in order smite

The sounding furrows, for my purpose holds
 To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths 60
 Of all the western stars, until I die
 It may be that the gulfs will wash us down,
 It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
 And see the great Achilles, whom we knew
 Though much is taken, much abides, and
 though 65
 We are not now that strength which in old
 days
 Moved earth and heaven, that which we are,
 we are,
 One equal temper of heroic hearts,
 Made weak by time and fate, but strong in
 will 69
 To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield

Tennyson was even fonder of the Arthurian legends than he was of the Greek myths. Many of his most characteristic poems were founded on Malory's fifteenth century *Morte d'Arthur*. It was these very poems which drew down twentieth century criticism upon the nineteenth century poet for his use of the antique and noble compilation, it was charged by many that Tennyson had changed the lusty Round Table knights into mawkish Victorian gentlemen by emasculating Malory. *Idylls of the King* became the chief target for attack. Critics pointed out that Tennyson not only imposed his narrow moral views upon semi-pagan characters, but that he made them smug and anemic, turning the savage pageantry of the Middle Ages into a Sunday school picnic. Carlyle wrote to Emerson, "At first we read Tennyson's *Idylls* with profound recognition of the finely elaborated execution, and also of the inward perfection of vacancy and, to say truth, with considerable impatience at being treated so very like infants, though the lollypops were *so* superlative." But, though the reaction against Tennyson has been great, the poetic achievement of the best of his Arthurian tales is greater. These narratives are, as John Drinkwater has declared, "pervaded by Tennyson's descriptive gift, and yet it is always closely woven into the imaginative texture and hardly ever indulged for its own sake."

"Sir Galahad," "Morte d'Arthur," and "Merlin and the Gleam" are living literature, and it is interesting to compare these poems with the more recent psychological treatment of the same themes and persons in E. A. Robinson's *Merlin, Lancelot, and Tristram*.

SIR GALAHAD

My good blade carves the casques of men,
 My tough lance thrusteth sure,
 My strength is as the strength of ten,
 Because my heart is pure

The shattering trumpet shrilleth high, 5
 The hard brands shiver on the steel,
 The splinter'd spear shafts crack and fly,
 The horse and rider reel
 They reel, they roll in clanging lists,
 And when the tide of combat stands, 10

Perfume and flowers fall in showers,
That lightly rain from ladies' hands

As down dark tides the glory slides,
And star like mingles with the stars

How sweet are looks that ladies bend
On whom their favors fall!
For them I battle till the end, 15
To save from shame and thrall
But all my heart is drawn above,
My knees are bow'd in crypt and shrine
I never felt the kiss of love,
Nor maiden's hand in mine 20
More bounteous aspects on me beam,
Me mightier transports move and thrill,
So keep I fair thro' faith and prayer
A virgin heart in work and will

When on my goodly charger borne
Thro' dreaming towns I go 50
The cock crows ere the Christmas morn,
The streets are dumb with snow
The tempest crackles on the leads,
And, ringing, springs from brand and mail,
But o'er the dark a glory spreads, 55
And gilds the driving hail
I leave the plain, I climb the height,
No branchy thicket shelter yields,
But blessed forms in whistling storms
Fly o'er waste fens and windy fields 60

When down the stormy crescent goes, 25
A light before me swims,
Between dark stems the forest glows,
I hear a noise of hymns
Then by some secret shrine I ride,
I hear a voice, but none are there, 30
The stalls are void, the doors are wide,
The tapers burning fair
Fair gleams the snowy altar cloth,
The silver vessels sparkle clean,
The shrill bell rings, the censer swings, 35
And solemn chaunts resound between

A maiden knight—to me is given
Such hope, I know not fear,
I yearn to breathe the airs of heaven
That often meet me here
I muse on joy that will not cease, 65
Pure spaces clothed in living beams,
Pure lilies of eternal peace,
Whose odors haunt my dreams,
And, stricken by an angel's hand,
This mortal armor that I wear, 70
This weight and size, this heart and eyes,
Are touch'd, are turn'd to finest air

Sometimes on lonely mountain meres
I find a magic bark,
I leap on board no helmsman steers
I float till all is dark 40
A gentle sound, an awful light!
Three angels bear the holy Grail
With folded feet, in stoles of white,
On sleeping wings they sail
Ah, blessed vision! blood of God! 45
My spirit beats her mortal bars,

The clouds are broken in the sky,
And thro' the mountain walls
A rolling organ-harmony 75
Swells up, and shakes and falls
Then move the trees, the copses nod,
Wings flutter, voices hover clear
"O just and faithful knight of God!
Ride on! the prize is near" 80
So pass I hostel, hall, and grange,
By bridge and ford, by park and pale,
All arm'd I ride, whate'er betide,
Until I find the holy Grail

MORTE D'ARTHUR

So all day long the noise of battle roll'd
Among the mountains by the winter sea,
Until King Arthur's table, man by man,
Had fall'n in Lyonesse about their Lord,
King Arthur then, because his wound was deep, 5
The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights

And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
 A broken chancel with a broken cross,
 That stood on a dark strait of barren land 10
 On one side lay the Ocean, and on one
 Lay a great water, and the moon was full
 Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere
 "The sequel of today unsolders all
 The goodliest fellowship of famous knights 15
 Whereof this world holds record Such a sleep
 They sleep—the men I loved I think that we
 Shall never more, at any future time,
 Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,
 Walking about the gardens and the halls 20
 Of Camelot, as in the days that were
 I perish by this people which I made,—
 Tho' Merlin sware that I should come again
 To rule once more—but let what will be, be,
 I am so deeply smitten thro' the helm 25
 That without help I cannot last till morn
 Thou therefore take my brand Excalibur,
 Which was my pride for thou rememberest how
 In those old days, one summer noon, an arm
 Rose up from out the bosom of the lake, 30
 Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
 Holding the sword—and how I row'd across
 And took it, and have worn it, like a king
 And, wheresoever I am sung or told
 In aftertime, this also shall be known 35
 But now delay not take Excalibur,
 And fling him far into the middle mere
 Watch what thou seest, and lightly bring me word"
 To him replied the bold Sir Bedivere
 "It is not meet, Sir King, to leave thee thus, 40
 Aidless, alone, and smitten thro' the helm
 A little thing may harm a wounded man
 Yet I thy hest will all perform at full,
 Watch what I see, and lightly bring thee word"
 So saying, from the ruin'd shrine he stept 45
 And in the moon athwart the place of tombs,
 Where lay the mighty bones of ancient men,
 Old knights, and over them the sea wind sang
 Shrill, chill, with flakes of foam He, stepping down
 By zig zag paths, and juts of pointed rock, 50
 Came on the shining levels of the lake
 There drew he forth the brand Excalibur,
 And o'er him, drawing it, the winter moon,
 Brightening the skirts of a long cloud, ran forth
 And sparkled keen with frost against the hilt 55
 For all the haft twinkled with diamond sparks,
 Myriads of topaz lights, and jacinth work
 Of subtlest jewelry He gazed so long

That both his eyes were dazzled, as he stood,
 This way and that dividing the swift mind 60
 In act to throw but at the last it seem'd
 Better to leave Excalibur conceal'd
 There in the many knotted waterflags,
 That whistled stiff and dry about the marge
 So strode he back slow to the wounded King 65
 Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere
 "Hast thou perform'd my mission which I gave?
 What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?"
 And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere
 "I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
 And the wild water lapping on the crag " 70
 To whom replied King Arthur, faint and pale
 "Thou hast betray'd thy nature and thy name,
 Not rendering true answer, as beseem'd
 Thy fealty, nor like a noble knight 75
 For surer sign had follow'd, either hand,
 Or voice, or else a motion of the mere
 This is a shameful thing for men to lie
 Yet now, I charge thee, quickly go again
 As thou art lief and dear, and do the thing 80
 I bade thee, watch, and lightly bring me word "
 Then went Sir Bedivere the second time
 Across the ridge, and paced beside the mere,
 Counting the dewy pebbles, fix'd in thought,
 But when he saw the wonder of the hilt, 85
 How curiously and strangely chased, he smote
 His palms together, and he cried aloud,
 "And if indeed I cast the brand away,
 Surely a precious thing, one worthy note,
 Should thus be lost for ever from the earth, 90
 Which might have pleased the eyes of many men
 What good should follow this, if this were done?
 What harm, undone? deep harm to disobey,
 Seeing obedience is the bond of rule
 Were it well to obey then, if a king demand 95
 An act unprofitable, against himself?
 The King is sick, and knows not what he does
 What record, or what relic of my lord
 Should be to aftertime, but empty breath
 And rumors of a doubt? but were this kept, 100
 Stored in some treasure-house of mighty kings,
 Some one might show it at a joust of arms,
 Saying, 'King Arthur's sword, Excalibur,
 Wrought by the lonely maiden of the Lake
 Nine years she wrought it, sitting in the deeps 105
 Upon the hidden bases of the hills'
 So might some old man speak in the aftertime
 To all the people, winning reverence
 But now much honor and much fame were lost "

- So spake he, clouded with his own conceit, 110
 And hid Excalibur the second time,
 And so strode back slow to the wounded King
 Then spoke King Arthur, breathing heavily
 "What is it thou hast seen? or what hast heard?"
 And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere 115
 "I heard the water lapping on the crag,
 And the long ripple washing in the reeds "
 To whom replied King Arthur, much in wrath
 "Ah, miserable and unkind, untrue,
 Unknightly, traitor hearted! Woe is me!
 Authority forgets a dying king,
 Laid widow'd of the power in his eye
 That bow'd the will I see thee what thou art,
 For thou, the latest left of all my knights,
 In whom should meet the offices of all, 125
 Thou wouldst betray me for the precious hilt,
 Either from lust of gold, or like a girl
 Valuing the giddy pleasure of the eyes
 Yet, for a man may fail in duty twice,
 And the third time may prosper, get thee hence 130
 But, if thou spare to fling Excalibur,
 I will arise and slay thee with my hands "
 Then quickly rose Sir Bedivere, and ran,
 And, leaping down the ridges high, plunged
 Among the bulrush beds, and clutch'd the sword, 135
 And strongly wheel'd and threw it The great brand
 Made lightnings in the splendor of the moon,
 And flashing round and round, and whirl'd in an arch,
 Shot like a streamer of the northern morn,
 Seen where the moving isles of winter shock 140
 By night, with noises of the northern sea
 So flash'd and fell the brand Excalibur
 But ere he dipt the surface, rose an arm
 Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
 And caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him 145
 Three times, and drew him under in the mere
 And lightly went the other to the King
 Then spoke King Arthur, drawing thicker breath
 "Now see I by thine eyes that this is done
 Speak out what is it thou hast heard, or seen?" 150
 And answer made the bold Sir Bedivere
 "Sir King, I closed mine eyelids, lest the gems
 Should blind my purpose, for I never saw,
 Nor shall see, here or elsewhere, till I die,
 Not tho' I live three lives of mortal men, 155
 So great a miracle as yonder hilt
 Then with both hands I flung him, wheeling him,
 But when I look'd again, behold an arm,
 Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
 That caught him by the hilt, and brandish'd him 160

Three times, and drew him under in the mere'

And answer made King Arthur, breathing hard
 "My end draws nigh, 'tis time that I were gone
 Make broad thy shoulders to receive my weight,
 And bear me to the margin, yet I fear
 My wound hath taken cold, and I shall die"

165

So saying, from the pavement he half rose,
 Slowly, with pain, reclining on his arm,
 And looking wistfully with wide blue eyes
 As in a picture Him Sir Bedivere

170

Remorsefully regarded thro' his tears,
 And would have spoken, but he found not words,
 Then took with care, and kneeling on one knee,
 O'er both his shoulders drew the languid hands,
 And rising bore him thro' the place of tombs

175

But, as he walk'd, King Arthur panted hard,
 Like one that feels a nightmare on his bed
 When all the house is mute So sigh'd the King,
 Muttering and murmuring at his ear, "Quick, quick!
 I fear it is too late, and I shall die"

180

But the other swiftly strode from ridge to ridge,
 Clothed with his breath, and looking, as he walk'd,
 Larger than human on the frozen hills

He heard the deep behind him, and a cry
 Before His own thought drove him like a goad
 Dry clash'd his harness in the icy caves

185

And barren chasms, and all to left and right
 The bare black cliff clang'd round him, as he based
 His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang
 Sharp smitten with the dint of armed heels—
 And on a sudden, lo! the level lake,

190

And the long glories of the winter moon

Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,
 Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,
 Beneath them, and descending they were ware
 That all the decks were dense with stately forms
 Black stoled, black hooded, like a dream—by these
 Three Queens with crowns of gold—and from them rose
 A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,
 And, as it were one voice, an agony
 Of lamentation, like a wind, that shrills

195

200

All night in a waste land, where no one comes,
 Or hath come, since the making of the world

Then murmur'd Arthur, "Place me in the barge,"
 And to the barge they came There those three Queens
 Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept
 But she, that rose the tallest of them all

205

And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,
 And loosed the shatter'd casque, and chafed his hands,
 And call'd him by his name, complaining loud,
 And dropping bitter tears against his brow

210

Striped with dark blood for all his face was white
 And colorless, and like the wither'd moon
 Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east,
 And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops 215
 Of onset, and the light and lustrous curls—
 That made his forehead like a rising sun
 High from the dais throne—were parch'd with dust,
 Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,
 Mix'd with the knightly growth that fringed his lips 220
 So like a shatter'd column lay the King,
 Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,
 From spur to plume a star of tournament,
 Shot thro' the lists at Camelot, and charged
 Before the eyes of ladies and of kings 225
 Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere,
 "Ah! my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go?
 Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes?
 For now I see the true old times are dead,
 When every morning brought a noble chance, 230
 And every chance brought out a noble knight
 Such times have been not since the light that led
 The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh
 But now the whole ROUND TABLE is dissolved
 Which was an image of the mighty world, 235
 And I, the last, go forth companionless,
 And the days darken round me, and the years,
 Among new men, strange faces, other minds"
 And slowly answered Arthur from the barge
 "The old order changeth, yielding place to new, 240
 And God fulfills Himself in many ways,
 Lest one good custom should corrupt the world
 Comfort thyself what comfort is in me?
 I have lived my life, and that which I have done
 May He within Himself make pure! but thou, 245
 If thou shouldst never see my face again,
 Pray for my soul More things are wrought by prayer
 Than this world dreams of Wherefore, let thy voice
 Rise like a fountain for me night and day
 For what are men better than sheep or goats 250
 That nourish a blind life within the brain,
 If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
 Both for themselves and those who call them 'friend'
 For so the whole round earth is every way
 Bound by gold chains about the feet of God 255
 But now farewell I am going a long way
 With these thou seest—if indeed I go—
 (For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)
 To the island valley of Avilion,
 Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow, 260
 Nor ever wind blows loudly, but it lies
 Deep meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard lawns

And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound "

So said he, and the barge with oar and sail
Moved from the brink, like some full breasted swan
That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,
Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood
With swarthy webs Long stood Sir Bedivere
Revolving many memories, till the hull
Look'd one black dot against the verge of dawn,
And on the mere the wailing died away

265

270

MERLIN AND THE GLEAM

O young Mariner,
You from the haven
Under the sea cliff,
You that are watching
The gray Magician
With eyes of wonder,
I am Merlin,
And *I am dying,*
I am Merlin
Who follow The Gleam
Mighty the Wizard
Who found me at sunrise
Sleeping, and woke me
And learned me Magic!
Great the Master,
And sweet the Magic,
When over the valley,
In early summers,
Over the mountain,
On human faces,
And all around me,
Moving to melody,
Floated The Gleam
Once at the croak of a Raven who
crost it,
A barbarous people,
Blind to the magic,
And deaf to the melody,
Snarled at and cursed me
A demon vext me,
The light retreated,
The landskip darkened,
The melody deadened,
The Master whispered,
"Follow The Gleam "
Then to the melody,
Over a wilderness

5

10

15

20

25

30

35

Gliding, and glancing at
Elf of the woodland,
Gnome of the cavern,
Griffin and Giant,
And dancing of Fairies
In desolate hollows,
And wraiths of the mountain,
And rolling of dragons
By warble of water,
Or cataract music
Of falling torrents,
Flitted The Gleam
Down from the mountain
And over the level,
And streaming and shining on
Silent river,
Silvery willow,
Pasture and plowland,
Innocent maidens,
Garrulous children,
Homestead and harvest,
Reaper and gleaner,
And rough ruddy faces
Of lowly labor,
Slided The Gleam—
Then, with a melody
Stronger and stately,
Led me at length
To the city and palace
Of Arthur the king,
Touched at the golden
Cross of the churches,
Flashed on the Tournament,
Flickered and bickered
From helmet to helmet,
And last on the forehead
Of Arthur the blameless
Rested The Gleam
Clouds and darkness

40

45

50

55

60

65

70

75

Closed upon Camelot, Arthur had vanished I knew not whither, The king who loved me, And cannot die, For out of the darkness Silent and slowly The Gleam, that had waned to a wintry glimmer On icy fallow And faded forest, Drew to the valley Named of the shadow, And slowly brightening Out of the glimmer, And slowly moving again to a melody Yearningly tender, Fell on the shadow, No longer a shadow, But clothed with The Gleam And broader and brighter The Gleam flying onward, Wed to the melody, Sang through the world, And slower and fainter, Old and weary, But eager to follow, I saw, whenever	80 85 90 95 100	In passing it glanced upon Hamlet or city, That under the Crosses The dead man's garden, The mortal hillock, Would break into blossom And so to the land's Last limit I came— And can no longer, But die rejoicing, For through the Magic Of Him the Mighty, Who taught me in childhood, There on the border Of boundless Ocean, And all but in Heaven Hovers The Gleam Not of the sunlight, Not of the moonlight, Not of the starlight! O young Mariner, Down to the haven, Call your companions, Launch your vessel, And crowd your canvas, And, ere it vanishes Over the margin, After it, follow it, Follow The Gleam	105 110 115 120 125 130
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"The Palace of Art" is, obviously, an allegorical poem. It is the allegory of a beauty-loving soul which builds itself "a lordly pleasure-house," but discovers that beauty and solitude in themselves are insufficient. The ivory tower is an ineffective escape, the world invades it. "The riddle of the painful earth" flashes through the soul, demanding a solution, phantasms and nightmares compel the soul to leave her intellectual throne, only to return when her "guilt" has been "purged." This purging must take the form of a new social feeling, something beyond itself, for the soul may "return with *others*." The suggestion is clear. Beauty, to justify itself, must be a thing of action, it must turn from passive contemplation to active good.

THE PALACE OF ART

I built my soul a lordly pleasure house, Wherein at ease for aye to dwell I said, "O Soul, make merry and ca rouse, Dear soul, for all is well"	A huge crag-platform, smooth as burnished brass, I chose The rangèd ramparts bright From level meadow bases of deep grass Suddenly scaled the light	5
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Thereon I built it firm Of ledge or shelf
 The rock rose clear, or winding stair 10
 My soul would live alone unto herself
 In her high palace there

And "While the world runs round and
 round," I said,
 "Reign thou apart, a quiet king,
 Still as, while Saturn whirls, his steadfast
 shade 15
 Sleeps on his luminous ring"

To which my soul made answer readily
 "Trust me, in bliss I shall abide
 In this great mansion, that is built for me,
 So royal rich and wide" 20

Four courts I made, East, West and South
 and North,
 In each a squared lawn, wherefrom
 The golden gorge of dragons spouted forth
 A flood of fountain foam

And round the cool green courts there
 ran a row 25
 Of cloisters, branched like mighty woods,
 Echoing all night to that sonorous flow
 Of spouted fountain floods

And round the roofs a gilded gallery
 That lent broad verge to distant lands, 30
 Far as the wild swan wings, to where the sky
 Dipt down to sea and sands

From those four jets four currents in one
 swell
 Across the mountain streamed below
 In misty folds, that floating as they fell 35
 Lit up a torrent bow

And high on every peak a statue seemed
 To hang on tiptoe, tossing up
 A cloud of incense of all odor steamed
 From out a golden cup 40

So that she thought, "And who shall gaze
 upon
 My palace with unblinded eyes,
 While this great bow will waver in the sun,
 And that sweet incense rise?" 44

For that sweet incense rose and never failed,
 And, while day sank or mounted higher,

The light aerial gallery, golden-railed,
 Burnt like a fringe of fire

Likewise the deep set windows, stained and
 traced, 49
 Would seem slow flaming crimson fires
 From shadowed grotts of arches interlaced,
 And upt with frost like spires

Full of long sounding corridors it was,
 That over vaulted grateful gloom,
 Through which the livelong day my soul did
 pass, 55
 Well pleased, from room to room

Full of great rooms and small the palace
 stood,
 All various, each a perfect whole
 From living Nature, fit for every mood
 And change of my still soul 60

For some were hung with arras green and
 blue,
 Showing a gaudy summer morn,
 Where with puffed cheek the belted hunter
 blew
 His wreathed bugle-horn

One seemed all dark and red—a tract of
 sand, 65
 And some one pacing there alone,
 Who paced for ever in a glimmering land,
 Lit with a low large moon

One showed an iron coast and angry waves
 You seemed to hear them climb and fall
 And roar rock thwarted under bellowing
 caves,
 Beneath the windy wall 72

And one, a full fed river winding slow
 By herds upon an endless plain,
 The ragged rims of thunder brooding low,
 With shadow-streaks of rain 76

And one, the reapers at their sultry toil
 In front they bound the sheaves Behind
 Were realms of upland, prodigal in oil,
 And hoary to the wind 80

And one a foreground black with stones and
 slags,
 Beyond, a line of heights, and higher

All barred with long white cloud the scornful
crag,
And highest, snow and fire

And one, an English home—gray twilight
poured 85

On dewy pastures, dewy trees,
Softer than sleep—all things in order stored,
A haunt of ancient Peace

Nor these alone, but every landscape fair,
As fit for every mood of mind, 90
Or gay, or grave, or sweet, or stern, was
there
Not less than truth designed

Or the maid mother¹ by a crucifix,
In tracts of pasture sunny warm,
Beneath branch work of costly sardonyx 95
Sat smiling, babe in arm

Or in a clear walled city on the sea,
Near gilded organ pipes, her hair
Wound with white roses, slept St Cecily,²
An angel looked at her 100

Or thronging all one porch of Paradise
A group of Hours bowed to see
The dying Islamite, with hands and eyes
That said, We wait for thee

Or mythic Uther's deeply wounded son³
In some fair space of sloping greens 106
Lay, dozing in the vale of Avalon,
And watched by weeping queens

Or hollowing one hand against his ear,
To list a foot fall, ere he saw 110
The wood nymph, stayed the Ausonian
king⁴ to hear
Of wisdom and of law

Or over hills with peaky tops engrailed,
And many a tract of palm and rice,
The throne of Indian Cama⁵ slowly sailed
A summer fanned with spice 116

¹ the Virgin Mary

² or Cecilia, patroness of music

³ King Arthur, supposedly buried at Avalon

⁴ Numa Pompilius, second legendary king of Rome, who was accustomed to meet the wood nymph, Egeria, in a grove

Or sweet Europa's mantle blew unclasped,
From off her shoulder backward borne
From one hand drooped a crocus one hand
grasped
The mild bull's golden horn⁶ 120

Or else flushed Ganymede,⁷ his rosy thigh
Half-buried in the Eagle's down,
Sole as a flying star shot through the sky
Above the pillared town

Nor these alone but every legend fair 125
Which the supreme Caucasian mind
Carved out of Nature for itself, was there,
Not less than life, designed

Then in the towers I placed great bells that
swung, 129
Moved of themselves, with silver sound,
And with choice paintings of wise men I
hung
The royal dais round

For there was Milton like a seraph strong,
Beside him Shakespeare bland and mild,
And there the world worn Dante grasped his
song, 135
And somewhat grimly smiled

And there the Ionian father⁸ of the rest,
A million wrinkles carved his skin,
A hundred winters snowed upon his breast,
From cheek and throat and chin 140

Above, the fair hall ceiling stately-set
Many an arch high up did lift,
And angels rising and descending met
With interchange of gift

Below was all mosaic choicely planned 145
With cycles of the human tale
Of this wide world, the times of every land
So wrought, they will not fail

The people here, a beast of burden slow,
Toiled onward, pricked with goads and
stings, 150

⁵ the Indian god of love

⁶ Zeus, charmed by the beauty of Europa, assumed the form of a bull and carried her away

⁷ cup bearer to Zeus, to whom he had been carried by an eagle

⁸ Homer

Here played, a tiger, rolling to and fro
The heads and crowns of kings,

Here rose, an athlete, strong to break or bind
All force in bonds that might endure,
And here once more like some sick man de-
clined, 155
And trusted any cure

But over these she trod and those great bells
Began to chime She took her throne
She sat betwixt the shining Oriels,
To sing her songs alone 160

And through the topmost Oriels' colored
flame
Two godlike faces gazed below,
Plato the wise, and large browed Verulam,¹
The first of those who know

And all those names, that in their motion
were
Full welling fountain heads of change, 166
Betwixt the slender shafts were blazoned fair
In diverse raiment strange

Through which the lights, rose, amber, em-
erald, blue,
Flushed in her temples and her eyes, 170
And from her lips, as morn from Memnon,²
drew
Rivers of melodies

No nightingale delighteth to prolong
Her low preamble all alone,
More than my soul to hear her echoed song
Throb through the ribbed stone, 176

Singing and murmuring in her feastful
mirth,
Joying to feel herself alive,
Lord over Nature, Lord of the visible earth,
Lord of the senses five, 180

Communing with herself "All these are
mine,
And let the world have peace or wars,

"Tis one to me" She—when young night
divine
Crowned dying day with stars,

Making sweet close of his delicious toils—
Lit light in wreaths and anadems, 186
And pure quintessences of precious oils
In hollowed moons of gems,

To mimic heaven, and clapt her hands and
cried,
"I marvel if my still delight 190
In this great house so royal rich, and wide,
Be flattered to the height

"O all things fair to sate my various eyes!
O shapes and hues that please me well!
O silent faces of the Great and Wise, 195
My Gods, with whom I dwell!

"O God like isolation which art mine,
I can but count thee perfect gain,
What time I watch the darkening droves of
swine
That range on yonder plain 200

"In filthy sloughs they roll a prurient skin,
They graze and wallow, breed and sleep,
And oft some brainless devil enters in,
And drives them to the deep"

Then of the moral instinct would she prate
And of the rising from the dead, 206
As hers by right of full accomplished Fate,
And at the last she said

"I take possession of man's mind and deed
I care not what the sects may brawl 210
I sit as God holding no form of creed,
But contemplating all"

Full oft the riddle of the painful earth
Flashed through her as she sat alone,
Yet not the less held she her solemn mirth,
And intellectual throne 216

And so she throve and prospered so three
years
She prospered on the fourth she fell,
Like Herod, when the shout was in his ears,
Struck through with pangs of hell³ 220

¹ Francis Bacon, Baron Verulam (1561-1626)

² From his statue at Thebes the first rays of the
sun are said to have brought forth music

³ See Acts 12 21 23

Lest she should fail and perish utterly,
 God, before whom ever lie bare
 The abysmal deeps of Personality,
 Plagued her with sore despair

When she would think, where'er she turned
 her sight 225

The airy hand confusion wrought,
 Wrote, "Mene, mene,"¹ and divided quite
 The kingdom of her thought

Deep dread and loathing of her solitude 229
 Fell on her, from which mood was born
 Scorn of herself, again, from out that mood
 Laughter at her self scorn

"What! is not this my place of strength," she
 said,
 "My spacious mansion built for me,
 Whereof the strong foundation stones were
 laid 235
 Since my first memory?"

But in dark corners of her palace stood
 Uncertain shapes, and unawares
 On white eyed phantasms weeping tears of
 blood,
 And horrible nightmares, 240

And hollow shades, enclosing hearts of flame,
 And, with dim fretted foreheads all,
 On corpses three months old at noon she
 came,
 That stood against the wall

A spot of dull stagnation, without light 245
 Or power of movement, seemed my soul,
 'Mid onward sloping motions infinite
 Making for one sure goal

A still salt pool, locked in with bars of sand,
 Left on the shore, that hears all night 250
 The plunging seas draw backward from the
 land
 Their moon led waters white

A star that with the choral starry dance
 Joined not, but stood, and standing saw
 The hollow orb of moving Circumstance
 Rolled round by one fixed law 256

¹ See Daniel 5 25, 26

Back on herself her serpent pride had curled
 "No voice," she shrieked in that lone hall,
 "No voice breaks through the stillness of this
 world
 One deep, deep silence all!" 260

She, moldering with the dull earth's molder-
 ing sod,
 Inwrought tenfold in slothful shame,
 Lay there exiled from eternal God,
 Lost to her place and name,

And death and life she hated equally, 265
 And nothing saw, for her despair,
 But dreadful time, dreadful eternity,
 No comfort anywhere,

Remaining utterly confused with fears,
 And ever worse with growing time, 270
 And ever unrelieved by dismal tears,
 And all alone in crime

Shut up as in a crumbling tomb, girt round
 With blackness as a solid wall,
 Far off she seemed to hear the dully sound
 Of human footsteps fall 276

As in strange lands a traveler walking slow,
 In doubt and great perplexity,
 A little before moon rise hears the low
 Moan of an unknown sea, 280

And knows not if it be thunder, or a sound
 Of rocks thrown down, or one deep cry
 Of great wild beasts, then thinketh, "I have
 found
 A new land, but I die"

She howled aloud, "I am on fire within 285
 There comes no murmur of reply
 What is it that will take away my sin,
 And save me lest I die?"

So when four years were wholly finished,
 She threw her royal robes away 290
 "Make me a cottage in the vale," she said,
 "Where I may mourn and pray

"Yet pull not down my palace towers, that
 are
 So lightly, beautifully built
 Perchance I may return with others there
 When I have purged my guilt" 296

Even those who question Tennyson's central philosophy, his ability to think or feel deeply, and his power to create character, cannot deny his gift of story-telling "The Revenge" is one of Tennyson's most stirring narratives Richard Hakluyt (1553-1616), termed "the Homer of our heroic age," recorded, among his famous "Voyages," the story of Lord Thomas Howard, who with six English ships was sent to intercept a Spanish treasure-fleet in August, 1591 Sir Richard Grenville, on board the *Revenge*, was second in command of the expedition Howard learned of the proximity of fifty three Spanish vessels (the consorts of the treasure-fleet), and having only six ships himself, gave orders to stand out to sea Grenville was in some way delayed and cut off For fifteen hours (and with only one hundred and fifty men) he tried to keep off the Spanish men-of-war with their five thousand men He was badly wounded, his crew surrendered, and he was taken aboard a Spanish flagship, where he died a few days later

The shifting rhythms eloquently carry out the excitement of the combat The entire poem is propelled by its vividly rhymed measures—a device which is the more interesting when compared to the unrhymed long-rolling lines describing an old sea-fight in Walt Whitman's "Song of Myself"

THE REVENGE

At Flores in the Azores Sir Richard Grenville lay,
And a pinnacle like a flutter'd bird, came flying from far away
"Spanish ships of war at sea! we have sighted fifty three!"
Then sware Lord Thomas Howard "Fore God I am no coward,
But I cannot meet them here, for my ships are out of gear, 5
And the half my men are sick I must fly, but follow quick
We are six ships of the line, can we fight with fifty three?"

Then spake Sir Richard Grenville "I know you are no coward,
You fly them for a moment to fight with them again
But I've ninety men and more that are lying sick ashore 10
I should count myself the coward if I left them, my Lord Howard,
To these Inquisition dogs and the devildoms of Spain"

So Lord Howard past away with five ships of war that day,
Till he melted like a cloud in the silent summer heaven,
But Sir Richard bore in hand all his sick men from the land 15
Very carefully and slow,
Men of Bideford in Devon,
And we laid them on the ballast down below,
For we brought them all aboard,
And they blest him in their pain, that they were not left to Spain, 20
To the thumbscrew and the stake, for the glory of the Lord

He had only a hundred seamen to work the ship and to fight,
And he sailed away from Flores till the Spaniard came in sight,
With his huge sea castles heaving upon the weather bow
"Shall we fight or shall we fly?" 25

Good Sir Richard, tell us now,
 For to fight is but to die!
 There'll be little of us left by the time this sun be set "
 And Sir Richard said again "We be all good English men
 Let us bang these dogs of Seville, the children of the devil,
 For I never turn'd my back upon Don or devil yet "

30

Sir Richard spoke and he laugh'd, and we roar'd a hurrah, and so
 The little *Revenge* ran on sheer into the heart of the foe,
 With her hundred fighters on deck, and her ninety sick below,
 For half of their fleet to the right and half to the left were seen,
 And the little *Revenge* ran on thro' the long sea lane between

35

Thousands of their soldiers look'd down from their decks and
 laugh'd,
 Thousands of their seamen made mock at the mad little craft
 Running on and on, till delay'd
 By their mountain like *San Philip* that, of fifteen hundred tons,
 And up shadowing high above us with her yawning tiers of guns,
 Took the breath from our sails, and we stay'd

40

And while now the great *San Philip* hung above us like a cloud
 Whence the thunderbolt will fall
 Long and loud,
 Four galleons drew away
 From the Spanish fleet that day,
 And two upon the larboard and two upon the starboard lay,
 And the battle thunder broke from them all

45

But anon the great *San Philip*, she bethought herself and went
 Having that within her womb that had left her ill content,
 And the rest they came aboard us, and they fought us hand to
 hand,
 For a dozen times they came with their pikes and musqueteers,
 And a dozen times we shook 'em off as a dog that shakes his ears
 When he leaps from the water to the land

50

55

And the sun went down, and the stars came out far over the sum-
 mer sea,
 But never a moment ceased the fight of the one and the fifty-three
 Ship after ship, the whole night long, their high-built galleons
 came,
 Ship after ship, the whole night long, with her battle thunder and
 flame,
 Ship after ship, the whole night long, drew back with her dead
 and her shame
 For some were sunk and many were shatter'd, and so could fight
 us no more—
 God of battles, was ever a battle like this in the world before?

60

For he said, "Fight on! fight on!"
 Tho' his vessel was all but a wreck,

- And it chanced that, when half of the short summer night was
gone,
With a grisly wound to be drest he had left the deck,
But a bullet struck him that was dressing it suddenly dead,
And himself he was wounded again in the side and the head,
And he said, "Fight on! fight on!" 65
- And the night went down, and the sun smiled out far over the
summer sea,
And the Spanish fleet with broken sides lay round us all in a ring,
But they dared not touch us again, for they fear'd that we still
could sting,
So they watch'd what the end would be
And we had not fought them in vain,
But in perilous plight were we,
Seeing forty of our poor hundred were slain,
And half of the rest of us maim'd for life 70
In the crash of the cannonades and the desperate strife,
And the sick men down in the hold were most of them stark and
cold,
And the pikes were all broken or bent, and the powder was all
of it spent, 80
And the masts and the rigging were lying over the side,
But Sir Richard cried in his English pride,
"We have fought such a fight for a day and a night
As may never be fought again!
We have won great glory, my men!
And a day less or more 85
At sea or ashore,
We die—does it matter when?
Sink me the ship, Master Gunner—sink her, split her in twain!
Fall into the hands of God, not into the hands of Spain!" 90
- And the gunner said, "Aye, aye," but the seamen made reply
"We have children, we have wives,
And the Lord hath spared our lives
We will make the Spaniard promise, if we yield, to let us go,
We shall live to fight again and to strike another blow" 95
And the lion there lay dying, and they yielded to the foe
- And the stately Spanish men to their flagship bore him then,
Where they laid him by the mast, old Sir Richard caught at last,
And they praised him to his face with their courtly foreign grace,
But he rose upon their decks, and he cried 100
"I have fought for Queen and Faith like a valiant man and true,
I have only done my duty as a man is bound to do
With a joyful spirit I Sir Richard Grenville die!"
And he fell upon their decks, and he died
- And they stared at the dead that had been so valiant and true, 105
And had holden the power and glory of Spain so cheap

That he dared her with one little ship and his English few,
 Was he devil or man? He was devil for aught they knew,
 But they sank his body with honor down into the deep,
 And they mann'd the *Revenge* with a swarthier alien crew, 110
 And away she sail'd with her loss and long'd for her own,
 When a wind from the lands they had ruin'd awoke from sleep,
 And the water began to heave and the weather to moan,
 And or ever that evening ended a great gale blew,
 And a wave like the wave that is raised by an earthquake grew, 115
 Till it smote on their hulls and their sails and their masts and
 their flags,
 And the whole sea plunged and fell on the shot shatter'd navy of
 Spain,
 And the little *Revenge* herself went down by the island crags
 To be lost evermore in the main

No consideration of Tennyson could be complete without an examination of his diction. It is simple and, at the same time, exact. His phrases are never "singular," nor do they startle the reader by any particular novelty; they are poised and balanced with an almost perfect nicety. It is true that he sometimes errs by being too determinedly picturesque and that he is not free of affectations. Even the famous line

Now lies the Earth all Danae to the stars

is a sentimentalizing of the image. But for the most part his language is decorative without being too lush—in which he was far superior to Swinburne—and his musical effects are almost always flawless. Alliteration—that device which intoxicated Swinburne so that his poetry becomes almost unintelligible—in Tennyson's hands became a supple and lovely thing. Nothing could be more subtle than the lines which sound the very drowsiness of a summer day in the half-concealed l's, v's and m's of

Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the lawn,
 The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
 And murmuring of innumerable bees

It is hard to overestimate Tennyson as a craftsman. One may object to the ethical content of "In Memoriam," but only a tone-deaf reader can fail to appreciate the grace and precision of such a stanza as

Calm is the morn without a sound,
 Calm as to suit a calmer grief,
 And only thro' the faded leaf
 The chestnut pattering to the ground

The simple fact is lifted by the exactness of the chestnut "pattering" to the ground; the entire image of calm morning is enriched by a music which is dignified but never dull.

IN MEMORIAM A H H

(Selections)

PROEM

Strong Son of God, immortal Love,
Whom we, that have not seen thy face,
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,
Believing where we cannot prove,

Thine are these orbs of light and shade, 5
Thou madest Life in man and brute,
Thou madest Death, and lo, thy foot
Is on the skull which thou hast made

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust,
Thou madest man, he knows not why, 10
He thinks he was not made to die,
And thou hast made him, thou art just

Thou seemest human and divine,
The highest, holiest manhood, thou
Our wills are ours, we know not how, 15
Our wills are ours, to make them thine

Our little systems have their day,
They have their day and cease to be,
They are but broken lights of thee, 20
And thou, O Lord, art more than they

We have but faith we cannot know,
For knowledge is of things we see,
And yet we trust it comes from thee,
A beam in darkness let it grow

Let knowledge grow from more to more, 25
But more of reverence in us dwell,
That mind and soul, according well,
May make one music as before,

But vaster We are fools and slight,
We mock thee when we do not fear 30
But help thy foolish ones to bear,
Help thy vain worlds to bear thy light

Forgive w' at seemed my sin in me,
What seemed my worth since I began, 35
For merit lives from man to man,
And not from man, O Lord, to thee

Forgive my grief for one removed,
Thy creature, whom I found so fair
I trust he lives in thee, and there
I find him worthier to be loved 40

Forgive these wild and wandering cries,
Confusions of a wasted youth,
Forgive them where they fail in truth,
And in thy wisdom make me wise

I
I held it truth, with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things

But who shall so forecast the years 5
And find in loss a gain to match?
Or reach a hand through time to catch
The far-off interest of tears?

Let Love clasp Grief lest both be drowned,
Let darkness keep her raven gloss 10
Ah, sweeter to be drunk with loss,
To dance with death, to beat the ground,

Than that the victor Hours should scorn
The long result of Love, and boast,
"Behold the man that loved and lost, 15
But all he was is overworn"

IX

Fair ship, that from the Italian shore
Sailest the placid ocean plains
With my lost Arthur's loved remains,
Spread thy full wings, and waft him o'er

So draw him home to those that mourn 5
In vain, a favorable speed
Ruffle thy mirrored mast, and lead
Through prosperous flood his holy urn

All night no ruder air perplex
Thy sliding keel, till Phosphor, bright 10
As our pure love, through early light
Shall glimmer on the dewy decks

Sphere all your lights around, above,
Sleep, gentle heavens, before the prow,

Sleep, gentle winds, as he sleeps now, 15
My friend, the brother of my love,

My Arthur, whom I shall not see
Till all my widowed race be run,
Dear as the mother to the son,
More than my brothers are to me 20

XI

Calm is the morn without a sound,
Calm as to suit a calmer grief,
And only thro' the faded leaf
The chestnut pattering to the ground

Calm and deep peace on this high wold, 5
And on these dewes that drench the furze,
And all the silvery gossamers
That twinkle into green and gold

Calm and still light on yon great plain 9
That sweeps with all its autumn bowers,
And crowded farms and lessening towers,
To mingle with the bounding main

Calm and deep peace in this wide air,
These leaves that redden to the fall,
And in my heart, if calm at all, 15
If any calm, a calm despair

Calm on the seas, and silver sleep,
And waves that sway themselves in rest,
And dead calm in that noble breast
Which heaves but with the heaving deep 20

LIV

Oh yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood,
That nothing walks with aimless feet, 5
That not one life shall be destroy'd,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete,
That not a worm is cloven in vain,
That not a moth with vain desire 10
Is shrivel'd in a fruitless fire,
Or but subserves another's gain

Behold, we know not anything,
I can but trust that good shall fall
At last—far off—at last, to all, 15
And every winter change to spring

So runs my dream but what am I?
An infant crying in the night
An infant crying for the light
And with no language but a cry 20

LXXXVI

Sweet after showers, ambrosial air,
That rollest from the gorgeous gloom
Of evening over brake and bloom
And meadow, slowly breathing bare

The round of space, and rapt below 5
Through all the dewy tasseled wood,
And shadowing down the hornèd flood
In ripples, fan my brows and blow

The fever from my cheek, and sigh
The full new life that feeds thy breath 10
Throughout my frame, till Doubt and
Death,
Ill brethren, let the fancy fly

From belt to belt of crimson seas
On leagues of odor streaming far,
To where in yonder orient star 15
A hundred spirits whisper "Peace"

CVI

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light
The year is dying in the night,
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die

Ring out the old, ring in the new, 5
Ring, happy bells, across the snow
The year is going, let him go,
Ring out the false, ring in the true

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more,
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind 10

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife,

Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws 15

Ring out the darkness of the land
Ring in the Christ that is to be

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times,
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,
But ring the fuller minstrel in 20

CXXXI

O living will that shalt endure
When all that seems shall suffer shock,
Rise in the spiritual rock,
Flow through our deeds and make them pure,

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite,
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good

That we may lift from out of dust 5
A voice as unto him that hears,
A cry above the conquered years
To one that with us works, and trust,

Ring out old shapes of foul disease,
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold,
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace 25

With faith that comes of self control,
The truths that never can be proved 10
Until we close with all we loved,
And all we flow from, soul in soul

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand, 30

"Locksley Hall" is one of the poems which combine Tennyson's musical gift with his response to the thought of his day. The hero of the poem prefigures the future, long before the days of the airplane he sees "the heavens fill with commerce," hears the skies "fill with shouting," while there rains "a ghastly dew from the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue." He sees the materialism of the age "staled by frequency, shrunk by usage," and knows that his world, for all its material triumphs, is no better than before.

LOCKSLEY HALL

Comrades, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis early morn
Leave me here, and when you want me, sound upon the bugle-horn

'Tis the place, and all around it, as of old, the curlews call,
Dreary gleams about the moorland flying over Locksley Hall,

Locksley Hall, that in the distance overlooks the sandy tracts, 5
And the hollow ocean ridges roaring into cataracts

Many a night from yonder ivied casement, ere I went to rest,
Did I look on great Orion sloping slowly to the West

Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising through the mellow shade,
Glitter like a swarm of fire flies tangled in a silver braid 10

Here about the beach I wandered, nourishing a youth sublime
With the fairy tales of science, and the long result of Time,

When the centuries behind me like a fruitful land reposed,
When I clung to all the present for the promise that it closed

When I dipt into the future far as human eye could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be —

15

In the Spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast,
In the Spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another crest,

In the Spring a livelier iris changes on the burnished dove,
In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love

20

Then her cheek was pale and thinner than should be for one so young
And her eyes on all my motions with a mute observance hung

And I said, "My cousin Amy, speak, and speak the truth to me,
Trust me, cousin, all the current of my being sets to thee "

On her pallid cheek and forehead came a color and a light,
As I have seen the rosy red flushing in the northern night

25

And she turned—her bosom shaken with a sudden storm of sighs—
All the spirit deeply dawning in the dark of hazel eyes—

Saying, "I have hid my feelings, fearing they should do me wrong",
Saying, "Dost thou love me, cousin?" weeping, "I have loved thee long "

30

Love took up the glass of Time, and turned it in his glowing hands,
Every moment, lightly shaken, ran itself in golden sands

Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords with might,
Smote the chord of Self, that, trembling, passed in music out of sight

Many a morning on the moorland did we hear the copses ring,
And her whisper thronged my pulses with the fullness of the Spring

35

Many an evening by the waters did we watch the stately ships,
And our spirits rushed together at the touching of the lips

O my cousin, shallow hearted! O my Amy, mine no more!
O the dreary, dreary moorland! O the barren, barren shore!

40

Falser than all fancy fathoms, falser than all songs have sung,
Puppet to a father's threat, and servile to a shrewish tongue!

Is it well to wish thee happy?—having known me—to decline
On a range of lower feelings and a narrower heart than mine!

Yet it shall be thou shalt lower to his level day by day,
What is fine within thee growing coarse to sympathize with clay

45

As the husband is, the wife is thou art mated with a clown,
And the grossness of his nature will have weight to drag thee down

He will hold thee, when his passion shall have spent its novel force,
Something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse 50

What is this? his eyes are heavy think not they are glazed with wine
Go to him it is thy duty kiss him take his hand in thine

It may be my lord is weary, that his brain is overwrought
Soothe him with thy finer fancies, touch him with thy lighter thought

He will answer to the purpose, easy things to understand—
Better thou wert dead before me, though I slew thee with my hand! 55

Better thou and I were lying, hidden from the heart's disgrace,
Rolled in one another's arms, and silent in a last embrace

Cursèd be the social wants that sin against the strength of youth!
Cursèd be the social lies that warp us from the living truth! 60

Cursèd be the sickly forms that err from honest Nature's rule!
Cursèd be the gold that gilds the straitened forehead of the fool!

Well—'tis well that I should bluster!—Hadst thou less unworthy proved—
Would to God—for I had loved thee more than ever wife was loved

Am I mad, that I should cherish that which bears but bitter fruit?
I will pluck it from my bosom, though my heart be at the root 65

Never, though my mortal summers to such length of years should come
As the many wintered crow that leads the clanging rookery home

Where is comfort? in division of the records of the mind?
Can I part her from herself, and love her, as I knew her, kind? 70

I remember one that perished sweetly did she speak and move
Such a one do I remember whom to look at was to love

Can I think of her as dead, and love her for the love she bore?
No—she never loved me truly love is love for evermore

Comfort? comfort scorned of devils! this is truth the poet sings,
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things 75

Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest thy heart be put to proof,
In the dead unhappy night, and when the rain is on the roof

Like a dog, he hunts in dreams, and thou art staring at the wall,
Where the dying night lamp flickers, and the shadows rise and fall 80

Then a hand shall pass before thee, pointing to his drunken sleep,
To thy widowed marriage pillows, to the tears that thou wilt weep

Thou shalt hear the "Never, never," whispered by the phantom years,
And a song from out the distance in the ringing of thine ears,

And an eye shall vex thee, looking ancient kindness on thy pain 85
Turn thee, turn thee on thy pillow get thee to thy rest again

Nay, but Nature brings thee solace, for a tender voice will cry
'Tis a purer life than thine, a lip to drain thy trouble dry

Baby lips will laugh me down my latest rival brings thee rest 90
Baby fingers, waxen touches, press me from the mother's breast

O, the child too clothes the father with a dearness not his due
Half is thine and half is his it will be worthy of the two

O, I see thee old and formal, fitted to thy petty part,
With a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's heart

"They were dangerous guides the feelings—she herself was not exempt— 95
Truly, she herself had suffered"—Perish in thy self-contempt!

Overlive it—lower yet—be happy! wherefore should I care?
I myself must mix with action, lest I wither by despair

What is that which I should turn to, lighting upon days like these? 100
Every door is barred with gold, and opens but to golden keys

Every gate is thronged with suitors, all the markets overflow
I have but an angry fancy what is that which I should do?

I had been content to perish, falling on the foeman's ground,
When the ranks are rolled in vapor, and the winds are laid with sound

But the jingling of the guinea helps the hurt that Honor feels, 105
And the nations do but murmur, snarling at each other's heels

Can I but relive in sadness? I will turn that earlier page
Hide me from my deep emotion, O thou wondrous Mother-Age!

Make me feel the wild pulsation that I felt before the strife, 110
When I heard my days before me, and the tumult of my life,

Yearning for the large excitement that the coming years would yield,
Eager-hearted as a boy when first he leaves his father's field,

And at night along the dusky highway near and nearer drawn,
Sees in heaven the light of London flaring like a dreary dawn,

And his spirit leaps within him to be gone before him then,
Underneath the light he looks at, in among the throngs of men 115

Men, my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new
That which they have done but earnest of the things that they shall do

For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and all the wonder that would be, 120

Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight, dropping down with costly bales,

Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rained a ghastly dew
From the nations' airy navies grappling in the central blue,

Far along the world wide whisper of the south wind rushing warm,
With the standards of the peoples plunging through the thunder storm, 125

Till the war-drum throbbed no longer, and the battle flags were furled
In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world

There the common sense of most shall hold a fretful realm in awe,
And the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law 130

So I triumphed ere my passion sweeping through me left me dry,
Left me with the palsied heart, and left me with the jaundiced eye,

Eye, to which all order festers, all things here are out of joint
Science moves, but slowly, slowly, creeping on from point to point

Slowly comes a hungry people, as a lion creeping nigher,
Glares at one that nods and winks behind a slowly dying fire 135

Yet I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns

What is that to him that reaps not harvest of his youthful joys,
Though the deep heart of existence beat for ever like a boy's? 140

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I linger on the shore,
And the individual withers, and the world is more and more

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and he bears a laden breast,
Full of sad experience, moving toward the stillness of his rest

Hark, my merry comrades call me, sounding on the bugle horn,
They to whom my foolish passion were a target for their scorn 145

Shall it not be scorn to me to harp on such a moldered string?
I am shamed through all my nature to have loved so slight a thing

Weakness to be wroth with weakness! woman's pleasure, woman's pain—
Nature made them blinder motions bounded in a shallower brain 150

Woman is the lesser man, and all thy passions, matched with mine,
Are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine—

Here at least, where nature sickens, nothing Ah, for some retreat
Deep in yonder shining Orient, where my life began to beat,

Where in wild Mahratta battle fell my father evil starred,— 155
I was left a trampled orphan, and a selfish uncle's ward

Or to burst all links of habit—there to wander far away,
On from island unto island at the gateways of the day

Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,
Breadths of tropic shade and palms in cluster, knots of Paradise 160

Never comes the trader, never floats an European flag,
Slides the bird o'er lustrous woodland, swings the trailer from the crag,

Droops the heavy blossomed bower, hangs the heavy fruited tree—
Summer isles of Eden lying in dark purple spheres of sea

There methinks would be enjoyment more than in this march of mind, 165
In the steamship, in the railway, in the thoughts that shake mankind

There the passions cramped no longer shall have scope and breathing space
I will take some savage woman, she shall rear my dusky race

Iron jointed, supple sinewed, they shall dive, and they shall run,
Catch the wild goat by the hair, and hurl their lances in the sun, 170

Whistle back the parrot's call, and leap the rainbows of the brooks,
Not with blinded eyesight poring over miserable books—

Fool, again the dream, the fancy! but I *know* my words are wild,
But I count the gray barbarian lower than the Christian child

I, to herd with narrow foreheads, vacant of our glorious gains, 175
Like a beast with lower pleasures, like a beast with lower pains!

Mated with a squalid savage—what to me were sun or clime?
I the heir of all the ages, in the foremost files of time—

I that rather held it better men should perish one by one,
Than that earth should stand at gaze like Joshua's moon in Ajalon! 180

Not in vain the distance beacons Forward, forward let us range,
I et the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change

Through the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay

Mother Age (for mine I knew not) help me as when life begun 185
Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the lightnings, & weigh the Sun

O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set
Ancient founts of inspiration well through all my fancy yet

Howsoever these things be, a long farewell to Locksley Hall!
Now for me the woods may wither, now for me the roof-tree fall 190

Comes a vapor from the margin, blackening over heath and holt,
Cramming all the blast before it, in its breast a thunderbolt

Let it fall on Locksley Hall, with rain or hail, or fire or snow,
For the mighty wind arises, roaring seaward, and I go

But it is as poet rather than prophet that Tennyson is still read. No lover of poetry can help but recognize the variety of his artistry, from the grave unrhymed music of "Tears, Idle Tears" to the brightly ringing echoes of "Bugle Song", from that brief lullaby "Sweet and Low" to the sweeping fifteen syllabled line of "Locksley Hall", from the lyrical diversity of "Maud" to the songs from "The Princess", from the deep resignation of "Break, Break, Break" (which, in its sixteen solemn lines, condenses the spirit of "In Memoriam") to "Crossing the Bar," which sweeps out in the gloom of a gathering sea. Tennyson requested that this last poem should be placed at the end of all his collections, and it is as such a conclusion that it appears here

TEARS, IDLE TEARS

Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy autumn fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more 5

Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the under world,
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks with all we love below the verge,
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns 11
The earliest pipe of half-awakened birds

To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square,
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more

Dear as remembered kisses after death, 16
And sweet as those by hopeless fancy feigned
On lips that are for others, deep as love,
Deep as first love, and wild with all regret,
O Death in Life, the days that are no more!

BUGLE SONG

The splendor falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story,
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory

Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle, answer, echoes, dying, dying,
dying 6

O, hark, O, hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O, sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing! 10
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying,
Blow, bugle, answer, echoes, dying, dying,
dying

O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river,
Our echoes roll from soul to soul, 15
And grow for ever and for ever
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes fly
ing,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying,
dying

SWEET AND LOW

Sweet and low, sweet and low,
Wind of the western sea,
Low, low, breathe and blow,
Wind of the western sea!
Over the rolling waters go, 5
Come from the dying moon, and blow,
Blow him again to me,
While my little one, while my pretty one,
sleeps

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
 Father will come to thee soon, 10
 Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
 Father will come to thee soon,
 Father will come to his babe in the nest,
 Silver sails all out of the west
 Under the silver moon 15
 Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one,
 sleep

NOW SLEEPS THE CRIMSON
PETAL

Now sleeps the crimson petal, now the
white,
Nor waves the cypress in the palace walk,
Nor winks the gold fin in the porphyry font
The fire fly wakens waken thou with me

Now droops the milkwhite peacock like a
ghost, 5
And like a ghost she glimmers on to me

Now lies the earth all Danae to the stars,
And all thy heart lies open unto me

Now slides the silent meteor on, and leaves
A shining furrow, as thy thoughts in me 10

Now folds the lily all her sweetness up,
And slips into the bosom of the lake
So fold thyself, my dearest, thou, and slip
Into my bosom and be lost in me

BREAK, BREAK, BREAK

Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones, O Sea!
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me

O well for the fisherman's boy,
That he shouts with his sister at play!
O well for the sailor lad,
That he sings in his boat on the bay!

And the stately ships go on
To their haven under the hill,IO
But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still!

Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead 15
Will never come back to me

COME DOWN, O MAID

Come down, O maid, from yonder mountain height
What pleasure lives in height (the shepherd sang),
In height and cold, the splendor of the hills?

But cease to move so near the heavens and cease
 To glide a sunbeam by the blasted Pine, 5
 To sit a star upon the sparkling spire,
 And come, for Love is of the valley, come,
 For Love is of the valley, come thou down
 And find him, by the happy threshold, he,
 Or hand in hand with Plenty in the maize, 10
 Or red with spirited purple of the vats
 Or foxlike in the vine, nor cares to walk
 With Death and Morning on the silver horns,
 Nor wilt thou snare him in the white ravine,
 Nor find him dropt upon the firths of ice, 15
 That huddling slant in furrow cloven falls
 To roll the torrent out of dusky doors
 But follow, let the torrent dance thee down
 To find him in the valley let the wild
 Lean headed Eagles yelp alone, and leave 20
 The monstrous ledges there to slope, and spill
 Their thousand wreaths of dangling water smoke,
 That like a broken purpose waste in air
 So waste not thou, but come, for all the vales
 Await thee, azure pillars of the hearth 25
 Arise to thee the children call, and I
 Thy shepherd pipe, and sweet is every sound,
 Sweeter thy voice, but every sound is sweet,
 Myriads of rivulets hurrying thro' the lawn,
 The moan of doves in immemorial elms, 30
 And murmuring of innumerable bees

MAUD
 (Selections)

xvii

Go not, happy day,
 From the shining fields,
 Go not, happy day,
 Till the maiden yields
 Rosy is the West, 5
 Rosy is the South,
 Roses are her cheeks,
 And a rose her mouth
 When the happy Yes
 Falters from her lips, 10
 Pass and blush the news
 O'er the blowing ships
 Over blowing seas,
 Over seas at rest,
 Pass the happy news, 15
 Blush it thro' the West,

Till the red man dance
 By his red cedar tree,
 And the red man's babe
 Leap, beyond the sea 20
 Blush from West to East,
 Blush from East to West,
 Till the West is East,
 Blush it thro' the West
 Rosy is the West, 25
 Rosy is the South,
 Roses are her cheeks,
 And a rose her mouth

xxii

Come into the garden, Maud,
 For the black bat, night, has flown,
 Come into the garden, Maud,
 I am here at the gate alone,
 And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad
 And the musk of the rose is blown 30

For a breeze of morning moves,
 And the planet of Love is on high,
 Beginning to faint in the light that she loves
 On a bed of daffodil sky, 10
 To faint in the light of the sun she loves,
 To faint in his light, and to die

All night have the roses heard
 The flute, violin, bassoon,
 All night has the casement jessamine stirr'd
 To the dancers dancing in tune, 16
 Till a silence fell with the waking bird,
 And a hush with the setting moon

I said to the lily, "There is but one
 With whom she has heart to be gay 20
 When will the dancers leave her alone?
 She is weary of dance and play"
 Now half to the setting moon are gone,
 And half to the rising day,
 Low on the sand and loud on the stone 25
 The last wheel echoes away

I said to the rose, "The brief night goes
 In babble and revel and wine
 O young lord lover, what sighs are those,
 For one that will never be thine? 30
 But mine, but mine," so I sware to the rose,
 "For ever and ever, mine"

And the soul of the rose went into my blood,
 As the music clash'd in the hall,
 And long by the garden lake I stood, 35
 For I heard your rivulet fall
 From the lake to the meadow and on to the
 wood,
 Our wood, that is dearer than all,

From the meadow your walks have left so
 sweet
 That whenever a March wind sighs 40
 He sets the jewel-print of your feet
 In violets blue as your eyes,
 To the woody hollows in which we meet
 And the valleys of Paradise

The slender acacia would not shake 45
 One long milk bloom on the tree,
 The white lake blossom fell into the lake
 As the pimpernel dozed on the lea,
 But the rose was awake all night for your
 sake,

Knowing your promise to me 50
 The lilies and roses were all awake,
 They sigh'd for the dawn and thee

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,
 Come hither, the dances are done,
 In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls, 55
 Queen lily and rose in one,
 Shine out, little head, sunning over the curls,
 To the flowers, and be their sun

There has fallen a splendid tear
 From the passion flower at the gate 60
 She is coming, my dove, my dear,
 She is coming, my life, my fate,
 The red rose cries, "She is near, she is near",
 And the white rose weeps, "She is late",
 The larkspur listens, "I hear, I hear", 65
 And the lily whispers, "I wait"

She is coming, my own, my sweet,
 Were it ever so airy a tread,
 My heart would hear her and beat, 70
 Were it earth in an earthy bed,
 My dust would hear her and beat,
 Had I lain for a century dead,
 Would start and tremble under her feet,
 And blossom in purple and red

CROSSING THE BAR

Sunset and evening star,
 And one clear call for me!
 And may there be no moaning of the bar,
 When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep, 5
 Too full for sound and foam,
 When that which drew from out the bound
 less deep
 Turns again home

Twilight and evening bell,
 And after that the dark! 10
 And may there be no sadness of farewell,
 When I embark,

For though from out our bourne of Time and
 Place
 The flood may bear me far,
 I hope to see my Pilot face to face 15
 When I have crost the bar

CHARACTER AND ANALYSIS

The Elizabethan Age, superb in lyricism, almost completely ignored nature as poetic material. The Classical writers who followed turned nature, as well as love, into artifice. For more than a century the note of genuine passion disappeared from English poetry and was hardly felt until the mysticism of William Blake. The Romantic revival recaptured the early fervor, restored nature to a prominent place, celebrated the passions and large "goings-on of the universe," and hailed the liberation of man. But a revulsion set in with the Victorians. Neither the French nor the American revolution had fulfilled the hopes of the more ardent visionaries by regenerating society. The Victorians turned from dreams of an ideal democracy, founded on an impossible equality to a contemplation of the swift changes in science and government, to the new movements in philosophy, to the triumphs and dangers of a widespread materialism. Poetry became more and more concerned with man, not as a generality, but as a struggling, erring human being.

No poet of the period, indeed, no poet of any time, with the exception of Shakespeare, was more concerned with the study of character and the human soul than Robert Browning. Browning transmuted the contradictory thought of his day into physical shape, he gave philosophy substance, and turned ideas into persons. His characters, unlike most of Tennyson's, were not only vigorously alive but vividly personal. Even at their best, Tennyson's characters were straightforward and simple, Browning's were, like human nature itself, curious and complex.

The art of poetry, in its widest sense, [writes Lascelles Abercrombie in *The Theory of Poetry*] can do nothing more impressive than the creation of human character. It is never so alive, it never makes such seizure on our minds, as when the result of all its verbal and imaginative technique is our entrance into the life of a character, into a vividly personal form of experience. And so it is with *great* poetry. It is never so great, because never so impressive in its quality of greatness, as when its harmony of some live range of experience comes to life in us in the form of a personal figure.

Greater than all his other gifts was Browning's supreme gift for fusing experience and erudition in the form of significant *dramatis personae* and presenting greatly human characters in great poetry.

ROBERT BROWNING

Robert Browning was born in Camberwell, a suburb of London, on May 7, 1812, of mixed ancestry—English, Scotch, German—and this composite may well account for his broad sympathies and almost universal grasp. His father was employed in the Bank of England, and, differing from the usual Victorian parent, encouraged his son in his desire to be a poet. From the beginning, Browning's career was the very opposite of that of the garret-dwelling, poverty

pursued poet With a library of 7,000 volumes to browse in, a father who spoke several languages, and a background of wealth, Browning began life comfortably, lived it fully and ended it richly

Although Browning attended a few lectures at London University during the winter of 1829-30, he was without formal education Aided by a tutor, and seconded by his father, he laid the foundation of that broad knowledge which later made him one of the most erudite of English poets At twenty-one his first book, *Pauline, the Fragment of a Confession* (1833) was published, and the same year he went to Russia, the first of his many trips to the Continent During the following year he was in Italy, later to be his home for some of the happiest years of his life, two years later he finished a drama *Paracelsus* (1835) Macready, the most influential actor manager of his day, became interested in Browning's drama, and commissioned him to write a play The result was *Strafford* (1837) and other plays—such as the tragic *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon* and the comedic *Colombe's Birthday*—which were intended for the stage, but are now read only in the study Nevertheless, though Browning's penchant for long speeches as substitutes for action proved he was a poet, not a dramatist, his experience as playwright helped him to realize character by portraiture and create the dramatic monologues of which he became master

Meanwhile Browning had been working on a long narrative poem, and in 1840 it was published This poem, *Sordello*, was so tightly compressed in thought and so abstruse in its discussion of medieval philosophic questions that the public would have none of it For twenty years the poet was neglected, and for twenty years he practiced his craft incessantly and, almost, in secret

In 1845 he met Elizabeth Barrett, an invalid, six years his senior, and a poet then much more popular than he The love story has been told countless times—scarcely a year passes without a new book or a new play on the subject—and the drama of Wimpole Street has become even more famous than the diplomacy of Downing Street Elizabeth Barrett's father—a madly possessive, fire-breathing tyrant, and a complete contrast to Browning's mild and sympathetic parent—frowned on the attachment, threatened his daughter, and forbade Browning the house Nevertheless, the two poets fell the more deeply in love, the invalid summoned strength enough to elope, and when she was about forty and Browning thirty-four they were married and fled to Italy The years 1845-46 thus became as central in Browning's career as 1850 was in Tennyson's, they marked the culmination of his emotional life in the romance with Elizabeth Barrett, and produced what is probably his ripest single volume, *Dramatic Romances*

The two poets lived in Italy for the next five years, Browning's already abundant energy increased, Mrs Browning miraculously recovered her health, a son was born to them in 1849

In 1855 Browning reached the height of the art of dramatic monologues in *Men and Women* In 1861 Mrs Browning died, and from that time until his death, Browning devoted himself to his son, to his poetry, and, after the shock of his loss had diminished, to society and travel Fame, long delayed, came with *The Ring and the Book* (1868-69), his longest narrative poem, based on a Roman murder trial the record of which Browning had found in a dog-

ered volume on a second hand bookshelf in Florence. For the next twenty years he enjoyed the popularity denied him so long.

The range of his work grew even greater, and though his later work is sometimes clouded by philosophical speculations and indulgence in mannerisms, he continued to create extraordinary figures and pungent lyrics almost until the day of his death, December 12, 1889.

Learned as Browning was, he did not exhibit his knowledge for the sake of display, but used it as a background to set off his characters. Browning's figures furnish their own scenery in their very speech. His monologues are not merely soliloquies, but condensed dramas. They involve two or more people, although the reader hears only one. They are, one might say, dialogues, rather than monologues, for, as George Herbert Palmer wrote, "It is as if we stood by a telephone and heard its user speak to a distant friend, and were left to guess at the situation by the fragmentary utterances of only one side. But it is dialogue still. An unseen interlocutor is there, and what we hear has constant reference to his thought." "My Last Duchess" is typical.

The scene of "My Last Duchess" is Ferrara, a North Italian town notable for its magnificence and cruelty. The speaker, a cultured—or, rather, cultivated—brutal, and egotistical duke, is about to marry the daughter of a count, and has been discussing the marriage settlement with the count's legate. As the poem opens, he is showing the legate his art treasures, among which is the portrait of his last duchess, painted by Fra Pandolf, an imaginary character. She is dead now, he explains, dead because she failed to discriminate as nicely as he thought she should. To her a flattering phrase, "my favor at her breast," a sunset, a bough of cherries, her white mule, *and* his "nine-hundred years old name" were all equally pleasing. Clearly one could not tolerate such lack of taste. Therefore, he "gave commands" (Perhaps he gave orders that she should be murdered, perhaps he merely had her shut up in a convent and she pined away under the restraint and died. At any rate, he was responsible for her death.) But the painting is very choice. The duke returns to the subject of the interview, the terms of settlement, and in a subtle way indicates that he will not marry the count's daughter unless she is given a suitable dowry. With a gesture of condescension he invites the legate to walk down the stairway side by side, the legate having intended to fall back a step out of respect for him. And having dismissed both the late duchess and the future duchess from the conversation, the duke casually points out a bronze sea horse, *another* of his art objects. Thus we see not only the speaker but the interlocutor, the deferential legate. Fra Pandolf is likewise revealed in his courtesy and compliments. And even more plainly than the duke, Browning, by the genius of indirection, places before us the young duchess in all her beauty with her innocent—and fatal—happiness.

MY LAST DUCHESS

FERRARA

That's my last Duchess painted on the wall,
 Looking as if she were alive I call
 That piece a wonder, now Fra Pandolf's hands
 Worked busily a day, and there she stands
 Will't please you sit and look at her? I said 5
 "Fra Pandolf" by design, for never read
 Strangers like you that pictured countenance,
 The depth and passion of its earnest glance,
 But to myself they turned (since none puts by
 The curtain I have drawn for you, but I) 10
 And seemed as they would ask me, if they durst,
 How such a glance came there, so, not the first
 Are you to turn and ask thus Sir, 'twas not
 Her husband's presence only, called that spot
 Of joy into the Duchess' cheek perhaps 15
 Fra Pandolf chanced to say, "Her mantle laps
 Over my lady's wrist too much," or "Paint
 Must never hope to reproduce the faint
 Half flush that dies along her throat" such stuff
 Was courtesy, she thought, and cause enough 20
 For calling up that spot of joy She had
 A heart—how shall I say?—too soon made glad,
 Too easily impressed, she liked whate'er
 She looked on, and her looks went everywhere
 Sir, 'twas all one! My favor at her breast, 25
 The dropping of the daylight in the West,
 The bough of cherries some officious fool
 Broke in the orchard for her, the white mule
 She rode with round the terrace—all and each
 Would draw from her alike the approving speech,
 Or blush, at least She thanked men,—good! but thanked 30
 Somehow—I know not how—as if she ranked
 My gift of a nine hundred years old name
 With anybody's gift Who'd stoop to blame
 This sort of trifling? Even had you skill 35
 In speech—(which I have not)—to make your will
 Quite clear to such an one, and say, "Just this
 Or that in you disgusts me, here you miss,
 Or there exceed the mark"—and if she let
 Herself be lessoned so, nor plainly set 40
 Her wits to yours, forsooth, and made excuse,
 —E'en then would be some stooping, and I choose
 Never to stoop Oh sir, she smiled, no doubt,
 Whene'er I passed her, but who passed without
 Much the same smile? This grew, I gave commands,
 Then all smiles stopped together There she stands 45
 As if alive Will't please you rise? We'll meet

The company below, then I repeat,
 The Count your master's known munificence
 Is ample warrant that no just pretense
 Of mine for dowry will be disallowed, 50
 Though his fair daughter's self, as I avowed
 At starting, is my object Nay, we'll go
 Together down, sir Notice Neptune, though,
 Taming a sea horse, thought a rarity,
 Which Claus of Innsbruck cast in bronze for me! 55

Much has been made of Browning's obscurity Most of it vanishes with a sympathetic reading and with—it must be admitted—some knowledge of his associations If Browning had a character fault, it was not his egotism but his modesty, he took the intelligence of his readers for granted and was confident—perhaps unduly confident—of the powers of their imagination He wrote, "I never designedly tried to puzzle people, as some of my critics supposed On the other hand, I never pretended to offer such literature as should be a substitute for a cigar or a game at dominoes to an idle man "

Thus the reader must have some knowledge of Latin, an acquaintance with church ritual, and a little experience in gardening to appreciate completely the nuances of the "Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister" The speaker is a lecherous, evil-minded friar who has an obsession his hatred for another member of the monastery, Brother Lawrence One gathers that the latter is rather a gentle soul, an ascetic who likes to putter with his flowers, improve the species, and regale each of his brothers with melons from his garden But the speaker can find nothing but flaws in Brother Lawrence he is too fastidious about his plate, spoon, and drinking-cup, he shows too much interest in pretty Sanchicha, he fails to place his knife and fork in the form of the cross, and to drink his orange-juice in the orthodox three sips in honor of the Trinity The speaker now plans to ruin Brother Lawrence (Perhaps when Brother Lawrence is about to die I may be able to entice him to commit some sin and send him down to hell, a heretic Perhaps I can corrupt him with an obscene picture in a French novel Perhaps I could even pledge my soul to the devil if the devil would agree to ruin Brother Lawrence, and yet by clever wording leave a way out for myself) He is about to utter a magic formula, not the least of the sins which he is committing, when he hears the chanting of the monks, or the vesper-bell Perfunctorily he joins in The poem closes with his final expression of hatred

SOLILOQUY OF THE SPANISH CLOISTER

Gr r r—there go, my heart's abhorrence!
 Water your damned flower pots, do!
 If hate killed men, Brother Lawrence,
 God's blood, would not mine kill you!

What? your myrtle bush wants trimming? 5
 Oh, that rose has prior claims—
 Needs its leaden vase filled brimming?
 Hell dry you up with its flames!

At the meal we sit together
Salve ubi I must hear

Wise talk of the kind of weather,
 Sort of season, time of year
Not a plenteous cork crop scarcely
Dare we hope oak galls, I doubt
What's the Latin name for "parsley"? 15
 What's the Greek name for Swine's
 Snout?

Whew! We'll have our platter burnished,
 Laid with care on our own shelf!
 With a fire new spoon we're furnished,
 And a goblet for ourself, 20
 Rinsed like something sacrificial
 Ere 'tis fit to touch our chaps—
 Marked with L for our initial!
 (He he! There his lily snaps!)

Saint, forsooth! While brown Dolores 25
 Squats outside the Convent bank
 With Sanchicha, telling stories,
 Steeping tresses in the tank,
 Blue black, lustrous, thick like horse hairs,
 —Can't I see his dead eye glow, 30
 Bright as 'twere a Barbary corsair's?
 (That is, if he'd let it show!)

When he finishes refection,
 Knife and fork he never lays
 Cross wise, to my recollection, 35
 As do I, in Jesu's praise
 I the Trinity illustrate,
 Drinking watered orange pulp—
 In three sips the Arian frustrate,
 While he drains his at one gulp 40

Oh, those melons! If he's able
 We're to have a feast! so nice!
 One goes to the Abbot's table,
 All of us get each a slice
 How go on your flowers? None double? 45
 Not one fruit sort can you spy?
 Strange!—And I, too, at such trouble
 Keep them close nipped on the sly!

There's a great text in Galatians,
 Once you trip on it, entails 50
 Twenty nine distinct damnations,
 One sure, if another fails
 If I trip him just a dying,
 Sure of heaven as sure can be,
 Spin him round and send him flying 55
 Off to hell, a Manichee!

Or, my scrofulous French novel
 On gray paper with blunt type!
 Simply glance at it, you grovel
 Hand and foot in Belial's gripe 60
 If I double down its pages
 At the woeful sixteenth print,
 When he gathers his greengages,
 Ope a sieve and slip it in't?

Or, there's Satan! one might venture 65
 Pledge one's soul to him, yet leave
 Such a flaw in the indenture
 As he'd miss till, past retrieve,
 Blasted lay that rose acacia
 We're so proud of! *Hy, Zy, Hine* 70
 'St, there's Vespers! *Plena gratia*,
Ave, Virgo! Gr r r—you swine!

Browning's years in Italy made him especially fond of the Renaissance and equipped him to deal with that period. The art of painting particularly fascinated him. Two dramatic monologues, "Fra Lippo Lippi" and "Andrea Del Sarto," furnish a magnificent double portrait of the period and, at the same time, complement each other.

The speaker, Fra Lippo Lippi (1406-1469), a painter-monk, is returning in the early morning hours from a not too reputable section of his native Florence. Stopped by the night-patrol, he reveals his identity, and pretends slyly that he is unable to recall the name of the patron with whom he is living, none other than the illustrious Cosimo de' Medici. At the mention of the name the watchmen, of course, jump back ("Boh! you were best!") But Fra Lippo is not angry with them, he enjoys life too much to hold a grudge. Spying a particularly villainous looking watchman, he asks for a piece of chalk that he may

sketch him as the murderous slave who holds up the head of John the Baptist. Then follows an account of how he happens to be abroad at such an hour. The time is spring, he has been painting, and painting indoors, outdoors merry groups pass by, singing popular songs. He sees some pretty girls, hastily tears up the bed clothes, makes a "ladder," and is down the wall and after them. He goes on to recall his boyhood—how he was taken to the Carmelite friars, and at an early age began to decorate the walls of the monastery. His reminiscences grow more serious. The friars objected to the paintings because they obviously showed human beings in life like attitudes and were not the abstractions to which they had been used. Fra Lippo—on the street, just before dawn, and to policemen¹—formulates his artistic creed, explains how ill founded the objections of the friars are, and sums up his own opinion in the lines

If you get simple beauty and naught else,
You get about the best thing God invents

Once more, against the panoply of the past, Browning has created a vital and unforgettable character

FRA LIPPO LIPPI

I am poor brother Lippo, by your leave!
You need not clap your torches to my face
Zooks, what's to blame? you think you see a monk!
What, 'tis past midnight, and you go the rounds,
And here you catch me at an alley's end 5
Where sportive ladies leave their doors ajar?
The Carmine's my cloister—hunt it up,
Do,—harry out, if you must show your zeal,
Whatever rat, there, haps on his wrong hole,
And nip each softling of a wee white mouse, 10
Weke, weke, that's crept to keep him company!
Aha, you know your betters! Then, you'll take
Your hand away that's fiddling on my throat,
And please to know me likewise. Who am I?
Why, one, sir, who is lodging with a friend 15
Three streets off—he's a certain how d'ye call?
Master—a Cosimo of the Medici,
I' the house that caps the corner. Boh! you were best!
Remember and tell me, the day you're hanged,
How you affected such a gullet's gripe! 20
But you, sir, it concerns you that your knaves
Pick up a manner nor discredit you
Zooks, are we pilchards,¹ that they sweep the streets
And count fair prize what comes into their net?
He's Judas to a tittle, that man is! 25
Just such a face! Why, sir, you make amends
Lord, I'm not angry! Bid your hangdogs go

¹ sardines

Drink out this quarter florin to the health Of the munificent House that harbors me (And many more beside, lads! more beside!)	30
And all's come square again I'd like his face— His, elbowing on his comrade in the door With the pike and lantern,—for the slave that holds John Baptist's head a dangle by the hair With one hand ("Look you, now," as who should say)	35
And his weapon in the other, yet unwiped! It's not your chance to have a bit of chalk, A wood coal or the like? or you should see! Yes, I'm the painter, since you style me so What, brother Lippo's doings, up and down,	40
You know them and they take you? like enough! I saw the proper twinkle in your eye— 'Tell you, I liked your looks at very first Let's sit and set things straight now, hip to haunch Here's spring come, and the nights one makes up bands	45
To roam the town and sing out carnival, And I've been three weeks shut within my mew, A painting for the great man, saints and saints And saints again I could not paint all night— Ouf! I leaned out of window for fresh air	50
There came a hurry of feet and little feet, A sweep of lute strings, laughs, and whiffs of song,— <i>Flower o' the broom,</i> <i>Take away love, and our earth is a tomb!</i> <i>Flower o' the quince,</i>	55
<i>I let Lisa go, and what good in life since?</i> <i>Flower o' the thyme</i> —and so on Round they went Scarce had they turned the corner when a titter Like the skipping of rabbits by moonlight,—three slim shapes, And a face that looked up zooks, sir, flesh and blood,	60
That's all I'm made of! Into shreds it went, Curtain and counterpane and coverlet, All the bed-furniture—a dozen knots, There was a ladder! Down I let myself, Hands and feet, scrambling somehow, and so dropped,	65
And after them I came up with the fun Hard by Saint Laurence, hail fellow, well met,— <i>Flower o' the rose,</i> <i>If I've been merry, what matter who knows?</i>	70
And so as I was stealing back again To get to bed and have a bit of sleep Ere I rise up tomorrow and go work On Jerome knocking at his poor old breast With his great round stone to subdue the flesh, You snap me of the sudden Ah, I see!	75
Though your eye twinkles still, you shake your head— Mine's shaved—a monk, you say—the sting's in that! If Master Cosimo announced himself,	

Mum's the word naturally, but a monk!
 Come, what am I a beast for? tell us, now!
 I was a baby when my mother died
 And father died and left me in the street
 I starved there, God knows how, a year or two
 On fig skins, melon-parings, rinds and shucks,
 Refuse and rubbish One fine frosty day,
 My stomach being empty as your hat,
 The wind doubled me up and down I went
 Old Aunt Lapaccia trussed me with one hand,
 (Its fellow was a stinger as I knew)
 And so along the wall, over the bridge,
 By the straight cut to the convent Six words there,
 While I stood munching my first bread that month
 "So, boy, you're minded," quoth the good fat father,
 Wiping his own mouth, 'twas refection time,—
 "To quit this very miserable world?
 Will you renounce" "the mouthful of bread?" thought I,
 By no means! Brief, they made a monk of me,
 I did renounce the world, its pride and greed,
 Palace, farm, villa, shop, and banking house,
 Trash, such as these poor devils of Medici
 Have given their hearts to—all at eight years old
 Well, sir, I found in time, you may be sure,
 'Twas not for nothing—the good bellyful,
 The warm serge and the rope that goes all round,
 And day long blessed idleness beside!
 "Let's see what the urchin's fit for"—that came next
 Not overmuch their way, I must confess
 Such a to do! They tried me with their books,
 Lord, they'd have taught me Latin in pure waste!
Flower o' the clove,
All the Latin I construe is "amo," I love!
 But, mind you, when a boy starves in the streets
 Eight years together, as my fortune was,
 Watching folk's faces to know who will fling
 The bit of half stripped grape bunch he desires,
 And who will curse or kick him for his pains,—
 Which gentleman processional and fine,
 Holding a candle to the Sacrament,
 Will wink and let him lift a plate and catch
 The droppings of the wax to sell again,
 Or holla for the Eight and have him whipped,—
 How say I?—nay, which dog bites, which lets drop
 His bone from the heap of offal in the street,—
 Why, soul and sense of him grow sharp alike,
 He learns the look of things, and none the less
 For admonition from the hunger pinch
 I had a store of such remarks, be sure,
 Which, after I found leisure, turned to use
 I drew men's faces on my copy books,

Scrawled them within the antiphonary's marge, Joined legs and arms to the long music notes, Found eyes and nose and chin for A's and B's, And made a string of pictures of the world Betwixt the ins and outs of verb and noun, On the wall, the bench, the door The monks looked black "Nay," quoth the Prior, "turn him out, d'ye say?" In no wise Lose a crow and catch a lark What if at last we get our man of parts, We Carmelites, like those Camaldolese And Preaching Friars, to do our church up fine And put the front on it that ought to be!" And hereupon he bade me daub away Thank you! my head being crammed, the walls a blank, Never was such prompt disemburdening First, every sort of monk, the black and white, I drew them, fat and lean then, folk at church, From good old gossips waiting to confess Their cribs of barrel droppings, candle-ends,— To the breathless fellow at the altar foot, Fresh from his murder, safe and sitting there With the little children round him in a row Of admiration, half for his beard and half For that white anger of his victim's son Shaking a fist at him with one fierce arm, Signing himself with the other because of Christ (Whose sad face on the cross sees only this After the passion of a thousand years) Till some poor girl, her apron o'er her head, (Which the intense eyes looked through) came at eve On tiptoe, said a word, dropped in a loaf, Her pair of earrings and a bunch of flowers (The brute took growling), prayed, and so was gone I painted all, then cried, "'Tis ask and have, Choose, for more's ready!"—laid the ladder flat, And showed my covered bit of cloister wall The monks closed in a circle and praised loud Till checked, taught what to see and not to see Being simple bodies,—"That's the very man! Look at the boy who stoops to pat the dog! That woman's like the Prior's niece who comes To care about his asthma it's the life!" But there my triumph's straw-fire flared and funk'd, Their betters took their turn to see and say The Prior and the learned pulled a face And stopped all that in no time "How? what's here? Quite from the mark of painting, bless us all! Faces, arms, legs, and bodies like the true As much as pea and pea! it's devil's-game! Your business is not to catch men with show, With homage to the perishable clay,	130 135 140 145 150 155 160 165 170 175 180
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But lift them over it, ignore it all,
 Make them forget there's such a thing as flesh
 Your business is to paint the souls of men—
 Man's soul, and it's a fire, smoke no, it's not
 It's vapor done up like a new born babe—
 (In that shape when you die it leaves your mouth)
 It's well, what matters talking, it's the soul!
 Give us no more of body than shows soul!
 Here's Giotto,¹ with his Saint a praising God,
 That sets us praising,—why not stop with him?
 Why put all thoughts of praise out of our head
 With wonder at lines, colors, and what not?
 Paint the soul, never mind the legs and arms!
 Rub all out, try at it a second time
 Oh, that white smallish female with the breasts,
 She's just my niece Herodias,² I would say,—
 Who went and danc'd and got men's heads cut off!
 Have it all out!" Now, is this sense, I ask?
 A fine way to paint soul, by painting body
 So ill, the eye can't stop there, must go further
 And can't fare worse! Thus, yellow does for white
 When what you put for yellow's simply black,
 And any sort of meaning looks intense
 When all beside itself means and looks naught
 Why can't a painter lift each foot in turn,
 Left foot and right foot, go a double step,
 Make his flesh liker and his soul more like,
 Both in their order? Take the prettiest face,
 The Prior's niece patron saint—is it so pretty
 You can't discover if it means hope, fear,
 Sorrow or joy? won't beauty go with these?
 Suppose I've made her eyes all right and blue,
 Can't I take breath and try to add life's flash,
 And then add soul and heighten them threefold?
 Or say there's beauty with no soul at all—
 (I never saw it—put the case the same—)
 If you get simple beauty and naught else,
 You get about the best thing God invents
 That's somewhat and you'll find the soul you have missed,
 Within yourself, when you return him thanks
 "Rub all out!" Well, well, there's my life, in short,
 And so the thing has gone on ever since

 I'm grown a man no doubt, I've broken bounds
 You should not take a fellow eight years old
 And make him swear to never kiss the girls
 I'm my own master, paint now as I please—
 Having a friend, you see, in the Corner house!
 Lord, it's fast holding by the rings in front—
 Those great rings serve more purposes than just

¹ Italian painter (1267? 1337)² St Matthew 14 1 11

- To plant a flag in, or tie up a horse!
 And yet the old schooling sticks, the old grave eyes
 Are peeping o'er my shoulder as I work,
 The heads shake still—"It's art's decline, my son!
 You're not of the true painters, great and old,
 Brother Angelico's¹ the man, you'll find,
 Brother Lorenzo stands his single peer
 Fag on at flesh, you'll never make the third!"
Flower o' the pine,
You keep your mistr manners, and I'll stick to mine!
 I'm not the third, then bless us, they must know!
 Don't you think they're the likeliest to know,
 They with their Latin? So, I swallow my rage,
 Clench my teeth, suck my lips in tight, and paint
 To please them—sometimes do and sometimes don't,
 For, doing most, there's pretty sure to come
 A turn, some warm eve finds me at my saints—
 A laugh, a cry, the business of the world—
(Flower o' the peach,
Death for us all, and his own life for each!)
 And my whole soul revolves, the cup runs over,
 The world and life's too big to pass for a dream,
 And I do these wild things in sheer despite,
 And play the fooleries you catch me at,
 In pure rage! The old mill horse, out at grass
 After hard years, throws up his stiff heels so,
 Although the miller does not preach to him
 The only good of grass is to make chaff
 What would men have? Do they like grass or no—
 May they or mayn't they? All I want's the thing
 Settled forever one way As it is,
 You tell too many lies and hurt yourself
 You don't like what you only like too much,
 You do like what, if given you at your word,
 You find abundantly detestable
 For me, I think I speak as I was taught,
 I always see the garden and God there
 A making man's wife and, my lesson learned,
 The value and significance of flesh,
 I can't unlearn ten minutes afterwards
- You understand me I'm a beast, I know
 But see, now—why, I see, as certainly
 As that the morning star's about to shine,
 What will hap some day We've a youngster here
 Comes to our convent, studies what I do,
 Slouches and stares and lets no atom drop
 His name is Guidi—he'll not mind the monks—
 They call him Hulking Tom, he lets them talk—
 He picks my practice up—he'll paint apace,

¹ Fra Angelico (1387 1455), famous as a colorist, and, unlike Fra Lippo, noted for his piety

I hope so—though I never live so long,
 I know what's sure to follow You be judge! 280
 You speak no Latin more than I, belike,
 However, you're my man, you've seen the world
 —The beauty and the wonder and the power,
 The shapes of things, their colors, lights and shades,
 Changes, surprises,—and God made it all! 285
 —For what? Do you feel thankful, aye or no
 For this fair town's face, yonder river's line,
 The mountain round it and the sky above,
 Much more the figures of man, woman, child,
 These are the frame to? What's it all about? 290
 To be passed over, despised? or dwelt upon,
 Wondered at? oh, this last of course!—you say
 But why not do as well as say,—paint these
 Just as they are, careless what comes of it?
 God's works—paint any one, and count it crime 295
 To let a truth slip Don't object, "His works
 Are here already, nature is complete
 Suppose you reproduce her—(which you can't)
 There's no advantage! you must beat her, then"
 For, don't you mark? we're made so that we love 300
 First when we see them painted, things we have passed
 Perhaps a hundred times nor cared to see,
 And so they are better, painted—better to us,
 Which is the same thing Art was given for that,
 God uses us to help each other so, 305
 Lending our minds out Have you noticed, now,
 Your cullion's hanging face? A bit of chalk,
 And trust me but you should, though! How much more,
 If I drew higher things with the same truth!
 That were to take the Prior's pulpit place, 310
 Interpret God to all of you! Oh, oh,
 It makes me mad to see what men shall do
 And we in our graves! This world's no blot for us,
 Nor blank, it means intensely, and means good
 To find its meaning is my meat and drink 315
 "Aye, but you don't so instigate to prayer!"
 Strikes in the Prior "when your meaning's plain
 It does not say to folk—remember matins,
 Or, mind you fast next Friday!" Why, for this
 What need of art at all? A skull and bones, 320
 Two bits of stick nailed crosswise, or, what's best,
 A bell to chime the hour with, does as well
 I painted a Saint Laurence six months since
 At Prato, splashed the fresco in fine style
 "How looks my painting, now the scaffold's down?" 325
 I ask a brother "Hugely," he returns—
 "Already not one phiz of your three slaves
 Who turn the Deacon off his toasted side,
 But's scratched and prodded to our heart's content,

The pious people have so eased their own
 With coming to say prayers there in a rage 330
 We get on fast to see the bricks beneath
 Expect another job this time next year,
 For pity and religion grow i' the crowd—
 Your painting serves its purpose!" Hang the fools! 335

--That is—you'll not mistake an idle word
 Spoke in a huff by a poor monk, God wot,
 Tasting the air this spicy night which turns
 The unaccustomed head like Chianti wine!
 Oh, the church knows! don't misreport me, now! 340
 It's natural a poor monk out of bounds
 Should have his apt word to excuse himself
 And hearken how I plot to make amends
 I have bethought me I shall paint a piece

There's for you! Give me six months, then go, see 345
 Something in Sant' Ambrogio's! Bless the nuns!
 They want a cast o' my office I shall paint
 God in the midst, Madonna and her babe,
 Ringed by a bowery, flowery angel brood,
 Lilies and vestments and white faces, sweet 350
 As puff on puff of grated orris root

When ladies crowd to Church at midsummer
 And then i' the front, of course a saint or two—
 Saint John, because he saves the Florentines,
 Saint Ambrose, who puts down in black and white 355
 The convent's friends and gives them a long day,

And Job, I must have him there past mistake,
 The man of Uz (and Us without the z,
 Painters who need his patience) Well, all these
 Secured at their devotion, up shall come 360
 Out of a corner when you least expect,

As one by a dark stair into a great light,
 Music and talking, who but Lippo! I!—
 Mazed, motionless, and moonstruck—I'm the man!
 Back I shrink—what is this I see and 'hear'? 365
 I, caught up with my monk's things by mistake,

My old serge gown and rope that goes all round,
 I, in this presence, this pure company!
 Where's a hole, where's a corner for escape?

Then steps a sweet angelic slip of a thing
 Forward, puts out a soft palm—"Not so fast!" 370

—Addresses the celestial presence, "nay—
 He made you and devised you, after all,
 Though he's none of you! Could Saint John there draw—
 His camel hair make up a painting brush?" 375

We come to brother Lippo for all that,
*Iste perfectit opus!*¹ So, all smile—
 I shuffle sideways with my blushing face

¹ this man did the work

Under the cover of a hundred wings
 Thrown like a spread of kirtles when you're gay 380
 And play hot cockles, all the doors being shut,
 Till, wholly unexpected, in there pops
 The hothead husband! Thus I scuttle off
 To some safe bench behind, not letting go
 The palm of her, the little lily thing 385
 That spoke the good word for me in the nick,
 Like the Prior's niece Saint Lucy, I would say
 And so all's saved for me, and for the church
 A pretty picture gained Go, six months hence!
 Your hand, sir, and good by no lights, no lights! 390
 The street's hushed, and I know my own way back,
 Don't fear me! There's the gray beginning Zooks!

Browning's defects spring from an excess of energy and a surpius of intellect. His effects are massed with such rapidity, his transitions are so abrupt, his mind so agile, that the reader is sometimes unable to keep pace with him. When he is obscure, it is because he is too fecund, not because he is slipshod or purposely recondite. He says what he has to say with precision, but he is often too anxious to pack an entire epoch into a picture.

Thus "Andrea Del Sarto" attempts to be a study of a person, a drama of domestic infelicity, and a condensation of pages from Vasari's *Lives of the Painters*. The speaker, Andrea Del Sarto, a Florentine painter (1486-1531) is Fra Lippo Lippi's complete antithesis. Where Lippo is a carefree roisterer, Andrea is a meditative recluse, where Lippo, a bachelor, makes merry with casual girls, Andrea is devoted to his wife, who continually deceives him. She has plunged him into debt, caused a rift between him and his parents, makes him a party to her deceptions, and is wholly uninterested in his work. In spite of all this, Andrea is in love with her.

He knows he has missed the highest inspiration in his work, and he feels that had Lucrezia reciprocated his love, his art would have had "soul," and he would have been known as more than a technically flawless painter. He muses aloud, while Lucrezia shows little but boredom. Outside, her "cousin" impatiently whistles for her. Andrea dismisses her sadly but without bitterness. She who was once his mistress is now his wife, he can contemplate her beauty without hindrance, though he knows she is not wholly his. He does not envy the greatest of painters. Rafael may have his fame, Andrea has his Lucrezia.

ANDREA DEL SARTO

CALLED "THE FAULTLESS PAINTER"

But do not let us quarrel any more,
 No, my Lucrezia, bear with me for once
 Sit down and all shall happen as you wish
 You turn your face, but does it bring your
 heart?

I'll work then for your friend's friend, neve
 fear, 5

Treat his own subject after his own way,
 Fix his own time, accept, too, his own price,
 And shut the money into this small hand
 When next it takes mine. Will it? tenderly?
 Oh, I'll content him,—but tomorrow, Love!
 I often am much wearier than you think, 11

This evening more than usual, and it seems
 As if—forgive now—should you let me sit
 Here by the window with your hand in mine
 And look a half hour forth on Fiesole, 15
 Both of one mind, as married people use,
 Quietly, quietly the evening through,
 I might get up tomorrow to my work
 Cheerful and fresh as ever Let us try
 Tomorrow, how you shall be glad for this! 20
 Your soft hand is a woman of itself,
 And mine the man's bared breast she curls
 inside

Don't count the time lost, neither, you must
 serve

For each of the five pictures we require
 It saves a model So! keep looking so— 25
 My serpentine beauty, rounds on rounds!
 —How could you ever prick those perfect
 ears,

Even to put the pearl there! oh, so sweet—
 My face, my moon, my everybody's moon,
 Which everybody looks on and calls his, 30
 And, I suppose, is looked on by in turn,
 While she looks—no one's very dear, no less
 You smile? why, there's my picture ready
 made,

There's what we painters call our harmony!
 A common grayness silvers everything,— 35
 All in a twilight, you and I alike

—You, at the point of your first pride in me
 (That's gone you know),—but I, at every
 point,

My youth, my hope, my art, being all toned
 down

To yonder sober pleasant Fiesole 40
 There's the bell clinking from the chapel
 top,

That length of convent wall across the way
 Holds the trees safer, huddled more inside,
 The last monk leaves the garden, days de-
 crease,

And autumn grows, autumn in everything
 Eh? the whole seems to fall into a shape 46
 As if I saw alike my work and self
 And all that I was born to be and do,
 A twilight piece Love, we are in God's hand
 How strange now looks the life he makes us
 lead, 50

So free we seem, so fettered fast we are!
 I feel he laid the fetter let it lie!
 This chamber for example—turn your head—

All that's behind us! You don't understand
 Nor care to understand about my art, 55
 But you can hear at least when people speak
 And that cartoon, the second from the door
 —It is the thing, Love! so such thing should
 be—

Behold Madonna!—I am bold to say
 I can do with my pencil what I know, 60
 What I see, what at bottom of my heart
 I wish for, if I ever wish so deep—
 Do easily, too—when I say, perfectly,
 I do not boast, perhaps yourself are judge,
 Who listened to the Legate's talk last week, 65
 And just as much they used to say in France
 At any rate, 'tis easy, all of it!

No sketches first, no studies, that's long past
 I do what many dream of all their lives,
 —Dream? strive to do, and agonize to do, 70
 And fail in doing I could count twenty such
 On twice your fingers, and not leave this
 town,

Who strive—you don't know how the others
 strive

To paint a little thing like that you smeared
 Carelessly passing with your robes afloat,—75
 Yet do much less, so much less, Someone
 says,

(I know his name, no matter)—so much
 less!

Well, less is more, Lucrezia I am judged
 There burns a truer light of God in them,
 In their vexed beating stuffed and stopped
 up brain, 80

Heart, or whate'er else, than goes on to
 prompt

This low pulsed forthright craftsman's hand
 of mine

Their works drop groundward, but them-
 selves, I know,

Reach many a time a heaven that's shut to
 me, 84

Enter and take their place there sure enough,
 Though they come back and cannot tell the
 world

My works are nearer heaven, but I sit here
 The sudden blood of these men! at a word—
 Praise them, it boils, or blame them, it boils
 too

I, painting from myself, and to myself, 90
 Know what I do, am unmoved by men's
 blame

Or their praise either Somebody remarks
 Morello's outline there is wrongly traced,
 His hue mistaken, what of that? or else,
 Rightly traced and well ordered, what of
 that? 95
 Speak as they please, what does the moun-
 tain care?
 Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his
 grasp,
 Or what's a heaven for? All is silver gray,
 Placid and perfect with my art the worse!
 I know both what I want and what might
 gain, 100
 And yet how profitless to know, to sigh
 "Had I been two, another and myself,
 Our head would have o'erlooked the world!"
 No doubt
 Yonder's a work now, of that famous youth
 The Urbinate¹ who died five years ago 105
 ('Tis copied, George Vasari² sent it me)
 Well, I can fancy how he did it all,
 Pouring his soul, with kings and popes to see,
 Reaching, that heaven might so replenish
 him,
 Above and through his art—for it gives
 way, 110
 That arm is wrongly put—and there again—
 A fault to pardon in the drawing's lines,
 Its body, so to speak its soul is right,
 He means right—that, a child may under-
 stand
 Still, what an arm! and I could alter it 115
 But all the play, the insight and the stretch—
 Out of me, out of me! And wherefore out?
 Had you enjoined them on me, given me soul,
 We might have risen to Rafael, I and you!
 Nay, Love, you did give all I asked, I think—
 More than I merit, yes, by many times 121
 But had you—oh, with the same perfect brow,
 And perfect eyes, and more than perfect
 mouth,
 And the low voice my soul hears, as a bird 124
 The fowler's pipe, and follows to the snare—
 Had you, with these the same, but brought
 a mind!
 Some women do so Had the mouth there
 urged

'God and the glory! never care for gain
 The present by the future, what is that?
 Live for fame, side by side with Agnolo!³ 130
 Rafael is waiting up to God, all three!"
 I might have done it for you So it seems
 Perhaps not All is as God overrules
 Beside, incentives come from the soul's self,
 The rest avail not Why do I need you? 135
 What wife had Rafael, or has Agnolo?
 In this world, who can do a thing, will not,
 And who would do it, cannot, I perceive
 Yet the will's somewhat—somewhat, too, the
 power—
 And thus we half men struggle At the
 end, 140
 God, I conclude, compensates, punishes
 'Tis safer for me, if the award be strict,
 That I am something underrated here,
 Poor this long while, despised, to speak the
 truth
 I dared not, do you know, leave home all
 day, 145
 For fear of chancing on the Paris lords⁴
 The best is when they pass and look aside,
 But they speak sometimes, I must bear it all
 Well may they speak! That Francis, that first
 time, 149
 And that long festal year at Fontainebleau!
 I surely then could sometimes leave the
 ground,
 Put on the glory, Rafael's daily wear,
 In that humane great monarch's golden
 look,—
 One finger in his beard or twisted curl
 Over his mouth's good mark that made the
 smile, 155
 One arm about my shoulder, round my neck,
 The jingle of his gold chain in my ear,
 I painting proudly with his breath on me,
 All his court round him, seeing with his eyes,
 Such frank French eyes, and such a fire of
 souls 160
 Profuse, my hand kept plying by those
 hearts,—
 And, best of all, this, this, this face beyond,
 This in the background, waiting on my work,
 To crown the issue with a last reward!

¹ Sanzio Raphael (1483 1520), of Urbino

² Giorgio Vasari (1511 1571), painter, architect,
 and historian of Italian art

³ Michelangelo (1475 1564), most famous of the
 Florentine artists

⁴ Andrea had misappropriated money of the
 French King, Francis I

A good time, was it not, my kingly days? 165
And had you not grown restless but I
know—

'Tis done and past, 'twas right, my instinct
said,

Too live the life grew, golden and not gray,
And I'm the weak eyed bat no sun should
tempt

Out of his grange whose four walls make
his world 170

How could it end in any other way?

You called me, and I came home to your
heart

The triumph was—to reach and stay there,
since

I reached it ere the triumph, what is lost?

Let my hands frame your face in your hair's
gold, 175

You beautiful Lucrezia that are mine!

"Rafael did this, Andrea painted that,

The Roman's is the better when you pray,

But still the other's Virgin was his wife"—

Men will excuse me I am glad to judge 180

Both pictures in your presence, clearer grows

My better fortune, I resolve to think

For, do you know, Lucrezia, as God lives,

Said one day Agnolo, his very self,

To Rafael I have known it all these
years 185

(When the young man was flaming out his
thoughts

Upon a palace wall for Rome to see,

Too lifted up in heart because of it)

"Friend, there's a certain sorry little scrub

Goes up and down our Florence, none cares
how, 190

Who, were he set to plan and execute

As you are, pricked on by your popes and
kings,

Would bring the sweat into that brow of
yours!"

To Rafael's!—And indeed the arm is wrong
I hardly dare yet, only you to see, 195

Give the chalk here—quick, thus the line
should go!

Aye, but the soul! he's Rafael! rub it out!

Still, all I care for, if he spoke the truth

(What he? why, who but Michel Agnolo?

Do you forget already words like those?), 200

If really there was such a chance, so lost,—

Is, whether you're—not grateful—but more
pleased

Well, let me think so And you smile indeed!

This hour has been an hour! Another smile?

If you would sit thus by me every night 205

I should work better, do you comprehend?

I mean that I should earn more, give you
more

See, it is settled dusk now, there's a star,
Morello's gone, the watch lights show the
wall,

The cue owls speak the name we call them
by 210

Come from the window, Love,—come in, at
last,

Inside the melancholy little house

We built to be so gay with God is just

King Francis may forgive me, oft at nights,

When I look up from painting, eyes tired
out, 215

The walls become illumined, brick from brick

Distinct, instead of mortar, fierce bright gold,

That gold of his I did cement them with!

Let us but love each other Must you go?

That Cousin here again? he waits out
side? 220

Must see you—you, and not with me? Those
loans?

More gaming debts to pay? you smiled for
that?

Well, let smiles buy me! have you more to
spend?

While hand and eye and something of a
heart

Are left me, work's my ware, and what's it
worth? 225

I'll pay my fancy Only let me sit

The gray remainder of the evening out,

Idle, you call it, and muse perfectly

How I could paint, were I but back in France,

One picture, just one more—the Virgin's
face, 230

Not yours this time! I want you at my side

To hear them—that is, Michel Agnolo—

Judge all I do and tell you of its worth

Will you? Tomorrow, satisfy your friend

I take the subjects for his corridor, 235

Finish the portrait out of hand—there, there,

And throw him in another thing or two

If he demurs, the whole should prove enough
To pay for this same Cousin's freak Beside,

What's better and what's all I care about, 240
 Get you the thirteen scudi for the ruff!
 Love, does that please you? Ah, but what
 does he,
 The Cousin! what does he to please you
 more?

I am grown peaceful as old age tonight
 I regret little, I would change still less 245
 Since there my past life lies, why alter it?
 The very wrong to Francis!—it is true
 I took his coin, was tempted and complied,
 And built this house and sinned, and all is
 said
 My father and my mother died of want 250
 Well, had I riches of my own? you see
 How one gets rich! Let each one bear his
 lot
 They were born poor, lived poor, and poor
 they died

And I have labored somewhat in my time 254
 And not been paid profusely Some good son
 Paint my two hundred pictures—let him try!
 No doubt, there's something strikes a bal-
 ance Yes,
 You loved me quite enough, it seems to
 night
 This must suffice me here What would one
 have?
 In heaven, perhaps, new chances, one more
 chance— 260
 Four great walls in the New Jerusalem,
 Meted on each side by the angel's reed,
 For Leonard,¹ Rafael, Agnolo and me
 To cover—the three first without a wife,
 While I have mine! So—still they over
 come 265
 Because there's still Lucrezia,—as I choose
 Again the Cousin's whistle! Go, my Love

"The Bishop Orders His Tomb at Saint Praxed's Church" is perhaps the most brilliant of all Browning's analyses of character This churchman, as F L Lucas observes, "with his naive and nonchalant Renaissance way of serving at once Jove and Jehovah, Aphrodite and Mary of Nazareth" is a completely vital character to the very end The bishop lies on his death-bed About him are gathered his "nephews," a euphemism for the sons he has had by the unnamed woman, whom he had won in spite of the envious Gandolf, a live-long rival and, like the dying man, a bishop His first words, uttered in a conventionally pious tone, are an echo of the well-known verse in *Ecclesiastes* The bishop then recalls that the woman is dead, that we too must die, and dwells with unction on the peacefulness of Saint Praxed's Church—a suitable death chamber for a church dignitary But, though he is dying, he cannot and will not think kindly of Gandolf, who got, in some way, the choice niche in the church To solace himself the bishop reflects that his own niche has its merits and that Gandolf lies beneath an inferior variety of marble, *onion stone*, as Browning translates the Italian *cipollino* Throughout the rest of the poem the bishop urges his sons to provide him with an expensive memorial, reflects on the looting of his church (and practically admits his guilt), returns to his demand for the most desirable stone, selects Cicero as the author from whom his epitaph is to be chosen, mumbles in a confused manner about the beauty of the church, his own appearance, his epitaph, and with a last burst of hatred against Gandolf dismisses the sons who will inherit his estates

The poem is a characterization of a Renaissance churchman—a worldly bishop acquainted with the good things of life, but essentially base John Ruskin's praise is worth quoting "I know no other piece of modern English, prose or poetry, in which there is so much told, as in these lines, of the Renaissance

¹ Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519)

spirit,—its worldliness, inconsistency, pride, hypocrisy, ignorance of itself, love of art, of luxury, and of good Latin ”

THE BISHOP ORDERS
HIS TOMB AT SAINT
PRAXED S CHURCH

ROME, 15—

Vanity, saith the preacher, vanity!
Draw round my bed is Anselm keeping
back?

Nephews—sons mine ah God, I know
not! Well—

She, men would have to be your mother once,
Old Gandolf envied me, so fair she was! 5
What's done is done, and she is dead beside,
Dead long ago, and I am Bishop since,
And as she died so must we die ourselves,
And thence ye may perceive the world's a
dream

Life, how and what is it? As here I lie 10
In this state chamber, dying by degrees,
Hours and long hours in the dead night, I
ask

“Do I live, am I dead?” Peace, peace seems
all

Saint Praxed's ever was the church for peace,
And so, about this tomb of mine I fought
With tooth and nail to save my niche, ye
know 16

—Old Gandolf cozened me, despite my care,
Shrewd was that snatch from out the corner
South

He graced his carrion with, God curse the
same!

Yet still my niche is not so cramped but
thence 20

One sees the pulpit o' the epistle side,
And somewhat of the choir, those silent seats,
And up into the aery dome where live
The angels, and a sunbeam's sure to lurk
And I shall fill my slab of basalt there, 25
And 'neath my tabernacle take my rest,
With 'hose nine columns round me, two and
two,

The odd one at my feet where Anselm
stands

Peach blossom marble all, the rare, the ripe
As fresh-poured red wine of a mighty pulse
—Old Gandolf with his paltry onion stone, 31

Put me where I may look at him! True peach,
Rosy and flawless how I earned the prize!
Draw close that conflagration of my church
—What then? So much was saved if aught
were missed! 35

My sons, ye would not be my death? Go dig
The white grape vineyard where the oil press
stood,

Drop water gently till the surface sink,
And if ye find Ah God, I know not,
I!

Bedded in store of rotten fig leaves soft, 40
And corded up in a tight olive-frail,
Some lump, ah God, of *lapis lazuli*,
Big as a Jew's head cut off at the nape,
Blue as a vein o'er the Madonna's breast
Sons, all have I bequeathed you, villas, all, 45
That brave Frascati villa with its bath,
So, let the blue lump poise between my knees,
Like God the Father's globe on both his
hands

Ye worship in the Jesu Church so gay,
For Gandolf shall not choose but see and
burst! 50

Swift as a weaver's shuttle fleet our years
Man goeth to the grave, and where is he?
Did I say basalt for my slab, sons? Black—
'Twas ever antique black I meant! How else
Shall ye contrast my frieze to come be-
neath? 55

The bas relief in bronze ye promised me,
Those Pans and Nymphs ye wot of, and per
chance

Some tripod, thyrsus, with a vase or so,
The Savior at his sermon on the mount,
Saint Praxed in a glory, and one Pan 60
Ready to twitch the Nymph's last garment
off,

And Moses with the tables but I know
Ye mark me not! What do they whisper
thee,

Child of my bowels, Anselm? Ah, ye hope
To revel down my villas while I gasp 65
Bricked o'er with beggar's moldy travertine¹
Which Gandolf from his tomb-top chuckles
at!

¹ cheap limestone

Nay, boys, ye love me—all of jasper, then!
 'Tis jasper ye stand pledged to, lest I grieve
 My bath must needs be left behind, alas! 70
 One block, pure green as a pistachio nut,
 There's plenty jasper somewhere in the
 world—

And have I not Saint Praxed's ear to pray
 Horses for ye, and brown Greek manuscripts,
 And mistresses with great smooth marbly
 limbs? 75

—That's if ye carve my epitaph aright,
 Choice Latin, picked phrase, Tully's¹ every
 word,

No gaudy ware like Gandolf's second line—
 Tully, my masters? Ulpian² serves his need!
 And then how I shall lie through centuries,
 And hear the blessed mutter of the mass, 81
 And see God made and eaten all day long,
 And feel the steady candle flame, and taste
 Good, strong, thick, stupefying incense
 smoke!

For as I lie here, hours of the dead night, 85
 Dying in state and by such slow degrees,
 I fold my arms as if they clasped a crook,
 And stretch my feet forth straight as stone
 can point,

And let the bedclothes, for a mortcloth, drop
 Into great laps and folds of sculptor's
 work 90

And as yon tapers dwindle, and strange
 thoughts

Grow, with a certain humming in my ears,
 About the life before I lived this life,
 And this life too, popes, cardinals and priests,
 Saint Praxed at his sermon on the mount, 95
 Your tall pale mother with her talking eyes,
 And new found agate urns as fresh as day,

And marble's language, Latin pure, discreet
 —Aha, *ELUCESCEBAT*³ quoth our friend?
 No Tully, said I, Ulpian at the best! 100
 Evil and brief hath been my pilgrimage
 All *lapis*, all, sons! Else I give the Pope
 My villas! Will ye ever eat my heart?
 Ever your eyes were as a lizard's quick,
 They glitter like your mother's for my
 soul, 105
 Or ye would heighten my impoverished
 frieze,

Piece out its starved design, and fill my vase
 With grapes, and add a visor and a Term,
 And to the tripod ye would tie a lynx
 That in his struggle throws the thyrsus
 down, 110

To comfort me on my entablature
 Whereon I am to lie till I must ask,
 "Do I live, am I dead?" There, leave me,
 there!

For ye have stabbed me with ingratitude
 To death—ye wish it—God, ye wish it!
 Stone— 115
 Gritstone, a crumble! Clammy squares which
 sweat

As if the corpse they keep were oozing
 through—

And no more *lapis* to delight the world!
 Well, go! I bless ye Fewer tapers there,
 But in a row and, going, turn your backs 120
 —Aye, like departing altar ministrants,
 And leave me in my church, the church for
 peace,

That I may watch at leisure if he leers—
 Old Gandolf—at me, from his onion stone,
 As still he envied me, so fair she was! 125

It was not only painting and religion that evoked Browning's intricate analysis, music, architecture, all the fine arts were his material. Even pedagogy was turned to poetry. "A Grammarian's Funeral" shows the life of the medieval scholars. A learned scholar has died, and his pupils are carrying him to his tomb on a hill-top, since he was too learned a man to be buried on low earth among average mortals. As a youth, the grammarian had been sprightly and handsome, but close application to his studies had cost him his health. A stony concretion (*calculus*) in the body and a bad cough (*tussis*) had weakened him. Still he refused to give up his researches, studying carefully not only the text

¹ Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 B.C.)

² Domitius Ulpianus, Roman jurist (second-third century, A.D.)

³ he was famous

but all the commentaries Now he is through with controversy, he can no longer explore the Greek particles, *Hoti*, *Oun*, and *De* He is dead

A marching song of admiration and triumph, it is another of Browning's demonstrations that "life succeeds in that it seems to fail" The Grammarian lived splendidly because he aimed for a million—and missed it He was great because he sought to see the whole (The same idea is in "Rabbi Ben Ezra" and in other poems) To Browning the Grammarian was a hero, and he presents him as such He fought for the impossible and trusted God for the future The world would laugh at him, perhaps, even despise him, but he was "still loftier than the world suspects, living and dying"

A GRAMMARIAN'S FUNERAL

SHORTLY AFTER THE REVIVAL OF LEARNING
IN EUROPE

Let us begin and carry up this corpse,
Singing together
Leave we the common crofts, the vulgar
thorpes
Each in its tether
Sleeping safe on the bosom of the plain, 5
Cared for till cock crow
Look out if yonder be not day again
Rimming the rock row!
That's the appropriate country, there, men's
thought,
Rarer, intenser, 10
Self-gathered for an outbreak, as it ought,
Chafes in the censer
Leave we the unlettered plain its herd and
crop,
Seek we sepulture
On a tall mountain, cited to the top, 15
Crowded with culture!
All the peaks soar, but one the rest excels
Clouds overcome it,
No! yonder sparkle is the citadel's
Circling its summit 20
Thither our path lies, wind we up the
heights,
Wait ye the warning?
Our low life was the level's and the night's,
He's for the morning
Step to a tune, square chests, erect each head,
'Ware the beholders! 26
This is our master, famous, calm and dead
Borne on our shoulders
Sleep, crop and herd! sleep, darkling thorpe
and croft,
Safe from the weather! 30

He, whom we convoy to his grave aloft,
Singing together,
He was a man born with thy face and throat,
Lyric Apollo!
Long he lived nameless how should Spring
take note 35
Winter would follow?
Till lo, the little touch, and youth was gone!
Cramped and diminished,
Moaned he, "New measures, other feet anon!
My dance is finished?" 40
No, that's the world's way (keep the moun-
tain side,
Make for the city!)
He knew the signal, and stepped on with
pride
Over men's pity,
Left play for work, and grappled with the
world 45
Bent on escaping
"What's in the scroll," quoth he, "thou keep
est furled?
Show me their shaping,
Theirs who most studied man, the bard and
sage,—
Give!"—So, he gowned him, 50
Straight got by heart that book to its last
page
Learned, we found him
Yea, but we found him bald too, eyes like
lead,
Accents uncertain
"Time to taste life," another would have said,
"Up with the curtain!" 56
This man said rather, "Actual life comes
next?
Patience a moment!
Grant I have mastered learning's crabbed
text,
Still there's the comment 60

Let me know all! Prate not of most or least,
 Painful or easy!
 Even to the crumbs I'd fain eat up the feast,
 Aye, nor feel queasy"
 Oh, such a life as he resolved to live, 65
 When he had learned it,
 When he had gathered all books had to give!
 Sooner, he spurned it
 Image the whole, then execute the parts—
 Fancy the fabric 70
 Quite, ere you build, ere steel strike fire
 from quartz,
 Ere mortar dab brick!

(Here's the town gate reached there's the
 market place

Gaping before us)
 Yea, this in him was the peculiar grace 75
 (Hearten our chorus!)

That before living he'd learn how to live—
 No end to learning

Earn the means first—God surely will con-
 trive

Use for our earning 80
 Others mistrust and say, "But time escapes
 Live now or never!"

He said, "What's time? Leave Now for dogs
 and apes!

Man has Forever"
 Back to his book then deeper drooped his
 head 85

Calculus racked him
 Leaden before, his eyes grew dross of lead
Tussis attacked him

"Now, master, take a little rest!"—not he!
 (Caution redoubled, 90

Step two abreast, the way winds narrowly!)

Not a whit troubled,
 Back to his studies, fresher than at first,
 Fierce as a dragon

He (soul hydroptic¹ with a sacred thirst) 95
 Sucked at the flagon

Oh, if we draw a circle premature,
 Heedless of far gain,

Greedy for quick returns of profit, sure
 Bad is our bargain! 100

Was it not great? did not he throw on God,
 (He loves the burthen)—

God's task to make the heavenly period
 Perfect the earthen?

Did not he magnify the mind, show clear 105
 Just what it all meant?

¹ thirsty, as though suffering from dropsy

He would not discount life, as fools do here
 Paid by installment

He ventured neck or nothing—heaven's suc-
 cess

Found, or earth's failure 110
 "Wilt thou trust death or not?" He answered

"Yes!
 Hence with life's pale lure!"

That low man seeks a little thing to do,
 Sees it and does it

This high man, with a great thing to pursue,
 Dies ere he knows it 116

That low man goes on adding one to one,
 His hundred's soon hit

This high man, aiming at a million,
 Misses an unit 120

That, has the world here—should he need
 the next,

Let the world mind him!
 This, throws himself on God, and unper-
 plexed

Seeking shall find him
 So, with the throttling hands of death at
 strife, 125

Ground he at grammar,
 Still, through the rattle, parts of speech were
 rife

While he could stammer
 He settled *Hoti's* business—let it be!—

Properly based *Oun*— 130
 Gave us the doctrine of the enclitic *De*,

Dead from the waist down
 Well, here's the platform, here's the proper
 place

Hail to your purleus,
 All ye highfliers of the feathered race, 135
 Swallows and curlews!

Here's the top peak, the multitude below
 Live, for they can, there

This man decided not to Live but Know—
 Bury this man there? 140

Here—here's his place, where meteors shoot,
 clouds form,

Lightnings are loosened,
 Stars come and go! Let joy break with the
 storm,

Peace let the dew send!
 Lofty designs must close in like effects 145

Loftily lying,
 Leave him—still loftier than the world sus-
 pects,

Living and dying

In confidence he drudges at their task,
And it is good to cheat the pair, and gibe,
Letting the rank tongue blossom into speech]

Setebos, Setebos, and Setebos!

'Thinketh, He dwelleth i' the cold o' the moon 25

'Thinketh He made it, with the sun to match,
But not the stars, the stars came otherwise,
Only made clouds, winds, meteors, such as that
Also this isle, what lives and grows thereon,
And snaky sea which rounds and ends the same 30

'Thinketh, it came of being ill at ease
He hated that He cannot change His cold,
Nor cure its ache, 'Hath spied an icy fish
That longed to 'scape the rock stream where she lived,
And thaw herself within the luke warm brine 35
O' the lazy sea her stream thrusts far amid,
A crystal spike 'twixt two warm walls of wave,
Only, she ever sickened, found repulse
At the other kind of water, not her life
(Green dense and dim delicious, bred o' the sun), 40
Flounced back from bliss she was not born to breathe,
And in her old bounds buried her despair,
Hating and loving warmth alike so He

'Thinketh, He made thereat the sun, this isle,
Trees and the fowls here, beast and creeping thing 45
Yon otter, sleek yet, black, lithe as a leech,
Yon auk, one fire eye in a ball of foam,
That floats and feeds, a certain badger brown
He hath watched hunt with that slant white wedge eye
By moonlight, and the pie¹ with the long tongue 50
That pricks deep into oakwarts for a worm,
And says a plain word when she finds her prize,
But will not eat the ants, the ants themselves
That build a wall of seeds and settled stalks
About their hole—He made all these and more, 55
Made all we see, and us, in spite how else?
He could not, Himself, make a second self
To be His mate, as well have made Himself
He would not make what he mislikes or slights,
An eyesore to Him, or not worth His pains 60
But did, in envy, listlessness or sport,
Make what Himself would fain, in a manner, be—
Weaker in most points, stronger in a few,
Worthy, and yet mere playthings all the while,
Things He admires and mocks too,—that is it 65
Because, so brave, so better though they be,
It nothing skills if He begin to plague

¹ magpie

Look now, I melt a gourd fruit into mash,
 Add honeycomb and pods, I have perceived,
 Which bite like finches when they bill and kiss,— 70
 Then, when froth rises bladdery, drink up all,
 Quick, quick, till maggots scamper through my brain,
 Last, throw me on my back i' the seeded thyme,
 And wanton, wishing I were born a bird
 Put case, unable to be what I wish, 75
 I yet could make a live bird out of clay
 Would not I take clay, pinch my Caliban
 Able to fly?—for, there, see, he hath wings,
 And great comb like the hoopoe's to admire,
 And there, a sting to do his foes offense, 80
 There, and I will that he begin to live,
 Fly to yon rock top, nip me off the horns
 Of grigs high up that make the merry din,
 Saucy through their veined wings, and mind me not
 In which feat, if his leg snapped, brittle clay, 85
 And he lay stupid like,—why, I should laugh,
 And if he, spying me, should fall to weep,
 Beseech me to be good, repair his wrong,
 Bid his poor leg smart less or grow again,—
 Well, as the chance were, this might take or else 90
 Not take my fancy I might hear his cry,
 And give the mankin three sound legs for one,
 Or pluck the other off, leave him like an egg,
 And lessoned he was mine and merely clay
 Were this no pleasure, lying in the thyme, 95
 Drinking the mash, with brain become alive,
 Making and marring clay at will? So He

'Thinketh, such shows nor right nor wrong in Him,
 Nor kind, nor cruel He is strong and Lord
 'Am strong myself compared to yonder crabs 100
 That march now from the mountain to the sea,
 'Let twenty pass, and stone the twenty-first,
 Loving not, hating not, just choosing so
 'Say, the first straggler that boasts purple spots
 Shall join the file, one pincer twisted off, 105
 'Say, this bruised fellow shall receive a worm,
 And two worms he whose nippers end in red,
 As it likes me each time, I do so He

Well then, 'supposeth He is good i' the main,
 Placable if His mind and ways were guessed, 110
 But rougher than His handiwork, be sure!
 Oh, He hath made things worthier than Himself,
 And envieth that, so helped, such things do more
 Than He who made them! What consoles but this?
 That they, unless through Him, do nought at all, 115
 And must submit what other use in things?
 'Hath cut a pipe of pithless elder joint

That, blown through, gives exact the scream o' the jay
 When from her wing you twitch the feathers blue
 Sound this, and little birds that hate the jay 120
 Flock within stone's throw, glad their foe is hurt
 Put case such pipe could prattle and boast forsooth
 "I catch the birds, I am the crafty thing,
 I make the cry my maker cannot make
 With his great round mouth, he must blow through mine!" 125
 Would not I smash it with my foot? So He

But wherefore rough, why cold and ill at ease?
 Aha, that is a question! Ask, for that,
 What knows,—the something over Setebos
 That made Him, or He, may be, found and fought, 130
 Worst,ed, drove off and did to nothing, perchance
 There may be something quiet o'er His head,
 Out of His reach, that feels nor joy nor grief,
 Since both derive from weakness in some way
 I joy because the quails come, would not joy 135
 Could I bring quails here when I have a mind
 This Quiet, all it hath a mind to, doth
 'Esteemeth stars the outposts of its couch,
 But never spends much thought nor care that way
 It may look up, work up,—the worse for those 140
 It works on! 'Careth but for Setebos
 The many-handed as a cuttle fish,
 Who, making Himself feared through what He does,
 Looks up, first, and perceives he cannot soar
 To what is quiet and hath happy life, 145
 Next looks down here, and out of very spite
 Makes this a bauble world to ape yon real,
 These good things to match those as hips do grapes
 'Tis solace making baubles, aye, and sport
 Himself peeped late, eyed Prosper at his books 150
 Careless and lofty, lord now of the isle
 Vexed, 'stitched a book of broad leaves, arrow shaped,
 Wrote thereon, he knows what, prodigious words,
 Has peeled a wand and called it by a name,
 Wearth at whiles for an enchanter's robe 155
 The eyed skin of a supple ocelot,
 And hath an ounce sleeker than youngling mole,
 A four legged serpent he makes cower and couch,
 Now snarl, now hold its breath and mind his eye,
 And saith she is Miranda and my wife 160
 'Keeps for his Ariel a tall pouch bill crane
 He bids go wade for fish and straight disgorge,
 Also a sea beast, lumpish, which he snared,
 Blinded the eyes of, and brought somewhat tame,
 And split its toe-webs, and now pens the drudge 165
 In a hole o' the rock and calls him Caliban,
 A bitter heart that bides its time and bites

'Plays thus at being Prosper in a way,
 Taketh his mirth with make believes so He

- His dam held that the Quiet made all things 170
 Which Setebos vexed only 'holds not so
 Who made them weak, meant weakness He might vex
 Had He meant other, while His hand was in,
 Why not make horny eyes no thorn could prick,
 Or plate my scalp with bone against the snow, 175
 Or overscale my flesh 'neath joint and joint,
 Like an orc's armor? Aye,—so spoil His sport!
 He is the One now, only He doth all
 'Saith, He may like, perchance, what profits Him
 Aye, himself loves what does him good, but why? 180
 'Gets good no otherwise This blinded beast
 Loves whoso places flesh meat on his nose,
 But, had he eyes, would want no help, but hate
 Or love, just as it liked him He hath eyes
 Also it pleaseth Setebos to work, 185
 Use all His hands, and exercise much craft,
 By no means for the love of what is worked
 'Tasteth, himself, no finer good i' the world
 When all goes right, in this safe summer time,
 And he wants little, hungers, aches not much, 190
 Than trying what to do with wit and strength
 'Falls to make something 'piled yon pile of turfs,
 And squared and stuck there squares of soft white chalk,
 And, with a fish tooth, scratched a moon on each,
 And set up endwise certain spikes of tree, 195
 And crowned the whole with a sloth's skull a top,
 Found dead i' the woods, too hard for one to kill
 No use at all i' the work, for work's sole sake,
 'Shall some day knock it down again so He
- 'Saith He is terrible watch His feats in proof! 200
 One hurricane will spoil six good months' hope
 He hath a spite against me, that I know,
 Just as He favors Prosper, who knows why?
 So it is, all the same, as well I find
 'Wove wattles half the winter, fenced them firm 205
 With stone and stake to stop she tortoises
 Crawling to lay their eggs here well, one wave,
 Feeling the foot of Him upon its neck,
 Gaped as a snake does, lolled out its large tongue,
 And licked the whole labor flat, so much for spite 210
- 'Saw a ball flame down late (yonder it lies)
 Where, half an hour before, I slept i' the shade
 Often they scatter sparkles there is force!
 'Dug up a newt He may have envied once
 And turned to stone, shut up inside a stone 215
 Please Him and hinder this?—What Prosper does?

- Aha, if He would tell me how! Not He!
 There is the sport discover how or die!
 All need not die, for of the things o' the isle
 Some flee afar, some dive, some run up trees, 220
 Those at His mercy,—why, they please Him most
 When when well, never try the same way twice!
 Repeat what act has pleased, He may grow wroth
 You must not know His ways, and play Him off,
 Sure of the issue 'Doth the like himself 225
 'Spareth a squirrel that it nothing fears
 But steals the nut from underneath my thumb,
 And when I threat, bites stoutly in defense
 'Spareth an urchin that contrariwise,
 Curls up into a ball, pretending death 230
 For fright at my approach the two ways please
 But what would move my choler more than this,
 That either creature counted on its life
 Tomorrow and next day and all days to come,
 Saying, forsooth, in the inmost of its heart, 235
 "Because he did so yesterday with me,
 And otherwise with such another brute,
 So must he do henceforth and always"—Aye?
 Would teach the reasoning couple what "must" means!
 'Doth as he likes, or wherefore Lord? So He 240
- 'Conceiveth all things will continue thus,
 And we shall have to live in fear of Him
 So long as He lives, keeps His strength no change,
 If He have done His best, make no new world
 To please Him more, so leave off watching this,— 245
 If He surprise not even the Quiet's self
 Some strange day,—or, suppose, grow into it
 As grubs grow butterflies else, here are we,
 And there is He, and nowhere help at all
- 'Believeth with the life, the pain shall stop 250
 His dam held different, that after death
 He both plagued enemies and feasted friends
 Idly! He doth His worst in this our life,
 Giving just respite lest we die through pain,
 Saving last pain for worst,—with which, an end 255
 Meanwhile, the best way to escape His ire
 Is, not to seem too happy 'Sees, himself,
 Yonder two flies, with purple films and pink,
 Bask on the pompon bell above kills both
 'Sees two black painful beetles roll their ball 260
 On head and tail as if to save their lives
 Moves them the stick away they strive to clear
- Even so, 'would have Him misconceive, suppose
 This Caliban strives hard and ails no less,
 And always, above all else, envies Him, 265

Wherefore he mainly dances on dark nights,
 Moans in the sun, gets under holes to laugh,
 And never speaks his mind save housed as now
 Outside, 'groans, curses If He caught me here,
 O'erheard this speech, and asked "What chucklest at?" 270
 'Would, to appease Him, cut a finger off,
 Or of my three kid yearlings burn the best,
 Or let the toothsome apples rot on tree,
 Or push my tame beast for the orc to taste
 While myself lit a fire, and made a song 275
 And sung it, "*What I hate, be consecrate*
To celebrate Thee and Thy state, no mate
For Thee, what see for envy in poor me?"
 Hoping the while, since evils sometimes mend,
 Warts rub away and sores are cured with slime, 280
 That some strange day, will either the Quiet catch
 And conquer Setebos, or likelier He
 Decrepit may doze, doze, as good as die

[What, what? A curtain o'er the world at once!
 Crickets stop hissing, not a bird—or, yes, 285
 There scuds His raven that has told Him all!
 It was fool's play, this prattling! Ha! the wind
 Shoulders the pillared dust, death's house o' the move,
 And fast invading fires begin! White blaze—
 A tree's head snaps—and there, there, there, there, 290
 His thunder follows! Fool to gibe at Him!
 Lo! 'Lieth flat and loveth Setebos!
 'Maketh his teeth meet through his upper lip,
 Will let those quails fly, will not eat this month
 One little mess of whelks, so he may 'scape!]

A wholly different conception of deity—one much more native to Browning—is found in "Rabbi Ben Ezra" and its conviction

Our times are in His hand
 Who saith, "A whole I planned,
 Youth shows but half, trust God see all, nor be afraid!"

Rabbi Ben Ezra, or Ibn Ezra, was an actual person, an eleventh century Jewish poet, scholar, physician, and philosopher. Many of Ben Ezra's own views coincided with Browning's, so that the poem is an amalgam of two poets.

The Rabbi, evidently leaving middle age and standing on the threshold of old age, reflects on life. Youth, he says, is good, its joys should not be scorned, its very doubts and distresses have a tonic value. But youth in itself is no desideratum, old age is the goal toward which youth progresses. We must "welcome each rebuff that turns earth's smoothness rough." Only with the years and struggle can character be formed, not what we have done but what we are is important.

Ben Ezra concludes by calling attention to the Potter's wheel, a favorite metaphor in the Orient and particularly appropriate here since the Rabbis were fond of quoting Isaiah's, "We are the clay and thou our Potter." Ben Ezra emphasizes that the Potter who shaped us determined that time should not stand still for man, but that he should be molded by its very mutability—formed by "this dance of plastic circumstance."

RABBI BEN EZRA

Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made
Our times are in His hand
Who saith, "A whole I planned, 5
Youth shows but half, trust God see all, nor
be afraid!"

Not that, amassing flowers,
Youth sighed, "Which rose make ours,
Which lily leave and then as best recall?"
Not that, admiring stars, 10
It yearned, "Nor Jove, nor Mars,
Mine be some figured flame which blends,
transcends them all!"

Not for such hopes and fears
Annulling youth's brief years,
Do I remonstrate folly wide the mark! 15
Rather I prize the doubt
Low kinds exist without,
Finished and finite clods, untroubled by a
spark

Poor vaunt of life indeed,
Were man but formed to feed 20
On joy, to solely seek and find and feast,
Such feasting ended, then
As sure an end to men,
Irks care the crop full bird? Frets doubt the
maw crammed beast?

Rejoice we are allied 25
To that which doth provide
And not partake, effect and not receive!
A spark disturbs our clod,
Nearer we hold of God
Who gives, than of his tribes that take, I
must believe 30

Then, welcome each rebuff
That turns earth's smoothness rough,

Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!
Be our joys three-parts pain!
Strive, and hold cheap the strain, 35
Learn, nor account the pang, dare, never
grudge the throe!

For thence,—a paradox
Which comforts while it mocks,—
Shall life succeed in that it seems to fail
What I aspired to be, 40
And was not, comforts me
A brute I might have been, but would not
sink i' the scale

What is he but a brute
Whose flesh has soul to suit,
Whose spirit works lest arms and legs want
play? 45
To man, propose this test—
Thy body at its best,
How far can that project thy soul on its lone
way?

Yet gifts should prove their use
I own the Past profuse 50
Of power each side, perfection every turn
Eyes, ears took in their dole,
Brain treasured up the whole,
Should not the heart beat once, "How good
to live and learn?"

Not once beat, "Praise be thine! 55
I see the whole design,
I, who saw power, see now Love perfect too,
Perfect I call thy plan
Thanks that I was a man!
Maker, remake, complete,—I trust what thou
shalt do!" 60

For pleasant is this flesh,
Our soul, in its rose mesh
Pulled ever to the earth, still yearns for rest
Would we some prize might hold

To match those manifold 65
Possessions of the brute,—gain most, as we
did best!

Let us not always say,
"Spite of this flesh today
I strove, made head, gained ground upon the
whole!"

As the bird wings and sings, 70
Let us cry, "All good things
Are ours, nor soul helps flesh more, now,
than flesh helps soul!"

Therefore I summon age
To grant youth's heritage,
Life's struggle having so far reached its
term 75

Thence shall I pass, approved
A man, for aye removed
From the developed brute, a God though in
the germ

And I shall thereupon
Take rest, ere I be gone 80
Once more on my adventure brave and new
Fearless and unperplexed,
When I wage battle next,
What weapons to select, what armor to
indue

Youth ended, I shall try 85
My gain or loss thereby,
Leave the fire ashes, what survives is gold
And I shall weigh the same,
Give life its praise or blame
Young, all lay in dispute, I shall know, being
old 90

For note, when evening shuts,
A certain moment cuts
The deed off, calls the glory from the gray
A whisper from the west
Shoots—"Add this to the rest, 95
Take it and try its worth here dies another
day"

So, still within this life,
Though lifted o'er its strife,
Let me discern, compare, pronounce at last,
"This rage was right i' the main, 100
That acquiescence vain
The Future I may face now I have proved
the Past"

For more is not reserved
To man, with soul just nerved
To act tomorrow what he learns today 105
Here, work enough to watch
The Master work, and catch
Hints of the proper craft, tricks of the tool's
true play

As it was better, youth
Should strive, through acts uncouth, 110
Toward making, than repose on aught found
made

So, better, age, exempt
From strife, should know, than tempt
Further Thou waitedst age wait death nor
be afraid!

Enough now, if the Right 115
And Good and Infinite
Be named here, as thou callest thy hand thine
own,

With knowledge absolute,
Subject to no dispute
From fools that crowded youth, nor let thee
feel alone 120

Be there, for once and all,
Severed great minds from small,
Announced to each his station in the Past!
Was I, the world arraigned,
Were they, my soul disdained, 125
Right? Let age speak the truth and give us
peace at last!

Now, who shall arbitrate?
Ten men love what I hate,
Shun what I follow, slight what I receive,
Ten, who in ears and eyes 130
Match me we all surmise,
They this thing, and I that whom shall my
soul believe?

Not on the vulgar mass
Called "work," must sentence pass,
Things done, that took the eye and had the
price, 135
O'er which, from level stand,
The low world laid its hand,
Found straightway to its mind, could value
in a trice

But all the world's coarse thumb
And finger failed to plumb, 140
So passed in making up the main account,

All instincts immature,
All purposes unsure,
That weighed not as his work, yet swelled
the man's amount

Thoughts hardly to be packed 145
Into a narrow act,
Fancies that broke through language and
escaped,
All I could never be,
All, men ignored in me,
This I was worth to God, whose wheel the
pitcher shaped 150

Aye, note that Potter's wheel,
That metaphor! and feel
Why time spins fast, why passive lies our
clay,—
Thou, to whom fools propound,
When the wine makes its round, 155
"Since life fleets, all is change, the past gone,
seize today!"

Fool! All that is, at all,
Lasts ever, past recall,
Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand
sure
What entered into thee, 160
That was, is, and shall be
Time's wheel runs back or stops Potter and
clay endure

He fixed thee 'mid this dance
Of plastic circumstance,
This Present, thou, forsooth, wouldst fain
arrest 165
Machinery just meant

To give thy soul its bent,
Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently
impressed

What though the earlier grooves,
Which ran the laughing loves 170
Around thy base, no longer pause and press?
What though, about thy rim,
Skull things in order grim
Grow out, in graver mood, obey the sterner
stress?

Look not thou down but up! 175
To uses of a cup,
The festal board, lamp's flash and trumpet's
peal,
The new wine's foaming flow,
The Master's lips aglow!
Thou, heaven's consummate cup, what needst
thou with earth's wheel? 180

But I need, now as then,
Thee, God, who moldest men,
And since, not even while the whirl was
worst,
Did I—to the wheel of life
With shapes and colors rife, 185
Bound dizzily—mistake my end, to slake
thy thirst

So, take and use thy work,
Amend what flaws may lurk,
What strain o' the stuff, what warpings past
the aim!
My times be in thy hand! 190
Perfect the cup as planned!
Let age approve of youth, and death com-
plete the same!

The concluding line of the fourth stanza of "Rabbi Ben Ezra" with its cacophony of consonants—"Irks care the crop-full bird? Frets doubt the maw crammed beast?"—brings up the matter of Browning's diction. Unlike Tennyson's graceful verse, all sweetness and control, Browning's energetic or brusque lines rush on with almost unreserved force. But it is only in extreme instances that Browning sacrifices euphony, and even when he does so it seems purposeful. "Popularity," for example, begins musically enough, syllable follows syllable with charm and ease. But soon the consonants jostle against each other, the lines break in two, and the poem dives headlong from the calm beauty of

Who has not heard how Tyrian shells
Enclosed the blue, that dye of dyes—

to the almost unpronounceable ugliness of

Hobbs hints blue,—straight he turtle eats
Nobbs prints blue,—claret crowns his cup
Nokes outdares Stokes in azure feats,—
Both gorge Who fished the murex up?
What porridge had John Keats?

But there is method in Browning's ugliness. The hideous syllables arrest the reader's smooth progress, they bring him up short and make him, too, see how popularity can change a thing of beauty into cheap commercial success. The very sound accomplishes the purpose as effectively as a sermon. As Lascelles Abercrombie comments, "What makes the words so remarkably animated here? It is the intensity of ferocious and amused contempt with which they are charged. And where do we find that? Scarcely at all in their meaning, almost entirely in their sound."

Rarely in literature has there been such a range of tone—a range which was, somehow, kept strictly within the author's style. Browning used the colloquial idiom and the elevated manner with equal ease, he enlivened the one and deepened the other, and alternated them in a dazzling, if sometimes fantastic, counterpoint. Analogies are usually misleading, and it is especially hazardous to speak of one art in terms of another. Yet there is a kinship between musicians and poets, and if Keats may be compared to Schubert because of his precocious lyricism and the serene purity of his spirit, Browning may be likened to Wagner with his turbulent virtuosity, his effective use of dissonance, and his orchestral richness.

This orchestral quality is evident in most of Browning's longer poems. It is manifest even in the shorter "Up at a Villa—Down in the City." The contrasted sights and sensations, the very smells, are communicated by the swiftly changing sounds.

UP AT A VILLA—DOWN IN THE CITY

AS DISTINGUISHED BY AN ITALIAN PERSON OF QUALITY

Had I but plenty of money, money enough and to spare,
The house for me, no doubt, were a house in the city-square,
Ah, such a life, such a life, as one leads at the window there!

Something to see, by Bacchus, something to hear, at least!
There, the whole day long, one's life is a perfect feast,
While up at a villa one lives, I maintain it, no more than a beast.

5

Well now, look at our villa! stuck like the horn of a bull
Just on a mountain edge as bare as the creature's skull,
Save a mere shag of a bush with hardly a leaf to pull!
—I scratch my own, sometimes, to see if the hair's turned wool.

10

But the city, oh the city—the square with the houses! Why?
 They are stone faced, white as a curd, there's something to take the eye!
 Houses in four straight lines, not a single front awry,
 You watch who crosses and gossips, who saunters, who hurries by,
 Green blinds, as a matter of course, to draw when the sun gets high, 15
 And the shops with fanciful signs which are painted properly

What of a villa? Though winter be over in March by rights,
 'Tis May perhaps ere the snow shall have withered well off the heights
 You've the brown plowed land before, where the oxen steam and wheeze,
 And the hills over smoked behind by the faint gray olive trees 20

Is it better in May, I ask you? You've summer all at once,
 In a day he leaps complete with a few strong April suns
 'Mid the sharp short emerald wheat, scarce risen three fingers well,
 The wild tulip, at end of its tube, blows out its great red bell
 Like a thin clear bubble of blood, for the children to pick and sell 25

Is it ever hot in the square? There's a fountain to spout and splash!
 In the shade it sings and springs, in the shine such foam bows flash
 On the horses with curling fish tails, that prance and paddle and pash
 Round the lady atop in her conch—fifty gazers do not abash,
 Though all that she wears is some weeds round her waist in a sort of sash 30

All the year long at the villa, nothing to see though you linger,
 Except yon cypress that points like death's lean lifted forefinger
 Some think fireflies pretty, when they mix i' the corn and mingle,
 Or thrud the stinking hemp till the stalks of it seem atingle
 Late August or early September, the stunning cicala is shrill, 35
 And the bees keep their tiresome whine round the resinous firs on the hill
 Enough of the seasons,—I spare you the months of the fever and chill

Ere you open your eyes in the city, the blessed church bells begin
 No sooner the bells leave off than the diligence rattles in
 You get the pick of the news, and it costs you never a pin 40
 By and by there's the traveling doctor gives pills, lets blood, draws teeth,
 Or the Pulcinello-trumpet breaks up the market beneath
 At the post-office such a scene-picture—the new play, piping hot!
 And a notice how, only this morning, three liberal thieves were shot
 Above it, behold the Archbishop's most fatherly of rebukes, 45
 And beneath, with his crown and his lion, some little new law of the
 Duke's!

Or a sonnet with flowery marge, to the Reverend Don So and so,
 Who is Dante, Boccaccio, Petrarca, Saint Jerome, and Cicero,
 "And moreover," (the sonnet goes rhyming,) "the skirts of Saint Paul
 has reached,
 Having preached us those six Lent-lectures more unctuous than ever
 he preached" 50
 Noon strikes,—here sweeps the procession! our Lady borne smiling and
 smart

With a pink gauze gown all spangles, and seven swords stuck in her heart!
Bang-whang-whang goes the drum, *tootle-te tootle* the fife,
 No keeping one's haunches still it's the greatest pleasure in life

But bless you, it's dear—it's dear! fowls, wine, at double the rate 55
 They have clapped a new tax upon salt, and what oil pays passing the gate
 It's a horror to think of And so, the villa for me, not the city!
 Beggars can scarcely be choosers but still—ah, the pity, the pity!
 Look, two and two go the priests, then the monks with cowls and sandals,
 And the penitents dressed in white shirts, a holding the yellow candles, 60
 One, he carries a flag up straight, and another a cross with handles,
 And the Duke's guard brings up the rear, for the better prevention of
 scandals
Bang whang-whang goes the drum, *tootle te tootle* the fife
 Oh, a day in the city square, there is no such pleasure in life!

Something of the same musical dexterity, though in a more restrained key, is evidenced in "Love Among the Ruins" Here a skillful variation of gently moving long lines joined by the rhyming of measured short ones expresses the calm assurance of love Contrasting the noisy splendor of ancient Rome with the quiet pastures about him, the speaker, an obscure countryman, has no regrets, he knows that the love of living men and women is more important than the toppled bridges of antiquity, the thousand golden chariots, and all the proud temples of the past

LOVE AMONG THE RUINS

Where the quiet colored end of evening smiles
 Miles and miles
 On the solitary pastures where our sheep
 Half asleep
 Tinkle homeward through the twilight, stray
 or stop 5
 As they crop—
 Was the site once of a city great and gay
 (So they say),
 Of our country's very capital, its prince
 Ages since 10
 Held his court in, gathered councils, wield
 ing far
 Peace or war
 Now,—the country does not even boast a tree,
 As you see,
 To distinguish slopes of verdure, certain rills
 From the hills 16
 Intersect and give a name to (else they run
 Into one),
 Where the domed and daring palace shot its
 spires
 Up like fires 20
 O'er the hundred gated circuit of a wall
 Bounding all,

Made of marble, men might march on nor
 be pressed,
 Twelve abreast
 And such plenty and perfection, see, of grass
 Never was! 26
 Such a carpet as, this summer-time, o'er
 spreads
 And embeds
 Every vestige of the city, guessed alone,
 Stock or stone— 30
 Where a multitude of men breathed joy and
 woe
 Long ago,
 Lust of glory pricked their hearts up, dread
 of shame
 Struck them tame,
 And that glory and that shame alike, the gold
 Bought and sold 36
 Now,—the single little turret that remains
 On the plains,
 By the caper overrooted, by the gourd
 Overscored, 40
 While the patching houseleek's head of blos
 som winks
 Through the chinks—

Marks the basement whence a tower in an
 cient time
 Sprang sublime,
 And a burning ring, all round, the chariots
 traced 45
 As they raced,
 And the monarch and his minions and his
 dames
 Viewed the games

And I know—while thus the quiet colored
 eve
 Smiles to leave 50
 To their folding, all our many tinkling fleece
 In such peace,
 And the slopes and rills in undistinguished
 gray
 Melt away—
 That a girl with eager eyes and yellow hair 55
 Waits me there
 In the turret whence the charioteers caught
 soul
 For the goal,
 When the king looked, where she looks now,
 breathless, dumb
 Till I come 60

But he looked upon the city, every side,
 Far and wide,
 All the mountains topped with temples, all
 the glades'

Colonnades,
 All the causeys, bridges, aqueducts,—and
 then, 65
 All the men!
 When I do come, she will speak not, she will
 stand,
 Either hand
 On my shoulder, give her eyes the first em-
 brace
 Of my face, 70
 Ere we rush, ere we extinguish sight and
 speech
 Each on each

In one year they sent a million fighters
 forth
 South and North,
 And they built their gods a brazen pillar
 high 75
 As the sky,
 Yet reserved a thousand chariots in full
 force—
 Gold, of course
 Oh heart! oh blood that freezes, blood that
 burns!
 Earth's returns 80
 For whole centuries of folly, noise and sin!
 Shut them in,
 With their triumphs and their glories and
 the rest!
 Love is best

Browning's shorter lyrics are among his most popular works, and justly so "Cavalier Tunes" rings with the bravado of the Cavaliers and their scorn of the Roundheads, modern readers may have no interest in the now-forgotten proper names in the verses, yet they cannot help but respond to the gusto with which the lines were written "Home-Thoughts from Abroad" remains one of the most poignant expressions of nostalgia—especially the nostalgia for England—that have ever been written "Meeting at Night" is a flashlight drama packed in a lyric "Memorabilia" is a suggestive summoning of the poet by the mention of his name, just as an eagle-feather revives the memory of the moor on which it was found "My Star," supposedly refers to Mrs. Browning, but it is not necessarily personal in application And the famous "Song from Pippa Passes" condenses Browning's affirmative philosophy into eight short, unforgettable lines

SONG

(FROM "PIPPA PASSES")

The year's at the spring
 And day's at the morn,
 Morning's at seven,
 The hill side's dew pearled,
 The lark's on the wing,
 The snail's on the thorn
 God's in his heaven—
 All's right with the world!

MY STAR

All that I know
 Of a certain star
 Is, it can throw
 (Like the angled spar)
 Now a dart of red, 5
 Now a dart of blue,
 Till my friends have said
 They would fain see, too,
 My star that dartles the red and the blue!
 Then it stops like a bird, like a flower,
 hangs furled 10
 They must solace themselves with the
 Saturn above it
 What matter to me if their star is a world?
 Mine has opened its soul to me, therefore
 I love it

CAVALIER TUNES

I MARCHING ALONG

Kentish Sir Byng stood for his King,
 Bidding the crop headed Parliament swing
 And, pressing a troop unable to stoop
 And see the rogues flourish and honest folk
 droop,
 Marched them along, fifty score strong, 5
 Great hearted gentlemen, singing this song

God for King Charles! Pym and such carles
 To the Devil that prompts 'em their trea-
 sonous parles!
 Cavaliers, up! Lips from the cup,

Hands from the pasty, nor bite take nor sup
 Till you're—

Chorus—Marching along, fifty score
 strong, 11
 Great hearted gentlemen, singing
 this song!

Hampden to hell, and his obsequies' knell
 Serve Hazelrig, Fiennes, and young Harry
 as well!

England, good cheer! Rupert is near! 15
 Kentish and loyalists, keep we not here,

Chorus—Marching along, fifty score
 strong,
 Great hearted gentlemen, singing
 this song?

Then, God for King Charles! Pym and his
 snarls

To the Devil that pricks on such pestilent
 carles! 20

Hold by the right, you double your might,
 So, onward to Nottingham fresh for the
 fight,

Chorus—March we along, fifty score
 strong,
 Great hearted gentlemen, singing
 this song!

II GIVE A ROUSE

King Charles, and who'll do him right now?
 King Charles, and who's ripe for fight now?
 Give a rouse, here's, in hell's despite now,
 King Charles!

Who gave me the goods that went since? 5
 Who raised me the house that sank once?
 Who helped me to gold I spent since?
 Who found me in wine you drank once?

Chorus—King Charles, and who'll do him
 right now?
 King Charles, and who's ripe for
 fight now? 10
 Give a rouse here's, in hell's
 despite now,
 King Charles!

To whom used my boy George quaff else,
 By the old fool's side that begot him?

For whom did he cheer and laugh else, 15
While Noll's¹ damned troopers shot him?

Chorus—King Charles, and who'll do him
right now?

King Charles, and who's ripe for
fight now?

Give a rouse here's, in hell's
despite now,

King Charles! 20

III BOOT AND SADDLE

Boot, saddle, to horse and away!

Rescue my castle before the hot day

Brightens to blue from its silvery gray

Chorus—Boot, saddle, to horse and away!

Ride past the suburbs, asleep as you'd say, 5

Many's the friend there, will listen and pray

"God's luck to gallants that strike up the
lay—

Chorus—Boot, saddle, to horse, and
away!"

Forty miles off, like a roebuck at bay,

Flouts Castle Brancepeth the Roundheads'
array 10

Who laughs, "Good fellows ere this, by my
fay,

Chorus—Boot, saddle, to horse, and
away!"

Who? My wife Gertrude, that, honest and
gay,

Laughs when you talk of surrendering,
"Nay!

I've better counselors, what counsel they? 15

Chorus—Boot, saddle, to horse, and
away!"

MEMORABILIA

Ah, did you once see Shelley plain,

And did he stop and speak to you,

And did you speak to him again?

How strange it seems and new!

But you were living before that, 5

And also you are living after,

¹ Oliver Cromwell's

And the memory I started at—

My starting moves your laughter!

I crossed a moor, with a name of its own

And a certain use in the world no doubt, 10

Yet a hand's-breadth of it shines alone

'Mid the blank miles round about

For there I picked up on the heather

And there I put inside my breast

A molted feather, an eagle feather! 15

Well, I forget the rest

MEETING AT NIGHT

The gray sea and the long black land,

And the yellow half moon large and low,

And the startled little waves that leap

In fiery ringlets from their sleep,

As I gain the cove with pushing prow, 5

And quench its speed i' the slushy sand

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach,

Three fields to cross till a farm appears,

A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch

And blue spurt of a lighted match, 10

And a voice less loud, through its joys and
fears,

Than the two hearts beating each to each!

HOME THOUGHTS FROM ABROAD

Oh, to be in England

Now that April's there,

And whoever wakes in England

Sees, some morning, unaware,

That the lowest boughs and the brushwood
sheaf 5

Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,

While the chaffinch sings on the orchard
bough

In England—now!

And after April, when May follows,

And the whitethroat builds, and all the swal-
lows! 10

Hark, where my blossomed pear tree in the
hedge

Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's
edge—

That's the wise thrush, he sings each song
twice over,

Lest you should think he never could recap
ture

The first fine careless rapture!

And though the fields look rough with hoary
dew,

All will be gay when noontide wakes anew

The buttercups, the little children's dower

—Far brighter than this gaudy melon
flower!

15

20

Asolando is a collection of poems published on the very day of Browning's death. Browning prepared the volume at the villa of Mrs. Arthur Bronson (to whom it was dedicated) in Asolo—hence the title. Of the "Epilogue" Browning said, "It almost looks like bragging to say this, and as if I ought to cancel it, but it's the simple truth, and as it's true, it shall stand."

The "Epilogue" and the related "Prospice" (meaning "Look Forward" and written just after the death of Mrs. Browning) sum up Browning's virile, if sometimes over stressed, heartiness, his high courage, and his undeviating optimism.

PROSPICE

Fear death?—to feel the fog in my throat,

The mist in my face,

When the snows begin, and the blasts denote

I am nearing the place,

The power of the night, the press of the storm,

5

The post of the foe,

Where he stands, the Arch Fear in a visible form,

Yet the strong man must go

For the journey is done and the summit attained,

And the barriers fall,

10

Though a battle's to fight ere the guerdon be gained,

The reward of it all

I was ever a fighter, so—one fight more,

The best and the last!

I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and forbore,

15

And bade me creep past

No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers

The heroes of old,

Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears

Of pain, darkness and cold

20

For sudden the worst turns the best to the brave,

The black minute's at end,

And the elements' rage, the fiend voices that rave,

Shall dwindle, shall blend,

Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,

25

Then a light, then thy breast,

O thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,

And with God be the rest!

EPILOGUE TO ASOLANDO

At the midnight in the silence of the sleep time,
 When you set your fancies free,
 Will they pass to where—by death, fools think, imprisoned—
 Low he lies who once so loved you, whom you loved so,
 —Pity me? 5

Oh to love so, be so loved, yet so mistaken!
 What had I on earth to do
 With the slothful, with the mawkish, the unmanly?
 Like the aimless, helpless, hopeless, did I drivel
 —Being—who? 10

One who never turned his back but marched breast forward,
 Never doubted clouds would break,
 Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,
 Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
 Sleep to wake 15

No, at noonday in the bustle of man's work time
 Greet the unseen with a cheer!
 Bid him forward, breast and back as either should be,
 "Strive and thrive!" cry "Speed,—fight on, fare ever
 There as here!" 20

THE REALISTIC ATTITUDE

With the passing of the great Victorian figures, the age itself seemed to shrink. Unwilling to accept the old standards and unable to offer new ones, the succeeding generation escaped into heroics and an affectedly picturesque past or in pretty trifling, like Andrew Lang, Edmund Gosse, and Austin Dobson. A few men only were strong enough to make poetry of their uncertainty. Matthew Arnold voiced his doubt, especially in "Dover Beach," but maintained that a faltering faith is not a hopeless one, and that the search for moral truth is more important than the acceptance of religious dogma. Coventry Patmore attempted to bring ecstasy to Victorian placidity, "The Angel in the House" is a strange mixture of the material and the supernal. Thomas Hardy intensified Arnold's passion for honesty, his motto might well have been

Let there be truth at last
 Even if despair

An era of realism was at hand. It was not pessimism—though pessimism may well have been a reaction from the prevailing Philistinism—but a desire to see the world as it is, with all its cruelties and contradictions uncolored by the idyllic pantheism of Wordsworth and the indomitable, but sometimes insufferable, optimism of Browning. Thomas Hardy spanned the gap between the older writers of the nineteenth century and the younger men of the twen-

tieth His influence was widespread though little acknowledged, following him, such realists as John Masefield and Siegfried Sassoon are notable But both Masefield and Sassoon withdrew from the factual scene, and its demands, into meditation before they had reached middle age Hardy remained the uncompromising realist until his death

THOMAS HARDY

Thomas Hardy was born in Dorsetshire, June 2, 1840 His father was a stone mason, but when Hardy was sixteen he was apprenticed to an architect In London he won a prize, offered by the Royal Institute of British Architects, in 1863 But he had already begun to write and, almost against his will, stories were taking shape in his mind In 1871 the first of his books, *Desperate Remedies*, appeared, and in the next twenty-five years Hardy became famous as a novelist In 1895 his *Jude the Obscure* was howled down as "immoral" Critics sanctoriously condemned it, bishops boasted of having burned it Modern readers of the work find it hard to realize what could have caused the outburst He turned from prose to devote himself exclusively to poetry, which he had always loved, and continued to write verse until his death, January 11, 1928 His ashes were placed in Westminster Abbey, but his heart, as requested in his will, was buried in the Wessex countryside he loved so deeply

His *Collected Poems* (1919) in their very cumulativeness, and the even later verse, reveal Hardy for the important poet that he is Many critics have objected to the unevenness and technical faults of his lines But most of these "faults" are carefully designed, and the rudeness is as natural to his strength as the rough surface is to the sculptures of Rodin His knotted verses have a beauty of their own, like an old apple-tree, gnarled with years, yet creating a pattern far more interesting than the smoothly symmetrical poplar

Much has been made of Hardy's pessimism, a charge which he always vigorously denied It is true that he did not venerate nature as the Romantic poets did He knew nature too intimately to believe it was beneficent Far from being man's salvation, nature was merely another scene of his wars Hardy knew the grim warfare of the farmer, the tragedies of drouth and disease, the eternal struggles of plant and parasite He was not deceived by the fair face of a landscape The earthly aspect of nature was but one part of the universal scheme which was neither cruel nor kindly, but apathetic If the universe was governed at all, it was governed by accident, by casualty His poems "Hap" and "The Convergence of the Twain" recognize that human suffering is not caused by some vengeful god, but by a blind destiny which has no concern with the affairs of man

H A P¹

If but some vengeful god would call to me
 From up the sky, and laugh "Thou suffering thing,
 Know that thy sorrow is my ecstasy,
 That thy love's loss is my hate's profitung!"

Then would I bear it, clench myself, and die, 5
 Steeled by the sense of ire unmerited,
 Half-eased in that a Powerfuller than I
 Had willed and meted me the tears I shed

But not so How arrives it joy lies slain,
 And why unblooms the best hope ever sown? 10
 —Crass Casualty obstructs the sun and rain,
 And dicing Time for gladness casts a moan
 These purblind Doomsters had as readily strown
 Blisses about my pilgrimage as pain

THE CONVERGENCE OF THE TWAIN²

(*Lanes on the loss of the "Titanic"*)

I

In a solitude of the sea
 Deep from human vanity,
 And the Pride of Life that planned her, stilly couches she

II

Steel chambers, late the pyres
 Of her salamandrine fires, 5
 Cold currents thrird, and turn to rhythmic tidal lyres

III

Over the mirrors meant
 To glass the opulent
 The sea worm crawls—grotesque, slimed, dumb, indifferent

IV

Jewels in joy designed 10
 To ravish the sensuous mind
 Lie lightless, all their sparkles bleared and black and blind

¹ From *Wessex Poems* By permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers

² From *Satires of Circumstance* by Thomas Hardy By permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

V

Dim moon eyed fishes near
Gaze at the gilded gear
And query "What does this vaingloriousness down here?" 15

VI

Well while was fashioning
This creature of cleaving wing,
The Immanent Will that stirs and urges everything

VII

Prepared a sinister mate
For her—so gaily great— 20
A Shape of Ice, for the time far and dissociate

VIII

And as the smart ship grew
In stature, grace, and hue,
In shadowy silent distance grew the Iceberg too

IX

Alien they seemed to be, 25
No mortal eye could see
The intimate welding of their later history,

X

Or sign that they were bent
By paths coincident
On being anon twin halves of one august event, 30

XI

Till the Spinner of the Years
Said "Now!" And each one hears,
And consummation comes, and jars two hemispheres

Pitiless the universe may be, and purblind, but it is not without its ironies. A close observer of men, Hardy relished, with something like tenderness, man's heroisms, even his pretensions and absurdities. Long before Edgar Lee Masters uncovered the hidden secrets of small-town life in *Spoon River Anthology*, Hardy had written, with more restraint and far greater artistry, his *Satires of Circumstance*. They are the "other side" of the Victorian religious and moral conventions.

The kettle descants in a cozy drone,
And the young wife looks in her husband's
face,
And then at her guest's, and shows in her
own
Her sense that she fills an envied place,
And the visiting lady is all abloom, 5
And says there was never so sweet a room

And the happy young housewife does not
know
That the woman beside her was first his
choice,
Till the fates ordained it could not be so
Betraying nothing in look or voice 10
The guest sits smiling and sips her tea,
And he throws her a stray glance yearningly

IN CHURCH¹

"And now to God the Father," he ends,
And his voice thrills up to the topmost tiles
Each listener chokes as he bows and bends,
And emotion pervades the crowded aisles
Then the preacher glides to the vestry door, 5
And shuts it, and thinks he is seen no more

The door swings softly ajar meanwhile,
And a pupil of his in the Bible class,
Who adores him as one without gloss or
guile,
Sees her idol stand with a satisfied smile 10
And reenact at the vestry glass
Each pulpit gesture in deft dumb show
That had moved the congregation so

BY HER AUNT'S GRAVE¹

"Sixpence a week," says the girl to her lover,
"Aunt used to bring me, for she could con-
fide
In me alone, she vowed 'Twas to cover
The cost of her headstone when she died
And that was a year ago last June, 5
I've not yet fixed it But I must soon "

"And where is the money now, my dear?
"O, snug in my purse Aunt was s
slow
In saving it—eighty weeks, or near "
"Let's spend it," he hints "For she won't
know 10
There's a dance tonight at the Load of Hay "
She passively nods And they go that way

IN THE STUDY¹

He enters, and mute on the edge of a chair
Sits a thin-faced lady, a stranger there,
A type of decayed gentility,
And by some small signs he well can guess
That she comes to him almost breakfastless 5

"I have called—I hope I do not err—
I am looking for a purchaser
Of some score volumes of the works
Of eminent divines I own—
Left by my father—though it irks 10
My patience to offer them " And she smiles
As if necessity were unknown,
"But the truth of it is that oftenwhiles
I have wished, as I am fond of art,
To make my rooms a little smart, 15
And these old books are so in the way "
And lightly still she laughs to him,
As if to sell were a mere gay whim,
And that, to be frank, Life were indeed
To her not vinegar and gall, 20
But fresh and honey like, and Need
No household skeleton at all

AT THE DRAPER'S¹

"I stood at the back of the shop, my dear,
But you did not perceive me
Well, when they deliver what you were
shown
I shall know nothing of it, believe me"

And he coughed and coughed as she paled
and said, 5
"O, I didn't see you come in there—
Why couldn't you speak?"—"Well, I didn't
I left
That you should not notice I'd been there.

¹ From *Satures of Circumstance* By permission of
The Macmillan Company, publishers

"You were viewing some lovely things 'Soon
required

For a widow, of latest fashion', 10
And I knew 'twould upset you to meet the
man

Who had to be cold and ashen

"And screwed in a box before they could
dress you

'In the last new note in mourning,'
As they defined it So, not to distress you, 15
I left you to your adorning"

"AH, ARE YOU DIGGING
ON MY GRAVE?"¹

"Ah, are you digging on my grave,
My loved one?—planting rue?"

—"No yesterday he went to wed
One of the brightest wealth has bred
'It cannot hurt her now,' he said, 5
'That I should not be true'"

"Then who is digging on my grave?
My nearest dearest kin?"

—"Ah, no they sit and think, 'What use!
What good will planting flowers produce?' 10
No tendance of her mound can loose
Her spirits from Death's gin'"

"But some one digs upon my grave?
My enemy?—prodding sly?"

—"Nay when she heard you had passed the
Gate 15

That shuts on all flesh soon or late,
She thought you no more worth her hate,
And cares not where you lie"

"Then who is digging on my grave?
Say—since I have not guessed!" 20

—"O it is I, my mistress dear,
Your little dog, who still lives near,
And much I hope my movements here
Have not disturbed your rest?"

"Ah, yes! *You* dig upon my grave 25
Why flashed it not on me
That one true heart was left behind!
What feeling do we ever find
To equal among human kind
A dog's fidelity!" 30

"Mistress, I dug upon your grave
To bury a bone, in case
I should be hungry near this spot
When passing on my daily trot
I am sorry, but I quite forgot 35
It was your resting place"

It is not to be inferred that Hardy himself was without pity. He saw humanity struggling with environment, and because its success was so much a matter of pure chance, Hardy was the more moved. He was dubious about ultimate purposes, but he was stirred by the struggle of men. The very hopelessness of this struggle touched him most deeply, for he knew, as Siegfried Sassoon wrote, "when men grow aware of the futility of their effort, and yet strive to fashion something from it, they become noble and tragic." Such poems as "The Darkling Thrush," "The Man He Killed," and "In Time of 'The Breaking of Nations'" express this sense of nobility.

THE DARKLING THRUSH²

I leant upon a coppice gate
When Frost was specter-gray,
And Winter's dregs made desolate

The weakening eye of day
The tangled bine stems scored the sky 5
Like strings of broken lyres,
And all mankind that haunted nigh
Had sought their household fires

¹ From *Satires of Circumstance*. By permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

² From *Poems of the Past and the Present*. By permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

The land's sharp features seemed to be
 The Century's corpse outleant, 10
 His crypt the cloudy canopy,
 The wind his death lament
 The ancient pulse of germ and birth
 Was shrunken hard and dry,
 And every spirit upon earth 15
 Seemed fervorless as I

At once a voice arose among
 The bleak twigs overhead
 In a full hearted evensong
 Of joy illimited, 20
 An aged thrush, frail, gaunt, and small,
 In blast beruffled plume,
 Had chosen thus to fling his soul
 Upon the growing gloom

So little cause for carolings 25
 Of such ecstatic sound
 Was written on terrestrial things
 Afar or nigh around,
 That I could think there trembled through
 His happy good night air 30
 Some blessed Hope, whereof he knew
 And I was unaware

THE MAN HE KILLED¹

"Had he and I but met
 By some old ancient inn,
 We should have sat us down to wet
 Right many a nipperkin!

"But ranged as infantry, 5
 And staring face to face,

I shot at him as he at me,
 And killed him in his place

"I shot him dead because—
 Because he was my foe, 10
 Just so my foe of course he was,
 That's clear enough, although

"He thought he'd 'list, perhaps,
 Off-hand like—just as I—
 Was out of work—had sold his traps— 15
 No other reason why

"Yes, quaint and curious war is!
 You shoot a fellow down
 You'd treat if met where any bar is,
 Or help to half-a-crown" 20

IN TIME OF 'THE BREAKING
 OF NATIONS'²

Only a man harrowing clods
 In a slow silent walk,
 With an old horse that stumbles and nods
 Half asleep as they stalk

Only thin smoke without flame 5
 From the heaps of couch grass
 Yet this will go onward the same
 Though Dynasties pass

Yonder a maid and her wight
 Come whispering by, 10
 War's annals will fade into night
 Ere their story die

Although Hardy repeatedly registered "a wistful understanding of the human scene," he wrote few autobiographical poems. Among these few "Afterwards" and "Waiting Both," curiously dissimilar in meter though closely related in mood, were written during the latter part of his life. The first particularly reveals his intense observation of small as well as immense things, the second, with its premonition of death, is in interesting contrast to Browning's "Epilogue." Both are among Hardy's most memorable poems.

¹ From *Time's Laughingstocks*. By permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

² From *Moments of Vision*. By permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

AFTERWARDS¹

When the Present has latched its postern behind my tremulous stay,
 And the May month flaps its glad green leaves like wings,
 Delicate filmed as new spun silk, will the neighbors say,
 "He was a man who used to notice such things?"

If it be in the dusk when, like an eyelid's soundless blink, 5
 The dewfall hawk comes crossing the shades to alight
 Upon the wind warped upland thorn, a gazer may think,
 "To him this must have been a familiar sight"

If I pass during some nocturnal blackness, mothy and warm,
 When the hedgehog travels furtively over the lawn, 10
 One may say, "He strove that such innocent creatures should come to no harm,
 But he could do little for them, and now he is gone"

If, when hearing that I have been stilled at last, they stand at the door,
 Watching the full starred heavens that winter sees,
 Will this thought rise on those who will meet my face no more, 15
 "He was one who had an eye for such mysteries?"

And will any say when my bell of quittance is heard in the gloom,
 And a crossing breeze cuts a pause in its outrollings,
 Till they rise again, as they were a new bell's boom,
 "He hears it not now, but used to notice such things?" 20

WAITING BOTH²

A star looks down at me,
 And says "Here I and you
 Stand, each in our degree
 What do you mean to do,—
 Mean to do?"

5

I say "For all I know,
 Wait, and let Time go by,
 Till my change come"—"Just so"
 The star says "So mean I —
 So mean I"

10

JOHN MASEFIELD

John Masefield was born June 1, 1878, in the village of Ledbury, Herefordshire, England. At fourteen he was indentured on board a merchant ship and served for three years. Seventeen found him working in Greenwich Village, New York City, a year later, while living in Yonkers, where he was employed in a carpet factory, he began to read poetry, started to imitate it, and discovered he was a poet. He tells us that the realm of poetry was opened to him by Chaucer, there he found "a new world of wonder and delight."

In 1897 he returned to England. Five years later his first book, *Salt-Water Ballads* (1902) appeared. This volume was followed by *Ballads* (1905) and *A*

¹ From *Moments of Vision*. By permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

² From *Human Shows*. By permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

Mainsail Haul (1905), the first two are collections of poems, the third, a book of short nautical stories. The three early volumes are candid and sometimes crude expressions, but there is no question of their vitality. Masefield had learned the realities on shipboard, the young poet instinctively knew that strenuous action, the hearty communion of rough spirits, and the frank joy in actual life could not be communicated by soft images and delicate meters. Yet, even in the midst of his accurate portrayals of the hardships of existence and the terror of the sea, the poet is struck with life's mystery and magic. "Sea-Fever" and "A Wanderer's Song" communicate his nostalgia for the sea, its freedom, and never-to-be-forgotten lure.

SEA FEVER¹

I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by,
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white sail's shaking,
And a gray mist on the sea's face, and a gray dawn breaking

I must go down to the seas again, for the call of the running tide 5
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied,
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds flying,
And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the sea gulls crying

I must go down to the seas again, to the vagrant gypsy life,
To the gull's way and the whale's way, where the wind's like a 10
whetted knife,
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow-rover,
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's over

A WANDERER'S SONG

A wind's in the heart of me, a fire's in my heels,
I am tired of brick and stone and rumbling wagon-wheels,
I hunger for the sea's edge, the limits of the land,
Where the wild old Atlantic is shouting on the sand

Oh, I'll be going, leaving the noises of the street, 5
To where a lifting foresail foot is yanking at the sheet,
To a windy, tossing anchorage where yawls and ketches ride,
Oh, I'll be going, going, until I meet the tide

And first I'll hear the sea wind, the mewling of the gulls,
The clucking, sucking of the sea about the rusty hulls, 10
The songs at the capstan in the hooker warping out,
And then the heart of me'll know I'm there or thereabout

¹ This poem and the following by John Masefield are from *Poems*, 1925, The Macmillan Company. By permission of the publishers.

THE REALISTIC ATTITUDE

Oh, I am tired of brick and stone, the heart of me is sick,
 For windy green, unquiet sea, the realm of Moby Dick,
 And I'll be going, going, from the roaring of the wheels,
 For a wind's in the heart of me, a fire's in my heels 15

"Laugh and Be Merry" has something of the same pulse, but here wistfulness is exchanged for buoyancy. The tone is deepened in "A Consecration," a poem which reveals Masfield's early passion for humanity and a particular sympathy for those who are exploited and forgotten. The poet pledges himself to record the lives of "the scorned, the rejected, the men hemmed in with the spears." He will not glorify the "be medaled Commander," the princes and prelates, but "the stoker of steamers, the man with the clout"—the maimed, the halt, and the blind.

LAUGH AND BE MERRY

Laugh and be merry, remember, better the world with a song,
 Better the world with a blow in the teeth of a wrong
 Laugh, for the time is brief, a thread the length of a span
 Laugh and be proud to belong to the old proud pageant of man

Laugh and be merry, remember, in olden time 5
 God made Heaven and Earth for joy He took in a rhyme,
 Made them, and filled them with the strong red wind of His mirth,
 The splendid joy of the stars the joy of the earth

So we must laugh and drink from the deep blue cup of the sky,
 Join the jubilant song of the great stars sweeping by, 10
 Laugh, and battle, and work, and drink of the wine outpoured
 In the dear green earth, the sign of the joy of the Lord

Laugh and be merry together, like brothers akin,
 Guesting awhile in the rooms of a beautiful inn,
 Glad till the dancing stops, and the lilt of the music ends 15
 Laugh till the game is played, and be you merry, my friends

A CONSECRATION¹

Not of the princes and prelates with periwigged charioteers
 Riding triumphantly laureled to lap the fat of the years,—
 Rather the scorned—the rejected—the men hemmed in with the spears,

The men of the tattered battalion which fights till it dies,
 Dazed with the dust of the battle, the din, and the cries, 5
 The men with the broken heads and the blood running into their eyes

¹ This poem and the following by John Masfield are from *Poems* 1925, The Macmillan Company. By permission of the publishers.

Not the be medaled Commander, beloved of the throne,
 Riding cock-horse to parade when the bugles are blown,
 But the lads who carried the koppie and cannot be known

Not the ruler for me, but the ranker, the tramp of the road, 10
 The slave with the sack on his shoulders pricked on with the goad,
 The man with too weighty a burden, too weary a load,

The sailor, the stoker of steamers, the man with the clout,
 The chantyman bent at the halliards putting a tune to the shout,
 The drowsy man at the wheel and the tired lookout 15

Others may sing of the wine and the wealth and the mirth,
 The portly presence of potentates goodly in girth,—
 Mine be the dirt and the dross, the dust and scum of the earth!

Theirs be the music, the color, the glory, the gold,
 Mine be a handful of ashes, a mouthful of mold 20
 Of the maimed, of the halt and the blind in the rain and the cold—
 Of these shall my songs be fashioned, my tales be told

AMEN

The mystic is already evident in Masefield's early poems, it emerges in his middle period. Masefield was little known until the publication of *The Everlasting Mercy* (1911), *The Widow in the Bye Street* (1912), *Dauber* (1912), and *The Daffodil Fields* (1913). These volumes won him a large and immediate following. They were popular because of their realism of subject, their vigorous use of common language, and the speed of narrative. Not the least of Masefield's successes was due to his skillful alternation of the brutal and the ecstatic. Passages of utmost vulgarity were followed by passages of revelation. Saul Kane, in *The Everlasting Mercy*, in the midst of a drunken orgy is struck with a sudden vision of beauty. Dauber, the young protagonist of the poem of the same name, escapes the goading of his shipmates, the threat of the terrifying storm, and the "long defeat of doing nothing well" in the realization of the Ideal. The mystic transforms the actual scene, the social sense is enlarged by spiritual experience.

Reynard the Fox (1919) is probably the most "national" of Masefield's works, and it is said that this did more than any other single poem to win Masefield the office of poet laureate, which was awarded to him in 1930. The realist is still dominant here, but in *Good Friday and Other Poems* and the later verse the mystic is in control. "What Am I, Life?" and the other sonnets leave the world of action, for which Masefield had so great a zest, in exchange for philosophic abstraction. The perception of beauty becomes the chief theme—beauty and its curious metamorphoses.

This theme runs through his later plays as well as his novels, of which there are almost a dozen, and reaches a climax in *Midsummer Night* (1928) and *The Coming of Christ* (1929). A generous *Collected Poems* was published in 1923 and enlarged in 1935.

WATCHING BY A SICK BED

I heard the wind all day,
And what it was trying to say
I heard the wind all night
Rave as it ran to fight
After the wind the rain,
And then the wind again
Running across the hill
As it runs still

And all day long the sea
Would not let the land be,
But all night heaped her sand
On to the land,
I saw her glimmer white
All through the night,
Tossing the horrid hair
Still tossing there

And all day long the stone
Felt how the wind was blown,
And all night long the rock
Stood the sea's shock,
While, from the window, I
Looked out, and wondered why,
Why at such length
Such force should fight such strength

WHAT AM I, LIFE?

What am I, Life? A thing of watery salt
Held in cohesion by unresting cells,
Which work they know not why, which
never halt,
Myself unwitting where their Master dwells
I do not bid them, yet they toil, they spin 5
A world which uses me as I use them,
Nor do I know which end or which begin
Nor which to praise, which pamper, which
condemn
So, like a marvel in a marvel set,
I answer to the vast, as wave by wave 10
The sea of air goes over, dry or wet,
Or the full moon comes swimming from
her cave,
Or the great sun comes forth this myriad I
Tingles, not knowing how, yet wondering
why

THE PASSING STRANGE

Out of the earth to rest or range
Perpetual in perpetual change
The unknown passing through the strange

5 Water and saltness held together
To tread the dust and stand the weather 5
And plow the field and stretch the tether

To pass the wine cup and be witty,
Water the sands and build the city,
Slaughter like devils and have pity,

10 Be red with rage and pale with lust, 10
Make beauty come, make peace, make trust,
Water and saltness mixed with dust,

15 Drive over earth, swim under sea,
Fly in the eagle's secrecy,
Guess where the hidden comets be, 15

Know all the deathly seeds that still
Queen Helen's beauty, Caesar's will,
And slay them even as they kill,

20 Fashion an altar for a rood,
Defile a continent with blood, 20
And watch a brother starve for food,

Love like a madman, shaking, blind
Till self is burnt into a kind
Possession of another mind,

Brood upon beauty till the grace 25
Of beauty with the holy face
Brings peace into the bitter place,

Probe in the lifeless granites, scan
The stars for hope, for guide, for plan,
Live as a woman or a man, 30

Fasten to lover or to friend
Until the heart break at the end,
The break of death that cannot mend,

Then to lie useless, helpless, still
Down in the earth, in dark, to fill 35
The roots of grass or daffodil

Down in the earth, in dark, alone,
A mockery of the ghost in bone,
The strangeness, passing the unknown

Time will go by, that outlasts clocks, 40
 Dawn in the thorps will rouse the cocks,
 Sunset be glory on the rocks

But it, the thing, will never heed
 Even the rooting from the seed
 Thrusting to such it for its need 45

Since moons decay and suns decline
 How else should end this life of mine?
 Water and saltness are not wine

But in the darkest hour of night
 When even the foxes peer for sight 50
 The byre cock crows, he feels the light

So, in this water mixed with dust,
 The byre cock spirit crows from trust
 That death will change because it must, 54

For all things change, the darkness changes,
 The wandering spirits change their ranges,
 The corn is gathered to the granages

The corn is sown again, it grows,
 The stars burn out, the darkness goes
 The rhythms change, they do not close 60

They change, and we, who pass like foam,
 Like dust blown through the streets of Rome,
 Change ever, too, we have no home,

Only a beauty, only a power,
 Sad in the fruit, bright in the flower, 65
 Endlessly erring for its hour

But gathering, as we stray, a sense
 Of Life, so lovely and intense,
 It lingers when we wander hence

That those who follow feel behind 70
 Their backs, when all before is blind,
 Our joy, a rampart to the mind

ON GROWING OLD

Be with me, Beauty, for the fire is dying,
 My dog and I are old, too old for roving
 Man, whose young passion sets the spindrift
 flying,

Is soon too lame to march, too cold for loving

I take the book and gather to the fire, 5
 Turning old yellow leaves, minute by minute
 The clock ticks to my heart, a withered wire
 Moves a thin ghost of music in the spinet

I cannot sail your seas, I cannot wander
 Your corn land nor your hill-land nor your
 valleys 10

Ever again, nor share the battle yonder
 Where the young knight the broken squad-
 ron rallies,

Only stay quiet, while my mind remembers
 The beauty of fire from the beauty of embers

Beauty, have pity, for the strong have power,
 The rich their wealth, the beautiful their
 grace, 16

Summer of man its sunlight and its flower,
 Springtime of man all April in a face

Only, as in the jostling in the Strand,
 Where the mob thrusts or loiters or is loud,
 The beggar with the saucer in his hand 21
 Asks only a penny from the passing crowd,

So, from this glittering world with all its
 fashion,

Its fire and play of men, its stir, its march,
 Let me have wisdom, Beauty, wisdom and
 passion, 25

Bread to the soul, rain where the summers
 parch

Give me but these, and though the darkness
 close

Even the night will blossom as the rose

SIEGFRIED SASSOON

Siegfried Sassoon was born September 8, 1886. He was educated at Cambridge, England, was a captain in the Royal Welch Fusiliers, fought in France and Palestine, and won the Military Cross for bringing in wounded on the

battlefield If any poet-soldier knows the realities of war, and has a right to express its insane horror, that man is Sassoon

Sassoon did not begin life as a realist Carefully reared, in easy circumstance, he was first attracted by the Pre-Raphaelites and the paler poetry of the Eighteen Nineties His earliest book, *Poems* (1906), was privately published in Sassoon's twentieth year and was little more than a weak imitation of Tennyson, Rossetti, and Dowson Shortly before the war Sassoon read Masefield and was strongly influenced by him, *The Daffodil Murderer* (1913), another privately published pamphlet, is obviously a burlesque of the Masefieldian manner, although it ends on a note of seriousness

The influence of Masefield is still recognizable in the title poem of *The Old Huntsman* (1917), Sassoon's first important volume This poem is a blend of three idioms—Masefield's, Sassoon's, and the imaginary speaker's, a character whom Sassoon had known in youth The background is definitely autobiographical and is extended in the later prose *Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man* (1928), a work which won both the Hawthornden Prize and the James Tait Black Memorial Prize, and its sequel, *Memoirs of an Infantry Officer* (1930)

THE OLD HUNTSMAN¹

I've never ceased to curse the day I signed
A seven years' bargain for the Golden Fleece
'Twas a bad deal all round, and dear enough
It cost me, what with my daft management,
And the mean folk as owed and never paid me, 5
And backing losers, and the local bucks
Egging me on with whiskies while I bragged
The man I was when huntsman to the Squire

I'd have been prosperous if I'd took a farm
Of seventy acres, drove my gig and haggled 10
At Monday markets, now I've squandered all
My savings, nigh three hundred pound I got
As testimonial when I'd grown too stuff
And slow to press a beaten fox

The Fleece!

'Twas the damned Fleece that wore my Emily out, 15
The wife of thirty years who served me well
(Not like this beldam clattering in the kitchen,
That never trims a lamp nor sweeps the floor,
And brings me greasy soup in a foul crock)

Blast the old harridan! What's fetched her now, 20
Leaving me in the dark, and short of fire?
And where's my pipe? 'Tis lucky I've a turn
For thinking, and remembering all that's past
And now's my hour, before I hobble to bed,

¹From *The Old Huntsman and Other Poems* Reprinted by permission of the author

To set the works a wheezing, wind the clock
That keeps the time of life with feeble tick
Behind my bleared old face that stares and wonders

25

It's queer how, in the dark, comes back to mind
Some morning of September We've been digging
In a steep, sandy warren, riddled with holes,
And I've just pulled the terrier out and left
A sharp nosed cub face blinking there and snapping,
Then in a moment see him mobbed and torn
To strips in the baying hurly of the pack
I picture it so clear the dusty sunshine
On bracken, and the men with spades, that wipe
Red faces one tilts up a mug of ale
And, having stooped to clean my gory hands,
I whistle the jostling beauties out o' the wood

30

35

I'm but a daft old fool! I often wish
The Squire were back again—ah, he was a man!
They don't breed men like him these days, he'd come
For sure, and sit and talk and suck his briar
Till the old wife brings up a dish of tea
Aye, those were days, when I was serving Squire!
I never knowed such sport as '85,
The winter afore the one that snowed us silly

40

45

Once in a way the parson will drop in
And read a bit o' the Bible, if I'm bad,—
Pray the Good Lord to make my spirit whole
In faith he leaves some 'baccy on the shelf,
And wonders I don't keep a dog to cheer me,
Because he knows I'm mortal fond of dogs!

50

I ask you, what's a gent like that to me,
As wouldn't know Elijah if I saw him,
Nor have the wit to keep him on the talk?
'Tis kind of parson to be troubling still
With such as me, but he's a town bred chap,
Full of his college notions and Christmas hymns

55

Religion beats me I'm amazed at folk
Drinking the gospels in and never scratching
Their heads for questions When I was a lad
I learned a bit from mother, and never thought
To educate myself for prayers and psalms

60

But now I'm old and bald and serious-minded,
With days to sit and ponder I'd no chance
When young and gay to get the hang of all
This Hell and Heaven and when the clergy hoick
And holloa from the pulpits, I'm asleep,
However hard I listen, and when they pray

65

70

THE REALISTIC ATTITUDE

It seems we're all like children sucking sweets
In school, and wondering whether master sees

I used to dream of Hell when I was first
Promoted to a huntsman's job, and scent
Was rotten, and all the foxes disappeared, 75
And hounds were short of blood, and officers
From barracks over rode 'em all day long
On weedy, whistling nags that knocked a hole
In every fence, good sportsmen to a man
And brigadiers by now, but dreadful hard 80
On a young huntsman keen to show some sport

Aye, Hell was thick with captains, and I rode
The lumbering brute that's beat in half a m le,
And blunders into every blind old ditch
Hell was the coldest scenting land I've known, 85
And both my whips were always lost, and hounds
Would never get their heads down, and a man
On a great yawning chestnut trying to cast 'em
While I was in a corner pounded by
The ugliest hog backed stile you've clapped your eyes on 90
There was an iron spiked fence round all the coverts,
And civil spoken keepers I couldn't trust,
And the main earth unstop'd The fox I found
Was always a three legged 'un from a bag
Who reeked of misseed and wouldn't run 95
The farmers were all plowing their old pasture
And bellowing at me when I rode their beans
To cast for beaten fox, or galloped on
With hounds to a lucky view I'd lost my voice
Although I shouted fit to burst my guts, 100
And couldn't blow my horn

And when I woke,
Emily snored, and barn cocks started crowing,
And morn was at the window, and I was glad
To be alive because I heard the cry
Of hounds like church bells chiming on a Sunday,— 105
Aye, that's the song I'd wish to hear in Heaven!
The cry of hounds was Heaven for me I know
Parson would call me crazed and wrong to say it,
But where's the use of life and being glad
If God's not in your gladness?

I've no brains 110
For book learned studies, but I've heard men say
There's much in print that clergy have to wink at
Though many I've met were jolly chaps, and rode
To hounds, and walked me puppies, and could pick
Good legs and loins and necks and shoulders, aye, 115
And feet,—'twas necks and feet I looked at first

Some hounds I've known were wise as half your saints,
 And better hunters That old dog of the Duke's,
 Harlequin, what a dog he was to draw!
 And what a note he had, and what a nose 120
 When foxes ran down wind and scent was catchy!
 And that light lemon bitch of the Squire's, old Dorcas,—
 She were a marvelous hunter, were old Dorcas!
 Aye, oft I've thought "If there were hounds in Heaven,
 With God as Master, taking no subscription, 125
 And all His blessed country farmed by tenants,
 And a straight necked old fox in every gorse!"
 But when I came to work it out, I found
 There'd be too many huntsmen wanting places,—
 Though some I've known might get a job with Nick! 130

I've come to think of God as something like
 The figure of a man the old Duke was
 When I was turning hounds to Nimrod King,
 Before his Grace was took so bad with gout,
 And had to quit the saddle Tall and spare, 135
 Clean shaved and gray, with shrewd, kind eyes, that
 twinkled,
 And easy walk, who, when he gave good words,
 Gave them whole hearted, and would never blame
 Without just cause Lord God might be like that,
 Sitting alone in a great room of books 140
 Some evening after hunting

Now I'm tired
 With hearkening to the tick-tack on the shelf,
 And pondering makes me doubtful

Riding home
 On a moonless night of cloud that feels like frost
 Though stars are hidden (hold your feet up, horse!), 145
 And thinking what a task I had to draw
 A pack with all those lame 'uns, and the lot
 Wanting a rest from all this open weather,—
 That's what I'm doing now

And likely, too,
 The frost'll be a long 'un, and the night 150
 One sleep The parsons say we'll wake to find
 A country blinding white with dazzle of snow

The naked stars make men feel lonely,—wheeling
 And glinting on the puddles in the road
 And then you listen to the wind, and wonder 155
 If folk are quite such bucks as they appear
 When dressed by London tailors, looking down
 Their boots at covert side, and thinking big

THE REALISTIC ATTITUDE

This world's a funny place to live in Soon
 I'll need to change my country, but I know 160
 'Tis little enough I've understood my life,
 And a power of sights I've missed, and foreign marvels

I used to feel it, riding on spring days
 In meadows pied with sun and chasing clouds,
 And half forget how I was there to catch 165
 The foxes, lose the angry, eager feeling
 A huntsman ought to have, that's out for blood,
 And means his hounds to get it!

Now I know
 It's God that speaks to us when we're bewitched,
 Smelling the hay in June and smiling quiet, 170
 Or when there's been a spell of summer drought,
 Lying awake and listening to the rain

I'd like to be the simpleton I was
 In the old days when I was whipping in
 To a little harrier pack in Worcestershire, 175
 And loved a dairymaid, but never knew it
 Until she'd wed another So I've loved
 My life, and when the good years are gone down,
 Discover what I've lost

I never broke
 Out of my blundering self into the world, 180
 But let it all go past me, like a man
 Half asleep in a land that's full of wars

What a grand thing 'twould be if I could go
 Back to the kennels now and take my hounds
 For summer exercise, be riding out 185
 With forty couple when the quiet skies
 Are streaked with sunrise, and the silly birds
 Grown hoarse with singing, cobwebs on the furze
 Up on the hill, and all the country strange,
 With no one stirring, and the horses fresh, 190
 Sniffing the air I'll never breathe again

You've brought the lamp, then, Martha? I've no mind
 For newspaper tonight, nor bread and cheese
 Give me the candle, and I'll get to bed

The poetry which Sassoon wrote after his fortieth year—especially the poetry in *The Heart's Journey* (1928) and *Vigils* (1935)—is metaphysical in subject and solemn in tone. But the works by which he is best known are crowded with unforgettable scenes, stripped images, and violent realism. *Counter-Attack* (1918) and *Picture Show* (1920) are, with the possible exception of Wilfred

Owen's, the most powerful war-poetry ever written. They are vibrant with emotion and experience. The imagination is not called upon to emphasize the brutalities, Sassoon is content to be an accurate, if outraged, recorder. After four and a half years' service on various fronts, Sassoon realized the emptiness of nationalistic slogans and the lie of "glory." The poet's passion was spent, not in attempting to glorify, or even justify, the madness of war, but in communicating his loathing for the butchery which upholds "prestige," the nightmare of the trenches, the pride of the "system" ("Generals die in bed"), and the inhumanity of the whole military machine.

DOES IT MATTER?¹

Does it matter?—losing your leg?
 For people will always be kind,
 And you need not show that you mind
 When the others come in after hunting
 To gobble their muffins and eggs 5

Does it matter?—losing your sight?
 There's such splendid work for the blind,
 And people will always be kind,
 As you sit on the terrace remembering
 And turning your face to the light 10

Do they matter?—those dreams from the pit?
 You can drink and forget and be glad,
 And people won't say that you're mad,
 For they'll know that you've fought for your country,
 And no one will worry a bit 15

TO ANY DEAD OFFICER¹

Well, how are things in Heaven? I wish you'd say,
 Because I'd like to know that you're all right
 Tell me, have you found everlasting day,
 Or been sucked in by everlasting night?
 For when I shut my eyes your face shows pain, 5
 I hear you make some cheery old remark—
 I can rebuild you in my brain,
 Though you've gone out patrolling in the dark

You hated tours of trenches, you were proud
 Of nothing more than having good years to spend, 10
 Longed to get home and join the careless crowd
 Of chaps who work in peace with Time for friend
 That's all washed out now. You're beyond the wire
 No earthly chance can send you crawling back,

¹From *Counter Attack and Other Poems*. Reprinted by permission of the author.

- You've finished with machine gun fire—
Knocked over in a hopeless dud attack 15
- Somehow I always thought you'd get done in,
Because you were so desperate keen to live
You were all out to try and save your skin,
Well knowing how much the world had got to give 20
You joked at shells and talked the usual "shop,"
Stuck to your dirty job and did it fine
With "Jesus Christ! when will it stop?"
Three years It's hell unless we break the line"
- So when they told me you'd been left for dead 25
I wouldn't believe them, feeling it must be true
Next week the bloody Roll of Honor said
"Wounded and missing"—(That's the thing to do
When lads are left in shell holes dying slow,
With no'ing but blank sky and wounds that ache, 30
Moaning for water till they know
It's night, and then it's not worth while to wake!)
- Good by, old lad! Remember me to God,
And tell Him that our Politicians swear
They won't give in till Prussian Rule's been trod 35
Under the Heel of England Are you there?
Yes and the War won't end for at least two years,
But we've got stacks of men I'm blind with tears,
Staring into the dark Cheero!
I wish they'd killed you in a decent show 40

COUNTER-ATTACK ¹

- We'd gained our first objective hours before
While dawn broke like a face with blinking eyes,
Pallid, unshaved and thirsty, blind with smoke
Things seemed all right at first We held their line,
With bombers posted, Lewis guns well placed, 5
And clink of shovels deepening the shallow trench
The place was rotten with dead, green clumsy legs
High booted, sprawled and groveled along the saps,
And trunks, face downward, in the sucking mud,
Wallowed like trodden sand bags loosely filled, 10
And naked sodden buttocks, mats of hair,
Bulged, clotted heads slept in the plastering slime
And then the rain began,—the jolly old rain!
- A yawning soldier knelt against the bank,
Staring across the morning blar with fog, 15
He wondered when the Allemands would get busy,

¹From *Counter Attack and Other Poems* Reprinted by permission of the author.

And then, of course, they started with five nines
 Traversing, sure as fate, and never a dud
 Mute in the clamor of shells he watched them burst
 Spouting dark earth and wire with gus's from hell, 20
 While posturing grunts dissolved in drifts of smoke
 He crouched and flinched, dizzy with galloping fear,
 Sick for escape,—loathing the strangled horror
 And butchered, frantic gestures of the dead

 An officer came blundering down the trench 25
 "Stand to and man the fire step!" On he went
 Gasping and bawling, "Fire step counter attack!"
 Then the haze lifted Bombing on the right
 Down the old sap machine guns on the left,
 And stumbling figures looming out in front 30
 "O Christ, they're coming at us!" Bullets spat,
 And he remembered his rifle rapid fire
 And started blazing wildly then a bang
 Crumpled and spun him sideways, knocked him out
 To grunt and wriggle none heeded him, he choked 35
 And fought the flapping veils of smothering gloom,
 Lost in a blurred confusion of yells and groans
 Down, and down, and down, he sank and drowned,
 Bleeding to death The counter-attack had failed

ROMANTIC REALISM

The later work of Masfield and Sassoon concerns itself with mysticism rather than realism, their contemporaries proved that poetry cannot live by realism alone. In England before the advent of the disillusioned and often destructive post-war poets, the Georgians (approximately 1910 to 1920) added romance to realism and issued their biennials "in the belief that English poetry is now once again putting on a new strength and beauty." Rupert Brooke was typical of this period. On a foundation of actual things sharply observed he added the element of wonder and romantic surprise. Walter de la Mare and W. H. Davies employed a simple but original diction to pronounce the originality of familiar objects. A. E. Housman anticipated them all, as early as 1896 he published a volume in which the most ordinary words were used to sound an extraordinary lyricism. *A Shropshire Lad* did more than any other volume of the period to express the real quality of the English countryside as opposed to the prettification of nature, the passionate unaccountability of life, and the pure essence of poetry.

During the Victorian era were published two books of poetry, Edward Fitzgerald's *Rubáiyat of Omar Khayyám* and Housman's *A Shropshire Lad*, two books whose philosophy is completely opposed to the "sweetness and light" of the period and its entire moralistic structure. Fitzgerald's Omar proclaimed a frank and unashamed hedonism, Housman celebrated a bold and unrelieved pessimism. It is doubtful, however, that the many who made these two the most popular books of the day read them for their messages. It was not the

pagan recklessness of the one or the savage gloom of the other which convinced their admirers, but the memorable phrases, the quatrains which had the brilliance of epigrams, the sudden pictures of the world's beauty, and the remarkable music in which they were set

A E HOUSMAN

The purest of contemporary lyricists, A(lfred) E(dward) Housman, was born in 1859 in Shropshire, the English county he loves and describes so well. After a term in the British Patent Office, he was appointed professor of Latin at University College, London (1892) and, until his death in 1936, professor of Latin at Cambridge. He edited Juvenal, Manilius, and Lucan, and wrote many scholarly articles, his introduction to Manilius is not only a guide to that Latin poet but a revelation of the critical side of Housman.

Housman's first volume—*A Shropshire Lad*, published as early as 1896—impressed and influenced an entire generation. The second, significantly entitled *Last Poems*, published almost thirty years later, in 1922, showed no diminution of power. Echoes of his style are to be found everywhere in the lyrical poetry which followed, from the shorter lyrics of Rupert Brooke to those of Edna St. Vincent Millay. Death is everywhere present in these volumes—death, as a rule, in some violent form—friends are faithless, sweethearts betray their loves, lads lie uncomfortably in their graves or rise only to haunt some particularly pitiless girl, the heart, laden with rue, is given out of the bosom in vain. Yet it was not the catalogue of cynicism which so moved Housman's disciples as the bravado, and at times the bravery, of the poetry. The note of horror was both relieved and accentuated by the wry humor and uncanny twist of the lines, the bitter thoughts were tuned to an incongruously blithe music.

LOVELIEST OF TREES

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now
Is hung with bloom along the bough,
And stands about the woodland ride,
Wearing white for Eastertide

Now, of my threescore years and ten, 5
Twenty will not come again,
And take from seventy springs a score,
It only leaves me fifty more

And since to look at things in bloom 10
Fifty springs are little room,
About the woodlands I will go
To see the cherry hung with snow

WHEN I WAS ONE-AND
TWENTY

When I was one and twenty
I heard a wise man say,
"Give crowns and pounds and guineas
But not your heart away,
Give pearls away and rubies 5
But keep your fancy free"
But I was one and twenty,
No use to talk to me

When I was one and twenty 10
I heard him say again,
"The heart out of the bosom
Was never given in vain,

'Tis paid with sighs a-plenty
And sold for endless rue"
And I am two-and twenty,
And oh, 'tis true, 'tis true

15

OH, SEE HOW THICK THE GOLDCUP FLOWERS

Oh, see how thick the goldcup flowers
Are lying in field and lane,
With dandelions to tell the hours
That never are told again

Oh, may I squire you round the meads
And pick you posies gay?

5

—'Twill do no harm to take my arm
"You may, young man, you may"

Ah, spring was sent for lass and lad,

'Tis now the blood runs gold,

10

And man and maid had best be glad

Before the world is old

What flowers today may flower tomorrow,

But never as good as new

—Suppose I wound my arm right round—

"'Tis true, young man, 'tis true"

16

Some lads there are, 'tis shame to say,

That only court to thieve,

And once they bear the bloom away

'Tis little enough they leave

20

Then keep your heart for men like me

And safe from trustless chaps

My love is true and all for you

"Perhaps, young man, perhaps"

Oh, look in my eyes then, can you doubt?

25

—Why, 'tis a mile from town

How green the grass is all about!

We might as well sit down

—Ah, life, what is it but a flower?

Why must true lovers sigh?

30

Be kind, have pity, my own, my pretty,—

"Good by, young man, good-by"

OH, WHEN I WAS IN LOVE WITH YOU

Oh, when I was in love with you,
Then I was clean and brave,

And miles around the wonder grew
How well did I behave

And now the fancy passes by,
And nothing will remain,
And miles around they'll say that I
Am quite myself again

5

TO AN ATHLETE DYING YOUNG

The time you won your town the race
We chaired you through the market place,
Man and boy stood cheering by,
And home we brought you shoulder high

Today, the road all runners come,
Shoulder high we bring you home,
And set you at your threshold down,
Townsmen of a stiller town

5

Smart lad, to slip betimes away
From fields where glory does not stay,
And early though the laurel grows
It withers quicker than the rose

10

Eyes the shady night has shut
Cannot see the record cut,
And silence sounds no worse than cheers
After earth has stopped the ears

15

Now you will not swell the rout
Of lads that wore their honors out,
Runners whom renown outran
And the name died before the man

20

So set, before its echoes fade,
The fleet foot on the sill of shade,
And hold to the low lintel up
The still-defended challenge-cup

And round that early laureled head
Will flock to gaze the strengthless dead,
And find unwithered on its curls
The garland briefer than a girl's

25

SAY, LAD, HAVE YOU THINGS TO DO?

Say, lad, have you things to do?
Quick, then, while your day's at prime.

Quick, and if 'tis work for two,
Here am I, man now's your time

Send me now, and I shall go,
Call me, I shall hear your call,
Use me ere they lay me low
Where a man's no use at all,

Ere the wholesome flesh decay,
And the willing nerve be numb,
And the lips lack breath to say,
"No, my lad, I cannot come"

But if the Christmas field has kept
Awns the last gleaner overstept,
Or shriveled flax, whose flower is blue
A single season, never two,
Or if one haulm whose year is o'er
Shivers on the upland frore,
—Oh, bring from hill and stream and plain
Whatever will not flower again,
To give him comfort he and those
Shall bide eternal bedfellows
Where low upon the couch he lies
Whence he never shall arise

ON THE IDLE HILL OF SUMMER

On the idle hill of summer,
Sleepy with the flow of streams,
Far I hear the steady drummer
Drumming like a noise in dreams

Far and near and low and louder
On the roads of earth go by,
Dear to friends and food for powder,
Soldiers marching, all to die

East and west on fields forgotten
Bleach the bones of comrades slain,
Lovely lads and dead and rotten,
None that go return again

Far the calling bugles hollo,
High the screaming fife replies,
Gay the fields of scarlet follow
Woman bore me, I will rise

BRING, IN THIS TIMELESS GRAVE TO THROW

Bring, in this timeless grave to throw,
No cypress, somber on the snow,
Snap not from the bitter yew
His leaves that live December through,
Break no rosemary, bright with rime
And sparkling to the cruel clime,
Nor plod the winter land to look
For willows in the icy brook
To cast them leafless round him bring
No spray that ever buds in spring

THINK NO MORE, LAD

Think no more, lad, laugh, be jolly
Why should men make haste to die?
Empty heads and tongues a talking
Make the rough road easy walking,
And the feather pate of folly
Bears the falling sky

Oh, 'tis jesting, dancing, drinking
Spins the heavy world around
If young hearts were not so clever,
Oh, they would be young for ever
Think no more, 'tis only thinking
Lays lads underground

WITH RUE MY HEART IS LADEN

With rue my heart is laden
For golden friends I had,
For many a rose lipped maiden
And many a lightfoot lad

By brooks too broad for leaping
The lightfoot boys are laid,
The rose lipped girls are sleeping
In fields where roses fade

THE TRUE LOVER

The lad came to the door at night,
When lovers crown their vows,
And whistled soft and out of sight
In shadow of the boughs

- "I shall not vex you with my face
Henceforth, my love, for aye,
So take me in your arms a space
Before the east is gray
- "When I from hence away am past
I shall not find a bride,
And you shall be the first and last
I ever lay beside"
- She heard and went and knew not why,
Her heart to his she laid,
Light was the air beneath the sky
But dark under the shade
- "Oh, do you breathe, lad, that your breast
Seems not to rise and fall,
And here upon my bosom prest
There beats no heart at all?"
- 5 "Oh, loud, my girl, it once would knock,
You should have felt it then,
But since for you I stopped the clock
It never goes again"
- 10 "Oh, lad, what is it, lad, that drips
Wet from your cheek on mine?
What is it falling on my lips,
My lad, that tastes of brine?"
- 15 "Oh, like enough 'tis blood, my dear,
For when the knife has slit
The throat across from ear to ear
'Twill bleed because of it"
- 20 Under the stars the air was light
But dark below the boughs,
The still air of the speechless night,
When lovers crown their vows
- 25
- 30
- 35

Death, doubt, and the unhappy mutations of time throw their shadows across these pages, but beauty survives. Girls and boys grow old and die, but roses still thrive in the fields for other lovers, and brooks still tempt the leaping spirit, the young swain will break his heart and pass from the scene, but the cherry, loveliest of trees, will continue to blossom along the woodland road. Fifty years is scarcely time enough to watch "the ship of sunrise burning," or lie on the idle hill of summer "sleepy with the sound of streams," while beauty renews itself with careless immortality.

Strength as well as beauty is the characteristic of Housman's verse, a strength which is manifest in his diction. Breaking completely from the tradition of a "poetic" vocabulary, Housman speaks in the straightforward language of the people, avoiding over-emphasis and inversions. Most of his poems employ the plainest possible words and the simplest meters, the epilogue to *A Shropshire Lad* ("Terence, this is stupid stuff") is so conversational as to be almost slang. Yet it achieves eloquence by disdaining grandiloquence.

As a rule Housman's lines are stripped and singularly bare of ornament. Yet when he cares to employ figures of speech he brings "elevation" to an ordinarily brisk measure. Such a poem as "Reveille" is one metaphor after another, and yet the effect is never that of over-decoration.

Housman has never written a dull or mediocre poem. His taste is almost flawless, and his two books contain some of the most memorable lyrics not only of his time but of all time.

REVEILLE

Wake the silver dusk returning
Up the beach of darkness brims,
And the ship of sunrise burning
Strands upon the eastern rims

Wake the vaulted shadow shatters,
Trampled to the floor it spanned,
And the tent of night in tatters
Straws the sky pavilioned land

Up, lad, up, 'tis late for lying
 Hear the drums of morning play, 10
 Hark, the empty highways crying
 "Who'll beyond the hills away?"

Towns and countries woo together,
 Forelands beacon, belfries call,
 Never lad that trod on leather 15
 Lived to feast his heart with all

Up, lad thews that lie and cumber
 Sunlit pallets never thrive,
 Morns abed and daylight slumber
 Were not meant for man alive

Clay lies still, but blood's a rover,
 Breath's a ware that will not keep
 Up, lad when the journey's over
 There'll be time enough to sleep

In America an entire Renaissance may be said to have been begun in 1913. The four years that followed saw the publication of Vachel Lindsay's *General William Booth Enters into Heaven* (1913), the first anthology of *The Imagists* (1914), Amy Lowell's *Sword Blades and Poppy Seed* (1914), Robert Frost's *North of Boston* (1914), Edgar Lee Masters' *Spoon River Anthology* (1915), E. A. Robinson's *The Man Against the Sky* (1916), Carl Sandburg's *Chicago Poems* (1916), Robinson Jeffers' *Californians* (1916), Edna St. Vincent Millay's *Renaissance* (1917), and T. S. Eliot's *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* (1917).

The outstanding and uniting feature of these books is that in spite of their differences in taste and technique, they are broadly American. Until the early part of the twentieth century America had gone abroad for its arts. Its music was German, its painting was French, its sculpture was Graeco-Roman, its poetry was English. Now for almost the first time American rhythms, backgrounds, and subjects declared themselves. The writers especially had been influenced by European models, they had turned away from the native scene as something too prosaic for poetry. Now they discovered their nativity. Stilted diction and specious moralizing were discarded. Local accents were established, forgotten legends and neglected characters were dignified, even romanticized, urban experience and the news-reel technique were combined, the native inflection was everywhere.

Romantic realism in America was not only wide in application but widespread in area. No longer confined to one or two centers, the poetry assumed a national range of self-expression. The multiple aspects of New England were illuminated by Robert Frost, E. A. Robinson, and Amy Lowell, the panorama of the Middle West was delineated by Carl Sandburg and Vachel Lindsay, the South was represented by John Gould Fletcher and the "Fugitives," notably John Crowe Ransom, Donald Davidson, Allen Tate, Merrill Moore, and Robert Penn Warren, the far West was expressed by the Californian expansiveness of Robinson Jeffers. Of these none was more important, none more indubitably American than Robert Frost.

ROBERT FROST

By an irony of geography, the poet most representative of New England, Robert Frost, was born in San Francisco, California, March 26, 1875. Both his

parents, however, were New Englanders, and, after the death of his father, which occurred while Frost was still a boy, he was taken back to the East, where his forefathers had lived for eight generations. His father had taught school in New Hampshire, but the son resisted the routine curriculum, he attended Dartmouth and Harvard without graduating from either. He had already been earning his living as mill-hand, shoemaker, and editor of a country newspaper. In 1900 he became a farmer at Derry, New Hampshire, and attempted to support a growing family and himself by contending with the stubborn soil and short seasons, and (from 1905 to 1912) by teaching. In 1912 he went to England for a few years. After his return to America in 1915, he was honored by a number of universities and made "professor in residence" at Amherst. He occupied the Charles Eliot Norton Chair at Harvard in 1936.

A Boy's Will (1913) was published while Frost was in England. Although the poet is not yet completely master of his idiom, the point of view and tone of voice so characteristic of Frost are already evident. An individual and immediately recognizable inflection springs from the pages of *North of Boston* (1914), is emphasized in *Mountain Interval* (1916), *New Hampshire* (1923), *West-Running Brook* (1928) and is cumulatively pronounced in his *Collected Poems* (1930). Even before one examines the distinction of phrase and great depth of thought in these volumes, the most casual reading makes one aware that Frost is in the line of major poets. Superficially he seems to be a pastoral poet, making a third with Virgil and Wordsworth. Like Wordsworth he uses the subjects of common life, and his vocabulary is "the real language of men", but, even more than the illustrious bucolic poets', his verse is enriched not only by the overflow of powerful, if restrained, feelings, but by great imaginative power. Those readers who go beneath the surface of his lines will discover another characteristic, and possibly Frost's most salient quality: his way of suggesting universalities through a bantering humor or in a whimsical aside. The philosophy is always trenchant and no less philosophic for being linked to a kind of intellectual fooling. This blend of playfulness and profundity occurs even in the most somber of his works. "Mending Wall" twinkles with it, "Birches" is, in itself, an enlarged and grave whimsicality, even "The Death of the Hired Man" masks its tragedy in a raillery about relatives, speculations concerning self-respect and the way to build a load of hay, unforgettable differences as to the definition of "home," and the sheer fancy of the passage where the moon falls down the West, "dragging the whole sky with it to the hills."

THE DEATH OF THE HIRED MAN¹

Mary sat musing on the lamp-flame at the table
Waiting for Warren. When she heard his step,
She ran on tip-toe down the darkened passage
To meet him in the doorway with the news
And put him on his guard "Silas is back."
She pushed him outward with her through the door.

5

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And shut it after her "Be kind," she said
 She took the market things from Warren's arms
 And set them on the porch, then drew him down
 To sit beside her on the wooden steps 10

"When was I ever anything but kind to him?
 But I'll not have the fellow back," he said
 "I told him so last haying, didn't I?
 'If he left then,' I said, 'that ended it'
 What good is he? Who else will harbor him 15
 At his age for the little he can do?
 What help he is there's no depending on
 Off he goes always when I need him most
 'He thinks he ought to earn a little pay,
 Enough at least to buy tobacco with, 20
 So he won't have to beg and be beholden.'
 'All right,' I say, 'I can't afford to pay
 Any fixed wages, though I wish I could.'
 'Some one else can' 'Then some one else will have to'
 I shouldn't mind his bettering himself 25
 If that was what it was You can be certain,
 When he begins like that, there's some one at him
 Trying to coax him off with pocket money,—
 In haying time, when any help is scarce
 In winter he comes back to us I'm done " 30

"Sh' not so loud he'll hear you," Mary said

"I want him to he'll have to soon or late "

"He's worn out He's asleep beside the stove
 When I came up from Rowe's I found him here,
 Huddled against the barn door fast asleep, 35
 A miserable sight, and frightening, too—
 You needn't smile—I didn't recognize him—
 I wasn't looking for him—and he's changed
 Wait till you see "

"Where did you say he'd been?"

"He didn't say I dragged him to the house,
 And gave him tea and tried to make him smoke 40
 I tried to make him talk about his travels
 Nothing would do he just kept nodding off "

"What did he say? Did he say anything?"

"But little "

"Anything? Mary, confess 45
 He said he'd come to ditch the meadow for me "

"Warren!"

"But did he? I just want to know "

"Of course he did What would you have him say?
 Surely you wouldn't grudge the poor old man
 Some humble way to save his self-respect 50
 He added, if you really care to know,
 He meant to clear the upper pasture, too
 That sounds like something you have heard before?
 Warren, I wish you could have heard the way
 He jumbled everything I stopped to look 55
 Two or three times—he made me feel so queer—
 To see if he was talking in his sleep
 He ran on Harold Wilson—you remember—
 The boy you had in haying four years since
 He's finished school, and teaching in his college 60
 Silas declares you'll have to get him back
 He says they two will make a team for work
 Between them they will lay this farm as smooth!
 The way he mixed that in with other things
 He thinks young Wilson a likely lad, though daft 65
 On education—you know how they fought
 All through July under the blazing sun,
 Silas up on the cart to build the load,
 Harold along beside to pitch it on "

"Yes, I took care to keep well out of earshot " 70

"Well, those days trouble Silas like a dream
 You wouldn't think they would How some things linger!
 Harold's young college boy's assurance piqued him
 After so many years he still keeps finding
 Good arguments he sees he might have used 75
 I sympathize I know just how it feels
 To think of the right thing to say too late
 Harold's associated in his mind with Latin
 He asked me what I thought of Harold's saying
 He studied Latin like the violin 80
 Because he liked it—that an argument!
 He said he couldn't make the boy believe
 He could find water with a hazel prong—
 Which showed how much good school had ever done him
 He wanted to go over that But most of all 85
 He thinks if he could have another chance
 To teach him how to build a load of hay—"

"I know, that's Silas' one accomplishment
 He bundles every forkful in its place,
 And tags and numbers it for future reference, 90
 So he can find and easily dislodge it
 In the unloading Silas does that well
 He takes it out in bunches like big birds' nests
 You never see him standing on the hay
 He's trying to lift, straining to lift himself " 95

"He thinks if he could teach him that, he'd be
 Some good perhaps to some one in the world
 He hates to see a boy the fool of books
 Poor Silas, so concerned for other folk,
 And nothing to look backward to with pride,
 And nothing to look forward to with hope,
 So now and never any different "

100

Part of a moon was falling down the west,
 Dragging the whole sky with it to the hills
 Its light poured softly in her lap She saw
 And spread her apron to it She put out her hand
 Among the harp like morning glory strings,
 Taut with the dew from garden bed to eaves,
 As if she played unheard the tenderness
 That wrought on him beside her in the night
 "Warren," she said, "he has come home to die
 You needn't be afraid he'll leave you this time "

105

110

"Home," he mocked gently

"Yes, what else but home?
 It all depends on what you mean by home
 Of course he's nothing to us, any more
 Than was the hound that came a stranger to us
 Out of the woods, worn out upon the trail "

115

"Home is the place where, when you have to go there,
 They have to take you in "

"I should have called it
 Something you somehow haven't to deserve "

120

Warren leaned out and took a step or two,
 Picked up a little stick, and brought it back
 And broke it in his hand and tossed it by
 "Silas has better claim on us you think
 That on his brother? Thirteen little miles
 As the road winds would bring him to his door
 Silas has walked that far no doubt today
 Why didn't he go there? His brother's rich,
 A somebody—director in the bank "

125

"He never told us that "

"We know it though "

130

"I think his brother ought to help, of course
 I'll see to that if there is need He ought of right
 To take him in, and might be willing to—
 He may be better than appearances.
 But have some pity on Silas. Do you think

135

If he'd had any pride in claiming kin
Or anything he looked for from his brother,
He'd keep so still about him all this time."

"I wonder what's between them "

"I can tell you

Silas is what he is—we wouldn't mind him—
But just the kind that kinsfolk can't abide
He never did a thing so very bad
He don't know why he isn't quite as good
As any one He won't be made ashamed
To please his brother, worthless though he is "

140
145

"I can't think Si ever hurt any one "

"No, but he hurt my heart the way he lay
And rolled his old head on that sharp edged chair back
He wouldn't let me put him on the lounge
You must go in and see what you can do
I made the bed up for him there tonight
You'll be surprised at him—how much he's broken
His working days are done, I'm sure of it "

150

"I'd not be in a hurry to say that "

"I haven't been Go, look, see for yourself
But, Warren, please remember how it is
He's come to help you ditch the meadow
He has a plan You mustn't laugh at him
He may not speak of it, and then he may
I'll sit and see if that small sailing cloud
Will hit or miss the moon "

155
160

It hit the moon

Then there were three there, making a dim row,
The moon, the little silver cloud, and she
Warren returned—too soon, it seemed to her,
Slipped to her side, caught up her hand and waited

165

"Warren?" she questioned

"Dead," was all he answered

"Mending Wall" is a brilliant example of Frost's talk-flavored idiom and his intellectual double meanings. The poem may be read in many ways. It may be read as a skillful blend of reality and romanticizing, it is almost impossible to tell where fact leaves off and fancy begins. It may be read as a character study of two different types: the speculative questioner of old orders and the stern upholder of tradition. It may be stretched to sound the extremes

of revolt which challenges trouble making boundaries ("Something there is that doesn't love a wall") and convention which must be upheld at any cost. It may be enjoyed simply as a transcript of a common enough enterprise and a study of two men, one of whom is completely revealed although he utters only a single sentence. But it needs no interpretation beyond itself. Frost himself has referred to the kind of person who stands at the end of a poem waiting with enthusiasm to "drag you off your balance over the last punctuation mark into more than you meant to say." "I understand the poem all right, but please tell me what is behind it?" Such presumption, says Frost, needs to be baffled. The answer, he says mockingly, must be, "If I had wanted you to know, I should have told you in the poem." "Mending Wall," like most of Frost's poems, is complete in its faithfulness to its setting, its people, and the poet's sensitive observation.

MENDING WALL¹

Something there is that doesn't love a wall, That sends the frozen ground swell under it, And spills the upper boulders in the sun, And makes gaps even two can pass abreast The work of hunters is another thing	5
I have come after them and made repair Where they have left not one stone on a stone, But they would have the rabbit out of hiding, To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean, No one has seen them made or heard them made,	10
But at spring mending-time we find them there I let my neighbor know beyond the hill, And on a day we meet to walk the line And set the wall between us once again We keep the wall between us as we go	15
To each the boulders that have fallen to each And some are loaves and some so nearly balls We have to use a spell to make them balance "Stay where you are until our backs are turned!" We wear our fingers rough with handling them	20
Oh, just another kind of out door game, One on a side. It comes to little more There where it is we do not need the wall He is all pine and I am apple orchard My apple trees will never get across	25
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him He only says, "Good fences make good neighbors." Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder If I could put a notion in his head "Why do they make good neighbors? Isn't it	30
Where there are cows? But here there are no cows Before I built a wall I'd ask to know	

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What I was walling in or walling out,
 And to whom I was like to give offense
 Something there is that doesn't love a wall, 35
 That wants it down " I could say "Elves" to him,
 But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather
 He said it for himself I see him there
 Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top
 In each hand, like an old stone savage armed 40
 He moves in darkness as it seems to me,
 Not of woods only and the shade of trees
 He will not go behind his father's saying,
 And he likes having thought of it so well
 He says again, "Good fences make good neighbors" 45

"Birches" further illustrates Frost's penetration, his gayety and goodwill, and that style which is both frank and subtle. In an introduction to Edwin Arlington Robinson's posthumous volume, *King Jasper*, Frost described Robinson's manner by saying that the style is the way the man takes himself "If it is with outer seriousness, it must be with inner humor. If it is with outer humor, it must be with inner seriousness." These sentences may well describe Frost's own works, and no poem illustrates them better than "Birches." With its recollection of youth attached to a mature philosophy, the poem is at one time a description, an extension of fantasy, and spiritual autobiography.

BIRCHES¹

When I see birches bend to left and right
 Across the lines of straighter darker trees,
 I like to think some boy's been swinging them
 But swinging doesn't bend them down to stay
 Ice storms do that. Often you must have seen them 5
 Loaded with ice a sunny winter morning
 After a rain. They click upon themselves
 As the breeze rises, and turn many colored
 As the stir cracks and crazes their enamel
 Soon the sun's warmth makes them shed crystal shells 10
 Shattering and avalanching on the snow-crust—
 Such heaps of broken glass to sweep away
 You'd think the inner dome of heaven had fallen
 They are dragged to the withered bracken by the load,
 And they seem not to break, though once they are bowed 15
 So low for long, they never right themselves
 You may see their trunks arching in the woods
 Years afterwards, trailing their leaves on the ground
 Like girls on hands and knees that throw their hair
 Before them over their heads to dry in the sun 20

¹ From *Mountain Interval*, copyright, 1916, Henry Holt and Company. By permission of the publishers.

But I was going to say when Truth broke in
 With all her matter of fact about the ice storm
 (Now am I free to be poetical?)
 I should prefer to have some boy bend them
 As he went out and in to fetch the cows— 25
 Some boy too far from town to learn baseball,
 Whose only play was what he found himself,
 Summer or winter, and could play alone
 One by one he subdued his father's trees
 By riding them down over and over again 30
 Until he took the stiffness out of them,
 And not one but hung limp, not one was left
 For him to conquer He learned all there was
 To learn about not launching out too soon
 And so not carrying the tree away 35
 Clear to the ground He always kept his poise
 To the top branches, climbing carefully
 With the same pains you use to fill a cup
 Up to the brim, and even above the brim
 Then he flung outward, feet first, with a swish, 40
 Kicking his way down through the air to the ground
 So was I once myself a swinger of birches
 And so I dream of going back to be
 It's when I'm weary of considerations,
 And life is too much like a pathless wood 45
 Where your face burns and tickles with the cobwebs
 Broken across it, and one eye is weeping
 From a twig's having lashed across it open
 I'd like to get away from earth awhile
 And then come back to it and begin over 50
 May no fate willfully misunderstand me
 And half grant what I wish and snatch me away
 Not to return Earth's the right place for love
 I don't know where it's likely to go better
 I'd like to go by climbing a birch tree, 55
 And climb black branches up a snow-white trunk
Toward heaven, till the tree could bear no more,
 But dipped its top and set me down again
 That would be good both going and coming back
 One could do worse than be a swinger of birches 60

Frost's shorter poems are equally characteristic. They display his genius for understatement, his gentleness, and his love of earth that persists in spite of earth's cruelties and injustices. "Two Look at Two" is typical. The two lovers ascending the mountain side at dusk are unafraid of wild things or the dark, a wave of tenderness emanates from them and comes back, "as if the earth in one unlooked-for favor had made them certain earth returned their love."

ROBERT FROST

TWO LOOK AT TWO¹

Love and forgetting might have carried them
 A little further up the mountain side
 With night so near, but not much further up
 They must have halted soon in any case
 With thoughts of the path back, how rough it was 5
 With rock and washout, and unsafe in darkness,
 When they were halted by a tumbled wall
 With barbed-wire binding They stood facing this,
 Spending what onward impulse they still had
 In one last look the way they must not go, 10
 On up the failing path, where, if a stone
 Or earthslide moved at night, it moved itself,
 No footstep moved it "This is all," they sighed,
 "Good night to woods" But not so, there was more
 A doe from round a spruce stood looking at them 15
 Across the wall as near the wall as they
 She saw them in their field, they her in hers
 The difficulty of seeing what stood still,
 Like some up ended boulder split in two,
 Was in her clouded eyes they saw no fear there 20
 She seemed to think that two thus they were safe
 Then, as if they were something that, though strange,
 She could not trouble her mind with too long,
 She sighed and passed unscared along the wall
 "This, then, is all What more is there to ask?" 25
 But no, not yet A snort to bid them wait
 A buck from round the spruce stood looking at them
 Across the wall, as near the wall as they
 This was an antlered buck of lusty nostril
 Not the same doe come back into her place 30
 He viewed them quizzically with jerks of head,
 As if to ask, "Why don't you make some motion?
 Or give some sign of life? Because you can't
 I doubt if you're as living as you look "
 Thus till he had them almost feeling dared 35
 To stretch a proffering hand—and a spell breaking
 Then he too passed unscared along the wall
 Two had seen two, whichever side you spoke from
 "This *must* be all " It was all Still they stood,
 A great wave from it going over them, 40
 As if the earth in one unlooked for favor
 Had made them certain earth returned their love

Frost's lyrics and "grace notes," which are found increasingly in the later volumes, are no less Frostian than the monologues, many critics believe that they are among the most enduring of Frost's compositions "The Runaway" is a

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picture that is charming without mawkishness, local and universal "Fire and Ice" is an epigram which condenses a cosmic speculation and a lifetime of experience in nine brief lines "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" is one of the most remarkable of the later lyrics, its deceptively smooth quatrains conceal an unusual pattern of rhyme, its music is both rich and reticent, and its symbol is inescapable

Such poetry establishes Frost among the first of contemporary poets, and places him with the best of American writers past or present. It is neither his tone nor his technique, but his spirit which finally convinces. The reader is compelled by a quality of soul, fortified by the poet's serenity, strengthened by his strength. Thus the reader is moved most of all by what Frost has to say, by the emotional significance beneath the visual and intellectual content, and is given a sense of dimensions greater than his own.

THE RUNAWAY¹

Once when the snow of the year was beginning to fall,
 We stopped by a mountain pasture to say, "Whose colt?"
 A little Morgan had one forefoot on the wall,
 The other curled at his breast. He dipped his head
 And snorted to us. And then he had to bolt. 5
 We heard the miniature thunder where he fled,
 And we saw him, or thought we saw him, dim and gray,
 Like a shadow against the curtain of falling flakes
 "I think the little fellow's afraid of the snow
 He isn't winter broken. It isn't play. 10
 With the little fellow at all. He's running away
 I doubt if even his mother could tell him, 'Sakes,
 It's only weather.' He'd think she didn't know!
 Where is his mother? He can't be out alone."
 And now he comes again with a clatter of stone 15
 And mounts the wall again with whited eyes
 And all his tail that isn't hair up straight
 He shudders his coat as if to throw off flies
 "Whoever it is that leaves him out so late,
 When other creatures have gone to stall and bin, 20
 Ought to be told to come and take him in."

FIRE AND ICE²

Some say the world will end in fire,
 Some say in ice
 From what I've tasted of desire
 I hold with those who favor fire

But if it had to perish twice,
 I think I know enough of hate
 To say that for destruction ice
 Is also great
 And would suffice

¹ From *New Hampshire* by Robert Frost. Reprinted by permission of Henry Holt and Company.

² From *New Hampshire*, copyright, 1923, Henry Holt and Company. By permission of the publishers.

STOPPING BY WOODS ON A SNOWY EVENING¹

Whose woods these are I think I know His house is in the village though, He will not see me stopping here To watch his woods fill up with snow My little horse must think it queer To stop without a farmhouse near Between the woods and frozen lake The darkest evening of the year	He gives his harness bells a shake To ask if there is some mistake The only other sound's the sweep Of easy wind and downy flake The woods are lovely, dark and deep But I have promises to keep, And miles to go before I sleep, And miles to go before I sleep	10 5 15
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CARL SANDBURG

Carl Sandburg was born in Galesburg, Illinois, January 6, 1878. Life has never been easy for him. At thirteen he went to work delivering milk, from fourteen to twenty he earned his living as scene shifter, porter, truck-handler, dishwasher, turner's apprentice, and harvest hand. At twenty-one he enlisted and went to Porto Rico during the war with Spain.

On his return to the United States, Sandburg entered Lombard College, where he became editor of the college paper as well as captain of the basket ball team. After leaving college he was advertising manager for a department store, district organizer for the Social Democratic party in Wisconsin, and newspaper man in Chicago. Although he had been experimenting for years, it was not until 1914 that Sandburg was known as a poet, in that year a group of his poems appeared in *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse* and was awarded a prize. His first volume, *Chicago Poems* (1916), appeared in Sandburg's thirty eighth year. Commendation and controversy raged about the book. Critics were especially outraged by Sandburg's free—and skillful—use of the vernacular. They did not realize that a fresh if crude strength was being brought to American poetry, a creative vulgarity which was a fulfilment of Whitman's prophetic query, "Do you suppose the liberties and brawn of These States have to do only with delicate lady-words? With gloved gentlemen-words?"

The title poem of *Chicago Poems* was an energetic reply. It compelled the attention not only because of its direct utterance, but because of its honesty, its vigorous line, and thrust of emotion.

CHICAGO²

Hog Butcher for the World,
 Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat,
 Player with Railroads and the Nation's Freight
 Handler,
 Stormy, husky, brawling,
 City of the Big Shoulders

5

¹ From *New Hampshire*, copyright, 1923, Henry Holt and Company. By permission of the publishers.

² From *Chicago Poems*, copyright, 1916, Henry Holt and Company. By permission of the publishers.

They tell me you are wicked and I believe them, for I have seen your painted women
 under the gas lamps luring the farm boys
 And they tell me you are crooked and I answer Yes, it is true I have seen the gun
 man kill and go free to kill again
 And they tell me you are brutal and my reply is On the faces of women and chil-
 dren I have seen the marks of wanton hunger
 And having answered so I turn once more to those who sneer at this my city, and I
 give them back the sneer and say to them
 Come and show me another city with lifted head singing so proud to be alive and
 coarse and strong and cunning
 Flinging magnetic curses amid the toil of piling job on job, here is a tall bold slugger
 set vivid against the little soft cities,
 Fierce as a dog with tongue lapping for action, cunning as a savage pitted against
 the wilderness,

Bareheaded,

Shoveling,

Wrecking,

Planning,

Building, breaking, rebuilding,

15

Under the smoke, dust all over his mouth, laughing with white teeth,
 Under the terrible burden of destiny laughing as a young man laughs,
 Laughing even as an ignorant fighter laughs who has never lost a battle,
 Braggart and laughing that under his wrist is the pulse, and under his ribs the heart
 of the people,

20

Laughing!

Laughing the stormy, husky, brawling laughter of Youth, half naked, sweating,
 proud to be Hog Butcher, Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat, Player with Railroads
 and Freight Handler to the Nation

Cornhuskers (1918), *Smoke and Steel* (1920), *Slabs of the Sunburnt West* (1923), and *Good Morning, America* (1928) added to Sandburg's stature. They were a shock to those reared on dulcet music and mellifluous phrasing. Instead of orthodox meters Sandburg employed long, polyrhythmical lines as liberally as Whitman. They particularly reflected the open prairies and vast manufacturing regions of which Sandburg was so well qualified to write. It was little wonder that he was hailed as poet laureate of the industrial Middle West. His understanding of the brutal aspects of life and his sympathy with the down-trodden find continual expression in his work, in no poem more vividly than in "Smoke and Steel."

SMOKE AND STEEL¹

Smoke of the fields in spring is one,
 Smoke of the leaves in autumn another
 Smoke of a steel mill roof or a battleship funnel,
 They all go up in a line with a smokestack,
 Or they twist in the slow twist of the wind

5

¹ From *Smoke and Steel* copyright, 1920, by Harcourt, Brace and Company. All selections from *Smoke and Steel* are reprinted by permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company.

If the north wind comes they run to the south
 If the west wind comes they run to the east

By this sign

all smokes

know each other

10

Smoke of the fields in spring and leaves in autumn,
 Smoke of the finished steel, chilled and blue,
 By the oath of work they swear "I know you"

Hunted and hissed from the center

Deep down long ago when God made us over,

15

Deep down are the cinders we came from—

You and I and our heads of smoke

Some of the smokes God dropped on the job

Cross on the sky and count our years

And sing in the secret of our numbers,

20

Sing their dawns and sing their evenings,

Sing an old log fire song

You may put the damper up,

You may put the damper down,

The smoke goes up the chimney just the same

25

Smoke of a city sunset skyline,

Smoke of a country dusk horizon—

They cross on the sky and count our years

Smoke of a brick red dust

Winds on a spiral

30

Out of the stacks

For a hidden and glimpsing moon

This, said the bar iron shed to the blooming mill,

This is the slang of coal and steel

The day gang hands it to the night-gang,

35

The night gang hands it back

Stammer at the slang of this—

Let us understand half of it

In the rolling mil's and sheet mills,

In the harr and boom of the blast fires,

40

The smoke changes its shadow

And men change their shadows,

A nigger, a wop, a bohunk changes

A bar of steel—it is only

Smoke at the heart of it, smoke and the blood of a man

45

A runner of fire ran in it, ran out, ran somewhere else,

And left—smoke and the blood of a man

And the finished steel, chilled and blue

So fire runs in, runs out, runs somewhere else again,

And the bar of steel is a gun, a wheel, a nail, a shovel,

50

A rudder under the sea, a steering gear in the sky,
 And always dark in the heart and through it,
 Smoke and the blood of a man
 Pittsburgh, Youngstown, Gary—they make their steel with men

In the blood of men and the ink of chimneys 55
 The smoke nights write their oaths
 Smoke into steel and blood into steel,
 Homestead, Braddock, Birmingham, they make their steel with men
 Smoke and blood is the mix of steel

The birdmen drone 60
 in the blue, it is steel
 a motor sings and zooms

Steel barb wire around The Works
 Steel guns in the holsters of the guards at the gates of The Works
 Steel ore boats bring the loads clawed from the earth by steel, lifted and lugged by
 arms of steel, sung on its way by the clanking clam shells 65
 The runners now, the handlers now, are steel, they dig and clutch and haul, they
 hoist their automatic knuckles from job to job, they are steel making steel
 Fire and dust and air fight in the furnaces, the pour is timed, the billets wriggle,
 the clinkers are dumped
 Liners on the sea, climbing steel in the sky

Finders in the dark, you Steve with a dinner bucket, you Steve clumping in the
 dusk on the sidewalks with an evening paper for the woman and kids, you
 Steve with your head wondering where we all end up—
 Finders in the dark, Steve I hook my arm in cinder sleeves, we go down the street
 together, it is all the same to us, you Steve and the rest of us end together,
 in hell or heaven 70

Smoke nights now, Steve
 Smoke, smoke, lost in the sieves of yesterday,
 Dumped again to the scoops and hooks today
 Smoke like the clocks and whistles, always
 Smoke nights now 75
 Tomorrow something else

Luck moons come and go
 Five men swim in a pot of red steel
 Their bones are kneaded into the bread of steel
 Their bones are knocked into coils and anvils 80
 And the sucking plungers of sea fighting turbines
 Look for them in the woven frame of a wireless station
 So ghosts hide in steel like heavy armed men in mirrors
 Peepers, skulkers—they shadow-dance in laughing tombs
 They are always there and they never answer 85

One of them said "I like my job, the company is good to me, America is a wonderful country"

One "Jesus, my bones ache, the company is a liar, this is a free country, like hell "
 One "I got a girl, a peach, we save up and go on a farm and raise pigs and be
 boss ourselves"
 And the others were roughneck singers a long ways from home
 Look for them back of a steel vault door 90

They laugh at the cost
 They lift the birdmen into the blue
 It is steel a motor sings and zooms

In the subway plugs and drums,
 In the slow hydraulic drills, in gumbo or gravel, 95
 Under dynamo shafts in the webs of armature spiders,
 They shadow dance and laugh at the cost

The ovens light a red dome
 Spools of fire wind and wind
 Quadrangles of crimson sputter 100
 The lashes of dying maroon let down
 Fire and wind wash out the slag
 Forever the slag gets washed in fire and wind
 The anthem learned by the steel is
 Do this or go hungry 105
 Look for our rust on a plow
 Listen to us in a threshing-engine razz
 Look at our job in the running wagon wheat

Fire and wind wash at the slag
 Box cars, clocks, steam shovels, churns, pistons, boilers, scissors— 110
 Oh, the sleeping slag from the mountains, the slag heavy pig-iron will go down
 many roads
 Men will stab and shoot with it, and make butter and tunnel rivers, and mow hay
 in swaths, and slit hogs and skin beeves, and steer airplanes across North
 America, Europe, Asia, round the world
 Hacked from a hard rock country, broken and baked in mills and smelters, the
 rusty dust waits
 Till the clean hard weave of its atoms cripples and blunts the drills chewing a
 hole in it 114
 The steel of its plinths and flanges is reckoned, O God, in one millionth of an inch

Once when I saw the curves of fire, the rough scarf women dancing,
 Dancing out of the flues and smoke-stacks—flying hair of fire, flying feet upside
 down,
 Buckets and baskets of fire exploding and chortling, fire running wild out of the
 steady and fastened ovens,
 Sparks cracking a harr harr-huff from a solar plexus of rock ribs of the earth taking
 a laugh for themselves,
 Ears and noses of fire, gibbering gorilla arms of fire, gold mud pies, gold bird-wings,
 red jackets riding purple mules, scarlet autocrats tumbling from the humps of
 camels, assassinated czars straddling vermilion balloons, 120
 I saw then the fires flash one by one good by then smoke, smoke,

And in the screens the great sisters of night and cool stars, sitting women arranging
their hair,

Waiting in the sky, waiting with slow easy eyes, waiting and half murmuring

"Since you know all

and I know nothing,

tell me what I dreamed last night "

125

Pearl cobwebs in the windy rain,

in only a flicker of wind,

are caught and lost and never known again

A pool of moonshine comes and waits,

but never waits long, the wind picks up

loose gold like this and is gone

130

A bar of steel sleeps and looks slant eyed

on the pearl cobwebs, the pools of moonshine,

sleeps slant eyed a million years,

sleeps with a coat of rust, a vest of moths,

a shirt of gathering sod and loam

135

The wind never bothers a bar of steel

The wind picks only pearl cobwebs pools of moonshine

Another aspect of Sandburg's peculiar talent is displayed in his poems his combination of the plain tone and its symbolic overtone, a combination which is achieved by the mixture of actuality and vision, of slang and mysticism The mystical note is particularly evident in the shorter poems, poems which transcend environment Few things that Sandburg has written are likely to last longer than his "Cool Tombs," with its soft but insistent repetitions, the haunting "Wind Song," and the grimly heroic "Losers," which reaches its climax in the scornful and now-famous question of an anonymous American sergeant in the World War

COOL TOMBS¹

When Abraham Lincoln was shoveled into the tombs,
he forgot the copperheads and the assassin
in the dust, in the cool tombs

And Ulysses Grant lost all thought of con men and Wall
Street, cash and collateral turned ashes in the
dust, in the cool tombs

5

Pocahontas' body, lovely as a poplar, sweet as a red haw
in November or a pawpaw in May, did she wonder?
does she remember? in the dust, in the cool tombs?

¹ From *Cornhuskers*, copyright, 1918, Henry Holt and Company By permission of the publishers

Take any streetful of people buying clothes and groceries,
 cheering a hero or throwing confetti and blowing tin
 horns tell me if the lovers are losers tell
 me if any get more than the lovers in the dust
 in the cool tombs

DEATH SNIPS PROUD MEN¹

Death is stronger than all the governments because the governments are men and
 men die and then death laughs Now you see 'em, now you don't

Death is stronger than all proud men and so death snips proud men on the nose,
 throws a pair of dice and says Read 'em and weep

Death sends a radiogram every day When I want you I'll drop in—and then one
 day he comes with a master key and lets himself in and says We'll go now

Death is a nurse mother with big arms 'Twon't hurt you at all, it's your time now,
 you just need a long sleep, child, what have you had anyhow better than sleep?

WIND SONG¹

Long ago I learned how to sleep,
 In an old apple orchard where the wind swept by counting its money and throwing
 it away,

In a wind gaunt orchard where the limbs forked out and listened or never listened
 at all,

In a passel of trees where the branches trapped the wind into whistling, "Who, who
 are you?"

I slept with my head in an elbow on a summer afternoon and there I took a sleep
 lesson

There I went away saying I know why they sleep, I know how they trap the tricky
 winds

Long ago I learned how to listen to the singing wind and how to forget and how to
 hear the deep whine,

Slapping and lapsing under the day blue and the night stars
 Who, who are you?

Who can ever forget
 listening to the wind go by
 counting its money
 and throwing it away?

LOSERS¹

If I should pass the tomb of Jonah
 I would stop there and sit for a while,

¹ From *Smoke and Steel* copyright, 1920, by Harcourt, Brace and Company

Because I was swallowed one time deep in the dark
And came out alive after all

If I pass the burial spot of Nero 5
I shall say to the wind, "Well, well!"—
I who have fiddled in a world on fire,
I who have done so many stunts not worth doing

I am looking for the grave of Sinbad too
I want to shake his ghost hand and say, 10
"Neither of us died very early, did we?"

And the last sleeping place of Nebuchadnezzar—
When I arrive there I shall tell the wind
"You ate grass, I have eaten crow—
Who is better off now or next year?" 15

Jack Cade, John Brown, Jesse James,
There too I could sit down and stop for a while
I think I could tell their headstones
"God, let me remember all good losers "

I could ask people to throw ashes on their heads 20
In the name of that sergeant at Belleau Woods,
Walking into the drumfires, calling his men,
"Come on, you Do you want to live forever?"

EDNA ST VINCENT MILLAY

Edna St Vincent Millay was born February 22, 1892, in Rockland, Maine. One of her finest poems, written before she was nineteen, became the title-poem of her first volume, *Renascence* (1917), a collection published in her twenty-fifth year. The simple couplets of this poem are as seemingly ingenuous as a child's rhyme, but they are momentous in their implication. The background against which Miss Millay spent her childhood is delineated in these remarkable lines, but the scene is soon lost in the gathering intensity of the poem and its spiritual climax. One of the most quoted poems of the period, repetition has not dulled its music nor robbed it of its cumulative effect.

RENASCENCE¹

All I could see from where I stood
Was three long mountains and a wood,
I turned and looked the other way,
And saw three islands in a bay
So with my eyes I traced the line
Of the horizon, thin and fine,

Straight around till I was come
Back to where I'd started from,
And all I saw from where I stood
Was three long mountains and a wood 10
Over these things I could not see,
These were the things that bounded me,
And I could touch them with my hand, 5
Almost, I thought, from where I stand

¹ From *Renascence and Other Poems*, published by Harper & Brothers. Copyright, 1917, by Edna St Vincent Millay.

And all at once things seemed so small 15
 My breath came short, and scarce at all
 But, sure, the sky is big, I said,
 Miles and miles above my head,
 So here upon my back I'll lie
 And look my fill into the sky
 And so I looked, and, after all,
 The sky was not so very tall
 The sky, I said, must somewhere stop,
 And—sure enough!—I see the top!
 The sky, I thought, is not so grand, 25
 I 'most could touch it with my hand!
 And reaching up my hand to try,
 I screamed to feel it touch the sky
 I screamed, and—lo!—Infinity
 Came down and settled over me, 30
 Forced back my scream into my chest,
 Bent back my arm upon my breast,
 And, pressing of the Undefined
 The definition on my mind,
 Held up before my eyes a glass 35
 Through which my shrinking sight did pass
 Until it seemed I must behold
 Immensity made manifold,
 Whispered to me a word whose sound
 Deafened the air for worlds around, 40
 And brought unmuffled to my ears
 The gossiping of friendly spheres,
 The creaking of the tented sky,
 The ticking of Eternity
 I saw and heard and knew at last 45
 The How and Why of all things, past,
 And present, and forevermore
 The Universe, cleft to the core,
 Lay open to my probing sense 49
 That, sick'ning, I would fain pluck thence
 But could not,—nay! But needs must suck
 At the great wound, and could not pluck
 My lips away till I had drawn
 All venom out—Ah, fearful pawn!
 For my omniscience paid I toll 55
 In infinite remorse of soul
 All sin was of my sinning, all
 Atoning mine, and mine the gall
 Of all regret Mine was the weight
 Of every brooded wrong, the hate 60
 That stood behind each envious thrust,
 Mine every greed, mine every lust
 And all the while for every grief,
 Each suffering, I craved relief
 With individual desire,— 65

Craved all in vain! And felt fierce fire
 About a thousand people crawl,
 Perished with each,—then mourned for all!
 A man was starving in Capri,
 He moved his eyes and looked at me, 70
 I felt his gaze, I heard his moan,
 And knew his hunger as my own
 I saw at sea a great fog bank
 Between two ships that struck and sank,
 A thousand screams the heavens smote, 75
 And every scream tore through my throat
 No hurt I did not feel, no death
 That was not mine, mine each last breath
 That, crying, met an answering cry
 From the compassion that was I 80
 All suffering mine, and mine its rod,
 Mine, pity like the pity of God
 Ah, awful weight! Infinity
 Pressed down upon the finite Me!
 My anguished spirit, like a bird, 85
 Beating against my lips I heard,
 Yet lay the weight so close about
 There was no room for it without
 And so beneath the weight lay I
 And suffered death, but could not die 90

Long had I lain thus, craving death,
 When quietly the earth beneath
 Gave way, and inch by inch, so great
 At last had grown the crushing weight,
 Into the earth I sank till I 95
 Full six feet under ground did lie,
 And sank no more,—there is no weight
 Can follow here, however great
 From off my breast, I felt it roll,
 And as it went my tortured soul 100
 Burst forth and fled in such a gust
 That all about me swirled the dust

Deep in the earth I rested now,
 Cool is its hand upon the brow
 And soft its breast beneath the head 105
 Of one who is so gladly dead
 And all at once, and over all
 The pitying rain began to fall,
 I lay and heard each pattering hoof
 Upon my lowly, thatched roof, 110
 And seemed to love the sound far more
 Than ever I had done before
 For rain it hath a friendly sound
 To one who's six feet under ground, 115

- And scarce the friendly voice or face 115
A grave is such a quiet place
- The rain, I said, is kind to come
And speak to me in my new home
I would I were alive again
To kiss the fingers of the rain, 120
To drink into my eyes the shine
Of every slanting silver line,
To catch the freshened, fragrant breeze
From drenched and dripping apple trees
For soon the shower will be done, 125
And then the broad face of the sun
Will laugh above the rain soaked earth
Until the world with answering mirth
Shakes joyously, and each round drop
Rolls, twinkling, from its grass blade top
How can I bear it, buried here, 131
While overhead the sky grows clear
And blue again after the storm?
O, multi colored, multiform,
Beloved beauty over me, 135
That I shall never, never see
Again! Spring silver, autumn gold,
That I shall never more behold!
Sleeping your myriad magics through,
Close sepulchered away from you! 140
O God, I cried, give me new birth,
And put me back upon the earth!
Upset each cloud's gigantic gourd
And let the heavy rain, down poured
In one big torrent, set me free, 145
Washing my grave away from me!
- I ceased, and through the breathless hush
That answered me, the far-off rush
Of herald wings came whispering
Like music down the vibrant string 150
Of my ascending prayer, and—crash!
Before the wild wind's whistling lash
The startled storm clouds reared on high
And plunged in terror down the sky,
And the big rain in one black wave 155
Fell from the sky and struck my grave
- I know not how such things can be,
I only know there came to me
A fragrance such as never clings
To aught save happy living things, 160
A sound as of some joyous elf
Singing sweet songs to please himself,
And, through and over everything,
- A sense of glad awakening
The grass, a tiptoe at my ear, 165
Whispering to me I could hear,
I felt the rain's cool finger tips
Brushed tenderly across my lips,
Laid gently on my sealed sight,
And all at once the heavy night 170
Fell from my eyes and I could see,—
A drenched and dripping apple tree,
A last long line of silver rain,
A sky grown clear and blue again
And as I looked a quickening gust 175
Of wind blew up to me and thrust
Into my face a miracle
Of orchard breath, and with the smell,—
I know not how such things can be!—
I breathed my soul back into me 180
Ah! Up then from the ground sprang I
And hailed the earth with such a cry
As is not heard save from a man
Who has been dead, and lives again
About the trees my arms I wound, 185
Like one gone mad I hugged the ground,
I raised my quivering arms on high,
I laughed and laughed into the sky,
Till at my throat a strangling sob
Caught fiercely, and a great heart throb 190
Sent instant tears into my eyes,
O God, I cried, no dark disguise
Can e'er hereafter hide from me
Thy radiant identity!
Thou canst not move across the grass 195
But my quick eyes will see Thee pass,
Nor speak, however silently,
But my hushed voice will answer Thee
I know the path that tells Thy way
Through the cool eve of every day, 200
God, I can push the grass apart
And lay my finger on Thy heart!
- The world stands out on either side
No wider than the heart is wide,
Above the world is stretched the sky,— 205
No higher than the soul is high
The heart can push the sea and land
Farther away on either hand,
The soul can split the sky in two,
And let the face of God shine through 210
But East and West will pinch the heart
That cannot keep them pushed apart,
And he whose soul is flat—the sky
Will cave in on him by and by

A sponsor sent Miss Millay to Vassar, from which she received her degree in 1917. From college she went to New York, attempted journalism, did smart sketches under a pseudonym, acted with the Provincetown Players and the organization which was later to become The Theatre Guild, and wrote an ironic anti-war play, *Aria Da Capo* (1921). After her marriage to Eugen Jan Boissevain, she made her home in the Berkshire Hills in Massachusetts, was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for poetry in 1922, and wrote the libretto for *The King's Henchman*, the music for which was written by Deems Taylor, and which was performed at the Metropolitan Opera House in 1927.

Following *Renaissance* Miss Millay wrote a number of volumes, the most important of which are *Second April* (1921), *The Harp Weaver and Other Poems* (1924), *The Buck in the Snow and Other Poems* (1928), *Fatal Interview* (1931), and *Wine from These Grapes* (1934). Technically these books have no particular novelty. Although many of the poems are marred by being stretched beyond their emotional capacity, the best of them are brilliantly constructed and are solidified with an unusual power of phrase. Their high seriousness is particularly evident in such sonnets as "Pity Me Not," "What Lips My Lips Have Kissed," "I Know I Am but Summer to Your Heart," "Euclid Alone Has Looked on Beauty Bare," "See Where Capella with Her Golden Kids," and others in the same admirable, if sometimes magisterial, vein.

What chiefly distinguishes the later volumes is the gravity of the work. The poet turns away from pretty romanticizing and is concerned largely with the self-deluded, self-torturing human spirit. Maturity has brought her the unhappy recognition of love's transience and time's betrayal. Only beauty persists. The pyramid builders no longer impose their will upon Egypt, but the pyramids stand, backed by the constellations. She who loved the rose and rhododendron is forgotten by the flowers she cared for, but spring will not fail to bring the bees back to the white syringas. Birds leave the wintry tree, passion tricks the trusting heart. Beauty alone, abstract and pure as a mathematical concept, sustains the world.

I KNOW I AM BUT SUMMER¹

I know I am but summer to your heart,
And not the full four seasons of the year,
And you must welcome from another part
Such noble moods as are not mine, my dear
No gracious weight of golden fruits to sell 5
Have I, nor any wise and wintry thing,
And I have loved you all too long and well
To carry still the high sweet breast of Spring
Wherefore I say O love, as summer goes,
I must be gone, steal forth with silent drums,
That you may hail anew the bird and rose 11
When I come back to you, as summer comes

Else will you seek, at some not distant time
Even your summer in another clime

PITY ME NOT¹

Pity me not because the light of day
At close of day no longer walks the sky,
Pity me not for beauties passed away
From field and thicket as the year goes by,
Pity me not the waning of the moon, 5
Nor that the ebbing tide goes out to sea,
Nor that a man's desire is hushed so soon,
And you no longer look with love on me

¹ From *The Ballad of the Harp Weaver and Other Poems* published by Harper & Brothers. Copyright, 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, by Edna St. Vincent Millay.

'This have I known always love is no more
 Than the wide blossom which the wind as-
 sails, 10
 Than the great tide that treads the shifting
 shore,
 Strewing fresh wreckage gathered in the
 gales
 Pity me that the heart is slow to learn
 What the swift mind beholds at every turn

WHAT LIPS MY LIPS HAVE KISSED¹

What lips my lips have kissed, and where,
 and why,
 I have forgotten, and what arms have lain
 Under my head till morning, but the rain
 Is full of ghosts tonight, that tap and sigh
 Upon the glass and listen for reply, 5
 And in my heart there stirs a quiet pain
 For unremembered lads that not again
 Will turn to me at midnight with a cry

Thus in the winter stands the lonely tree,
 Nor knows what birds have vanished one by
 one, 10
 Yet knows its boughs more silent than be-
 fore
 I cannot say what loves have come and gone,
 I only know that summer sang in me
 A little while, that in me sings no more

EUCLID ALONE HAS LOOKED ON BEAUTY BARE¹

Euclid alone has looked on Beauty bare
 Let all that prate of Beauty hold their peace,
 And lay them prone upon the earth, and cease

To ponder on themselves, the while they stare
 At nothing, intricately drawn nowhere 5
 In shapes of shifting lineage Let geese
 Gabble and hiss, but heroes seek release
 From dusty bondage into luminous air

Oh, blinding hour—oh, holy terrible day—
 When first the shaft into his vision shone 10
 Of light anatomized! Euclid alone
 Has looked on Beauty bare, fortunate they
 Who though once only, and then but far away
 Have heard her massive sandal set on stone

ELEGY BEFORE DEATH²

There will be rose and rhododendron
 When you are dead and under ground,
 Still will be heard from white syringas
 Heavy with bees, a sunny sound,

Still will the tamaracks be raining 5
 After the rain has ceased, and still
 Will there be robins in the stubble,
 Brown sheep upon the warm green hill

Spring will not fail nor autumn falter,
 Nothing will know that you are gone, 10
 Saving alone some sullen plow land
 None but yourself sets foot upon,

Saving the may-weed and the pig weed
 Nothing will know that you are dead,—
 These, and perhaps a useless wagon 15
 Standing beside some tumbled shed

Oh, there will pass with your great passing
 Little of beauty not your own,—
 Only the light from common water,
 Only the grace from simple stone! 20

SEE WHERE CAPELLA WITH HER GOLDEN KIDS³

See where Capella with her golden kids
 Grazes the slope between the east and north?
 Thus when the builders of the pyramids

¹ From *The Ballad of the Harp Weaver and Other Poems* published by Harper & Brothers Copyright, 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, by Edna St Vincent Millay

² From *Second April*, published by Harper & Brothers Copyright, 1921, by Edna St Vincent Millay

³ From *Wine from These Grapes*, published by Harper & Brothers Copyright, 1934, by Edna St Vincent Millay

Flung down their tools at nightfall and poured forth
 Homeward to supper and a poor man's bed, 5
 Shortening the road with friendly jest and slur,
 The risen She Goat showing blue and red
 Climbed the clear dusk, and three stars followed her
 Safe in their linen and their spices lie
 The kings of Egypt, even as long ago 10
 Under these constellations, with long eye
 And scented limbs they slept, and feared no foe
 Their will was law, their will was not to die
 And so they had their way, or nearly so

The two conflicting tendencies of the period—the traditional and the experimental—were united in the work of Edwin Arlington Robinson. He was one of the first to revolt against the merely decorative figures of speech and the elaborate poetic diction current in his youth, yet his poetry was severe in outline, rich in phrase, and almost classical in tone. Anticipating the poetic renaissance, which began in America in 1913, Robinson's first volume, printed in 1896, pioneered in the conversational idiom and the directness which have become the chief characteristics of modern poetry.

No contemporary poet was more precise in his use of words. Again and again Robinson's lines are illuminated by epithets which are both exact and suggestive. Intelligence and intuition are combined in an extraordinary manner in everything he wrote, perhaps most effectively in the brief etchings, in the lyrics and sonnets which seem likely to outlive the longer and more ambitious work.

EDWIN ARLINGTON ROBINSON

Edwin Arlington Robinson (1869-1935), born at Head Tide, Maine, published his first volume of verse, *The Torrent and the Night Before*, in 1896, and in the following year, *The Children of the Night*. This was followed in 1902 by *Captain Craig*.

For a while Robinson was inspector of subways in New York, and from 1905 to 1910, a clerk in the New York Customs House. The latter position was a sinecure due to the enthusiastic admiration of President Theodore Roosevelt for his poetry, it rescued him from desperate poverty. He left this position in 1910, in which year appeared *The Town Down the River*. *The Man Against the Sky* was published in 1916, and in the following years a number of volumes: *Merlin*, *Launcelot*, *The Three Taverns*, *Avon's Harvest*, *The Man Who Died Twice*, *Dionysius in Doubt*, and *Tristram*. He was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in poetry three times in 1921, 1924, 1927.

In all these books there is manifest a searching for the light beyond illusions. But Robinson's transcendentalism is no mere emotional escape, his temper subjects the slightest phrase to critical analysis, his intuitions are supported—or scrutinized—by a vigorous intellectuality. Purely as a portrait painter he has

given American literature a gallery of memorable figures, some of whom appear in the following poems

Technically Robinson is as precise as he is dexterous, and a master of the slowly diminished ending. Although he has been accused of holding a consistently negative attitude toward life, his poetry reveals a restless, uncertain, but persistent search for moral values.

After 1928 Robinson's poetry tended to become repetitious, prolix and defeatist. These weaknesses of his later work the student of his poetry regrets while admiring at the same time the undeviating integrity which carried him through his difficulties and won him the admiration of his contemporaries, irrespective of their preferences or poetic affiliations.

CLIFF KLINGENHAGEN¹

Cliff Klingenhagen had me in to dine
 With him one day, and after soup and meat,
 And all the other things there were to eat,
 Cliff took two glasses and filled one with wine
 And one with wormwood. Then, without a sign 5
 For me to choose at all, he took the draught
 Of bitterness himself, and lightly quaffed
 It off, and said the other one was mine

And when I asked him what the deuce he meant
 By doing that, he only looked at me 10
 And smiled, and said it was a way of his
 And though I know the fellow, I have spent
 Long time a-wondering when I shall be
 As happy as Cliff Klingenhagen is

REUBEN BRIGHT

Because he was a butcher and thereby
 Did earn an honest living (and did right)
 I would not have you think that Reuben Bright
 Was any more a brute than you or I,
 For when they told him that his wife must die, 5
 He stared at them, and shook with grief and fright,
 And cried like a great baby half that night,
 And made the women cry to see him cry

And after she was dead, and he had paid
 The singers and the sexton and the rest, 10
 He packed a lot of things that she had made
 Most mournfully away in an old chest
 Of hers, and put some chopped up cedar boughs
 In with them, and tore down the slaughter house

¹ This poem, 'Reuben Bright,' and 'Calvary' are from *Children of the Night*, published by Charles Scribner's Sons. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

CALVARY

Friendless and faint, with martyred steps and slow,
 Faint for the flesh, but for the spirit free,
 Stung by the mob that came to see the show,
 The Master toiled along to Calvary,
 We gibed him, as he went, with houndish glee, 5
 Till his dimmed eyes for us did overflow,
 We cursed his vengeless hands thrice wretchedly,—
 And this was nineteen hundred years ago

But after nineteen hundred years the shame
 Still clings, and we have not made good the loss 10
 That outraged faith has entered in his name
 Ah, when shall come love's courage to be strong!
 Tell me, O Lord—tell me, O Lord, how long
 Are we to keep Christ writhing on the cross!

THE MASTER¹

A flying word from here and there
 Had sown the name at which we sneered,
 But soon the name was everywhere,
 To be reviled and then revered
 A presence to be loved and feared, 5
 We cannot hide it, or deny
 That we, the gentlemen who jeered,
 May be forgotten by and by

He came when days were perilous
 And hearts of men were sore beguiled, 10
 And having made his note of us,
 He pondered and was reconciled
 Was ever master yet so mild
 As he, and so untamable?
 We doubted, even when he smiled, 15
 Not knowing what he knew so well

He knew that undeceiving fate
 Would shame us whom he served unsought,
 He knew that he must wince and wait—
 The jest of those for whom he fought, 20
 He knew devoutly what he thought
 Of us and of our ridicule,
 He knew that we must all be taught
 Like little children in a school

We gave a glamor to the task 25
 That he encountered and saw through,
 But little of us did he ask,

And little did we ever do
 And what appears if we review
 The season when we railed and chaffed? 30
 It is the face of one who knew
 That we were learning while we laughed

The face that in our vision feels
 Again the venom that we flung,
 Transfigured to the world reveals 35
 The vigilance to which we clung
 Shrewd, hallowed, harassed, and among
 The mysteries that are untold,
 The face we see was never young,
 Nor could it wholly have been old 40

For he, to whom we had applied
 Our shopman's test of age and worth,
 Was elemental when he died,
 As he was ancient at his birth
 The saddest among kings of earth, 45
 Bowed with a galling crown, this man
 Met rancor with a cryptic mirth,
 Laconic—and Olympian

The love, the grandeur, and the fame
 Are bounded by the world alone, 50
 The calm, the smoldering, and the flame
 Of awful patience were his own
 With him they are forever flown
 Past all our fond self-shadowings,
 Wherewith we cumber the Unknown 55
 As with inept, Icarian wings

¹ This poem, *How Annandale Went Out*, 'Miniver Cheevy', and 'Richard Cory' are from *The Town Down the River*, published by Charles Scribner's Sons. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

For we were not as other men
 'Twas ours to soar and his to see
 But we are coming down again,
 And we shall come down pleasantly, 60
 Nor shall we longer disagree
 On what it is to be sublime,
 But flourish in our perigee
 And have one Titan at a time

HOW ANNANDALE WENT OUT

"They called it Annandale—and I was there
 To flourish, to find words, and to attend
 Liar, physician, hypocrite, and friend,

I watched him, and the sight was not so fair
 As one or two that I have seen elsewhere
 An apparatus not for me to mend— 6
 A wreck, with hell between him and the
 end,
 Remained of Annandale, and I was there

"I knew the ruin as I knew the man,
 So put the two together, if you can, 10
 Remembering the worst you know of me
 Now view yourself as I was, on the spot—
 With a slight kind of engine Do you see?
 Like this You wouldn't hang me? I
 thought not"

The following poems show Robinson's interest in men who have failed, in the misfits, the outcasts from society, the frustrated dreamers. Failure has been their lot either because of personal weakness or because of some external circumstance beyond their control. The poet is certainly not antagonistic to them, neither is he whole-heartedly sympathetic. The characterization is unimpassioned, objective, and vivid.

MINIVER CHEEVY

Miniver Cheevy, child of scorn,
 Grew lean while he assailed the seasons,
 He wept that he was ever born,
 And he had reasons

Miniver loved the days of old 5
 When swords were bright and steeds were
 prancing,
 The vision of a warrior bold
 Would set him dancing

Miniver sighed for what was not,
 And dreamed, and rested from his labors,
 He dreamed of Thebes and Camelot, 11
 And Priam's neighbors

Miniver mourned the ripe renown
 That made so many a name so fragrant,
 He mourned Romance, now on the town, 15
 And Art, a vagrant

Miniver loved the Medici,
 Albeit he had never seen one,
 He would have sinned incessantly
 Could he have been one 20

Miniver cursed the commonplace
 And eyed a khaki suit with loathing,

He missed the medieval grace
 Of iron clothing

Miniver scorned the gold he sought, 25
 But sore annoyed was he without it,
 Miniver thought, and thought, and thought
 And thought about it

Miniver Cheevy, born too late,
 Scratched his head and kept on thinking,
 Miniver coughed, and called it fate, 31
 And kept on drinking

RICHARD CORY

Whenever Richard Cory went down town,
 We people on the pavement looked at him
 He was a gentleman from sole to crown,
 Clean favored, and imperially slim

And he was always quietly arrayed, 5
 And he was always human when he
 talked,
 But still he fluttered pulses when he said,
 "Good-morning," and he glittered when
 he walked

And he was rich—yes, richer than a king—
 And admirably schooled in every grace 10
 In fine, we thought that he was everything
 To make us wish that we were in his place

So on we worked, and waited for the light,
 And went without the meat, and cursed
 the bread, 14
 And Richard Cory, one calm summer night,
 Went home and put a bullet through his
 head

MR FLOOD'S PARTY¹

Old Eben Flood, climbing alone one night
 Over the hill between the town below
 And the forsaken upland hermitage
 That held as much as he should ever know
 On earth again of home, paused warily 5
 The road was his with not a native near,
 And Eben, having leisure, said aloud,
 For no man else in Tilbury Town to hear

"Well, Mr Flood, we have the harvest moon
 Again, and we may not have many more, 10
 The bird is on the wing, the poet says,
 And you and I have said it here before
 Drink to the bird" He raised up to the light
 The jug that he had gone so far to fill,
 And answered huskily "Well, Mr Flood,
 Since you propose it, I believe I will" 16

Alone, as if enduring to the end
 A valiant armor of scarred hopes outworn,
 He stood there in the middle of the road
 Like Roland's ghost winding a silent horn
 Below him, in the town among the trees, 21
 Where friends of other days had honored
 him,
 A phantom salutation of the dead
 Rang thinly till old Eben's eyes were dim

Then, as a mother lays her sleeping child 25
 Down tenderly, fearing it may awake,
 He set the jug down slowly at his feet
 With trembling care, knowing that most
 things break,
 And only when assured that on firm earth
 It stood, as the uncertain lives of men 30

Assuredly did not, he paced away,
 And with his hand extended paused again

"Well, Mr Flood, we have not met like this
 In a long time, and many a change has come
 To both of us, I fear, since last it was 35
 We had a drop together 'Welcome home'"
 Convivially returning with himself,
 Again he raised the jug up to the light,
 And with an acquiescent quaver said
 "Well, Mr Flood, if you insist, I might 40

"Only a very little, Mr Flood—
 For auld lang syne No more, sir, that will
 do"

So, for the time, apparently it did,
 And Eben evidently thought so too,
 For soon amid the silver loneliness 45
 Of night he lifted up his voice and sang,
 Secure, with only two moons listening,
 Until the whole harmonious landscape
 rang—

"For auld lang syne" The weary throat gave
 out,
 The last word wavered, and the song being
 done, 50
 He raised again the jug regretfully
 And shook his head, and was again alone
 There was not much that was ahead of him,
 And there was nothing in the town below—
 Where strangers would have shut the many
 doors 55
 That many friends had opened long ago

BEWICK FINZER²

Time was when his half million drew
 The breath of six per cent,
 But soon the worm of what was not
 Fed hard on his content,
 And something crumbled in his brain 5
 When his half million went

Time passed, and filled along with his
 The place of many more,
 Time came, and hardly one of us
 Had credence to restore, 10

¹ From *Avon's Harvest* (and included in *Collected Poems*), published by The Macmillan Company Reprinted by permission of the publishers

² From *The Man Against the Sky* (and included in *Collected Poems*), published by The Macmillan Company Reprinted by permission of the publishers

From what appeared one day, the man Whom we had known before		With heart and eye that have a task When he looks in the face Of one who might so easily Have been in Finzer's place	
The broken voice, the withered neck, The coat worn out with care, The cleanliness of indigence, The brilliance of despair, The fond imponderable dreams Of affluence,—all were there	15	He comes unfailing for the loan We give and then forget, He comes, and probably for years Will he be coming yet,—	25
Poor Finzer, with his dreams and schemes, Fares hard now in the race,	20	Familiar as an old mistake, And futile as regret	30

MUSIC AND MYSTICISM

It is a platitude that every extreme breeds its opposite, and this axiom is particularly true of literary movements. In this swiftly moving age the reactions were particularly noticeable, and poetry, an especially articulate record of change, responded to every shift in the temper of the new century. At the very time when Thomas Hardy announced an uncompromising realism, William Butler Yeats pronounced an unadulterated mysticism. The influence of Yeats soon became apparent in America as well as in England. His followers stress the musicality of verse, they insist that whereas poetry may well talk, and even teach, its first function is to sing. They as much oppose the outward poetic properties as any of their contemporaries. They resist the over-embroidered clichés and the sentimental apostrophes, but they want to restore to verse that melodic current, the pulsing life-blood, which they feared was being drained by the realistic tendency.

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

William Butler Yeats was born at Sandymount, near Dublin, in 1865, was educated in England and his native island, made his home at intervals in Paris and on the Italian Riviera, but always returned to the country which vitalized his art and of which he was so vital a recorder. He attained prominence not only as poet and dramatist, but as pamphleteer and politician, since 1922 he has served the Irish Free State as senator. Thus he is one of the few men in the history of literature who has helped not only to make the nation's laws, but to make its songs. He died in January, 1939.

Yeats's first printed work was published in his twenty-first year, *Mosada A Poem* (1886), of which less than 100 copies were printed. But it was not until 1895 that his first representative collection of *Poems* drew attention to his gift of natural song. *The Wanderings of Ossin* (1889), *The Wind Among the Reeds* (1899), and *Poems 1899-1905* established him among the chief exponents of the Celtic Revival and were almost the first works to show the strength of the movement. Apart from the exquisite music and haunting phrases of this work there was a flavor utterly unlike that of any of Yeats's contemporaries.

It was an inflection not at all English, but definitely Irish, or Gaelic, the cadences echoed and expressed the native background, even when the background was not particularized, as in such lyrics as "When You Are Old," "Down by the Salley Gardens," "The Rose of the World," and "The Song of the Old Mother." Even Yeats's fays and sprites seem to inhabit a particularly Irish fairyland.

But something more than quaintness transpired from Yeats's poetry. It turned from the evoking of strange new harmonies to new expressions in drama. In 1892 Yeats published his play *The Countess Kathleen*, and in 1894 *The Land of Heart's Desire*, which has remained one of his most popular plays. Toward the end of the 'nineties Yeats became interested, with Lady Gregory, Edward Martyn, and others, in the formation of an Irish theatre. The result was the Abbey Theatre, founded in 1904, one of the most important elements of the Celtic Renaissance, not only has Yeats served as director of it, but for it he has written some of his best plays.

It was, however, as a poet that Yeats began and it is as a poet that he has made the deepest impression upon the period. For sheer charm his early poems, in spite of their sometimes arbitrary symbolism, are among his most popular.

THE LAKE ISLE OF INNISFREE¹

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made,
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honey bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings,
There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
And evening full of the linnet's wings 5

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore,
While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements gray, 10
I hear it in the deep heart's core

DOWN BY THE SALLEY GARDENS²

Down by the salley gardens my love and I did meet,
She passed the salley gardens with little snow-white feet
She bid me take love easy, as the leaves grow on the tree,
But I, being young and foolish, with her would not agree

In a field by a river my love and I did stand, 5
And on my leaning shoulder she laid her snow-white hand
She bid me take life easy, as the grass grows on the weirs,
But I was young and foolish, and now am full of tears

¹ From *Early Poems and Stories*. By permission of The Macmillan Company.

² From *Crossways*. By permission of The Macmillan Company.

And slowly read, and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows
deep,

How many loved your moments of glad
grace, 5
And loved your beauty with love false or
true

But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing
face,

And bending down beside the glowing bars
Murmur, a little sadly, how love fled 10
And paced among the mountains overhead
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars

FAIRY SONG¹

The wind blows out of the gates of the day
The wind blows over the lonely of heart,
And the lonely of heart is withered away,
While the faeries dance in a place apart, 5
Shaking their milk white feet in a ring,
Tossing their milk white arms in the air,
For they hear the wind laugh and murmur
and sing
Of a land where even the old are fair,
And even the wise are merry of tongue,
But I heard a reed of Coolaney say, 10
"When the wind has laughed and murmured
and sung,
The lonely of heart is withered away"

One of Yeats's early poems, "The Indian Upon God," evoked an instantaneous response. It was appreciated for its beauty of epithet, the daring of its images, and the gentle rise and fall of its musical line. It provoked particular comment since it came at the end of the Victorian religious controversies, its various pictures of a god made in the image of each worshiper were no less provocative for being fantastic. It is interesting to compare "The Indian Upon God" with other treatments of the same theme, especially with Robert Browning's "Caliban upon Setebos" on page 1158 and Rupert Brooke's "Heaven"

THE INDIAN UPON GOD²

I passed along the water's edge below the humid trees,
My spirit rocked in evening light, the rushes round my knees,
My spirit rocked in sleep and sighs, and saw the moorfowl pace
All dripping on a grassy slope, and saw them cease to chase 5
Each other round in circles, and heard the eldest speak
Who holds the world between His bill and made us strong or weak
Is an undying moorfowl, and He lives beyond the sky
The rains are from His dripping wing, the moonbeams from his eye
I passed a little further on and heard a lotus talk
Who made the world and ruleth it, He hangeth on a stalk 10
For I am in his image made, and all this twinkling tide
Is but a sliding drop of rain between His petals wide
A little way within the gloom a roebuck raised his eyes
Brimful of starlight, and he said *The Stamper of the Skies,*
He is a gentle roebuck, for how else, I pray, could He 15
Conceive a thing so sad and soft, a gentle thing like me?
I passed a little further on and heard a peacock say

¹ From *The Land of Heart's Desire* By permission of The Macmillan Company

² From *Early Poems and Stories* By permission of The Macmillan Company

*Who made this grass and made the worms and made my feathers gay,
He is a monstrous peacock, and He waveth all the night
His languid tail above us, lit with myriad spots of light*

Primarily interested in the concerns of his native land, Yeats has brought the vision of the mystic to bear upon the actualities. Whether his subject-matter is legendary or contemporary, an intuitive wisdom as well as an otherworldliness shines through his critical essays, his plays, his studies of folk lore and, most of all, his poems, all of which contributed to revive and stimulate Irish nationalism.

In the later poetry Yeats's early tendency to ornament his figures and make his pagan gods a little too aesthetic disappears. *Responsibilities*, *The Wild Swans at Coole* (1917), *Later Poems* (1922), *The Tower* (1928), and *The Winding Stair* (1933) disclose a poet who uses a stripped rather than an embroidered speech. The thought is no less mystical for being directed by a disciplined imagery, the intellectual strength is communicated through a medium which has a new firmness and austerity.

Yeats was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1923, and, upon his seventieth birthday in 1935, the conservative as well as the experimental writers united to hail him as one of the few important international figures in contemporary literature.

THE WILD SWANS AT COOLE¹

The trees are in their autumn beauty,
The woodland paths are dry,
Under the October twilight the water
Mirrors a still sky
Upon the brimming water among the stones
Are nine and fifty swans 6

The nineteenth autumn has come upon me
Since I first made my count
I saw, before I had well finished,
All suddenly mount 10
And scatter wheeling in great broken rings
Upon their clamorous wings

I have looked upon those brilliant creatures,
And now my heart is sore
All's changed since I, hearing at twilight, 15
The first time on this shore,
The bell-beat of their wings above my head,
Trod with a lighter tread

Unwearied still, lover by lover,
They paddle in the cold 20

Companionable streams, or climb the air
Their hearts have not grown old,
Passion or conquest, wander where they will,
Attend upon them still

But now they drift on the still water 25
Mysterious, beautiful
Among what rushes will they build,
By what lake's edge or pool
Delight men's eyes, when I awake some day
To find they have flown away? 30

A PRAYER FOR MY DAUGHTER¹

Once more the storm is howling, and half hid
Under this cradle hood and coverlid
My child sleeps on. There is no obstacle
But Gregory's wood and one bare hill
Whereby the haystack- and roof-leveling 5
wind,
Bred on the Atlantic, can be stayed,
And for an hour I have walked and prayed

¹From *Later Poems*. By permission of The Macmillan Company.

Because of the great gloom that is in my
mind

I have walked and prayed for this young
child an hour

And heard the sea-wind scream upon the
tower, 10

And under the arches of the bridge, and
scream

In the elms above the flooded stream,

Imagining in excited reverie

That the future years had come,

Dancing to a frenzied drum, 15

Out of the murderous innocence of the sea

May she be granted beauty, and yet not
Beauty to make a stranger's eye distraught,

Or hers before a looking glass, for such,
Being made beautiful overmuch, 20

Consider beauty a sufficient end,

Lose natural kindness and maybe

The heart revealing intimacy

That chooses right, and never find a friend

Helen being chosen found life flat and dull

And later had much trouble from a fool, 26

While that great Queen, that rose out of the
spray,

Being fatherless could have her way

Yet chose a bridle-legged smith for man

It's certain that fine women eat 30

A crazy salad with their meat

Whereby the Horn of Plenty is undone

In courtesy I'd have her chiefly learned,

Hearts are not had as a gift but hearts are
earned

By those that are not entirely beautiful, 35

Yet many, that have played the fool

For beauty's very self, has charm made wise,

And many a poor man that has roved,

Loved and thought himself beloved,

From a glad kindness cannot take his eyes 40

May she become a flourishing hidden tree

That all her thoughts may like the linnet be,

And have no business but dispensing round
Their magnanimities of sound,

Nor but in merriment begin a chase, 45

Nor but in merriment begin a quarrel

Oh, may she live like some green laurel

Rooted in one dear perpetual place

My mind, because the minds that I have
loved,

The sort of beauty that I have approved, 50

Prosper but little, has dried up of late,

Yet knows that to be choked with hate

May well be of all evil chances chief

If there's no hatred in a mind

Assault and battery of the wind 55

Can never tear the linnet from the leaf

An intellectual hatred is the worst,

So let her think opinions are accursed

Have I not seen the loveliest woman born

Out of the mouth of Plenty's horn, 60

Because of her opinionated mind

Barter that horn and every good

By quiet natures understood

For an old bellows full of angry wind?

Considering that, all hatred driven hence, 65

The soul recovers radical innocence

And learns at last that it is self-delighting,

Self-appeasing, self-affrighting,

And that its own sweet will is Heaven's will,

She can, though every face should scowl 70

And every windy quarter howl

Or every bellows burst, be happy still

And may her bridegroom bring her to a
house

Where all's accustomed, ceremonious,

For arrogance and hatred are the wares 75

Peddled in the thoroughfares

How but in custom and in ceremony

Are innocence and beauty born?

Ceremony's a name for the rich horn,

And custom for the spreading laurel tree 80

ELINOR WYLIE

Elinor (Hoyt) Wylie was born in Somerville, New Jersey, September 7,
1885, of old American stock. A grandfather was Governor of Pennsylvania,

and her father became Solicitor General under President Theodore Roosevelt. After a youthful romance which ended unhappily, she went to England when she was twenty-four, and remained abroad until the World War forced her return to America.

A privately printed *Incidental Numbers* was issued anonymously for a few friends in England in 1912, but it was not until 1921 that Elinor Wylie's name was known to more than a dozen readers. *Nets to Catch the Wind* (1921) is one of the most brilliant books of the end of the poetry renaissance in America. Its indebtednesses are obvious, the poet owes something to the seventeenth century metaphysicians, especially to Donne, and something to the twentieth century mystic, William Butler Yeats. But a personality develops which is quite itself.

In 1923 Elinor Wylie married the poet William Rose Benét and published *Black Armour*, as well as her remarkable novel, *Jennifer Loyn*, a tour de force in filigree prose. Two other volumes of poetry solidified her reputation, *Trivial Breath* (1928) and the posthumous *Angels and Earthly Creatures* (1929), which Elinor Wylie had arranged and made ready for the printer the day before she died, December 18, 1928.

Although there is nothing experimental or revolutionary in these volumes, they are like no others of the period. They are keen, almost two-edged, in craftsmanship: the rhymes are sharp and exact, little hammer blows of sound, the phrasing is smooth but firm, like spun silver. But the outstanding quality of this verse is its intellectual precision. Disdaining either emotional or verbal excess, Elinor Wylie imposed a patrician restraint upon everything she wrote. "The Eagle and the Mole," a rather early poem, is typical. This is a didactic poem and, in the hands of most writers, would have developed into a dreary piece of sermonizing. But Elinor Wylie's touch is so delicate, the music so austere, that the poem is saved from dullness and didacticism.

THE EAGLE AND THE MOLE¹

Avoid the reeking herd,
Shun the polluted flock,
Live like that stoic bird,
The eagle of the rock

The huddled warmth of crowds 5
Begets and fosters hate,
He keeps, above the clouds,
His cliff inviolate

When flocks are folded warm,
And herds to shelter run, 10
He sails above the storm,
He stares into the sun

If in the eagle's track
Your sinews cannot leap,
Avoid the lathered pack, 15
Turn from the steaming sheep

If you would keep your soul
From spotted sight or sound,
Live like the velvet mole,
Go burrow underground 20

And there hold intercourse
With roots of trees and stones,
With rivers at their source,
And disembodied bones

¹ This poem and the ones following are from *Collected Poems* by Elinor Wylie. Reprinted by permission of and special arrangement with Alfred A. Knopf, publisher.

"Velvet Shoes," "Winter Sleep," and "Now That Your Eyes Are Shut" are scarcely less polished. The first, possibly one of the whitest poems ever written, is a study in exquisite figures and hushed syllables, the other two have the same discrimination of taste and epithet. Readers may forget far more imposing poems before they forget the poet walking through the still town "in a windless peace," stepping upon white down, or the cries of little birds "like bubbles of glass," or the chestnut-burr "lined within with the finest fur."

VELVET SHOES

Let us walk in the white snow
In a soundless space,
With footsteps quiet and slow,
At a tranquil pace,
Under veils of white lace

I shall go shod in silk,
And you in wool,
White as a white cow's milk,
More beautiful
Than the breast of a gull

We shall walk through the still town
In a windless peace,
We shall step upon white down,
Upon silver fleece,
Upon softer than these

We shall walk in velvet shoes
Wherever we go
Silence will fall like dews
On white silence below
We shall walk in the snow

WINTER SLEEP

When against earth a wooden heel
Clicks as loud as stone and steel,
When snow turns flour instead of flakes,

And frost bakes clay as fire bakes,
When the hard bitten fields at last
Crack like iron flawed in the cast,
When the world is wicked and cross and old,
I long to be quit of the cruel cold

5 Little birds like bubbles of glass
Fly to other Americas,
10 Birds as bright as sparkles of wine,
Fly in the night to the Argentine,
Birds of azure and flame birds go
To the tropical Gulf of Mexico
They chase the sun, they follow the heat,
15 It is sweet in their bones, O sweet, sweet,
sweet!
It's not with them that I'd love to be,
But under the roots of the balsam tree

15 Just as the spiniest chestnut-burr
Is lined within with the finest fur,
20 So the stony walled, snow roofed house
Of every squirrel and mole and mouse
Is lined with thistledown, sea gull's feather,
Velvet mullein-leaf, heaped together
With balsam and juniper, dry and curled,
25 Sweeter than anything else in the world
O what a warm and darksome nest
Where the wildest things are hidden to rest!
It's there that I'd love to lie and sleep,
Soft, soft, soft, and deep, deep, deep! 30

NOW THAT YOUR EYES ARE SHUT

Now that your eyes are shut
Not even a dusty butterfly may brush them,
My flickering knife has cut
Life from sonorous lion throats to hush them

If pigeons croon too loud
Or lambs bleat proudly, they must come to slaughter,

And I command each cloud
To be precise in spilling silent water

Let light forbear those lids,
I have forbidden the leathery ash to smutch them, 10
The spider thread that thrids
The gray plumed grass has not my leave to touch them

My casual ghost may slip,
Issuing tiptoe, from the pure inhuman,
The tissues of my lip 15
Will bruise your eyelids, while I am a woman

It may be imagined that Elinor Wylie's gift was not adapted to the fashioning of rhymed narratives, and it is true that she wrote few story-poems. But her few ballads are eminently successful and bear her particular mark. "Peter and John" is particularly interesting in the way it tightens the ballad stanza by shortening the length of its lines, adds a sharp dexterity of rhyme, and supplies a new turn to the Scriptural legend. The surprise is prepared by the very tone, and yet the reader comes upon the climax with a shock of unexpectedness.

PETER AND JOHN

Twelve good friends
Walked under the leaves,
Binding the ends
Of the barley sheaves

Peter and John 5
Lay down to sleep
Pillowed upon
A hay maker's heap

John and Peter 10
Lay down to dream
The air was sweeter
Than honey and cream

Peter was bred 15
In the salty cold
His hair was red
And his eyes were gold

John had a mouth 20
Like a wing bent down
His brow was smooth
And his eyes were brown

Peter to slumber
Sank like a stone,

Of all their number
The bravest one

John more slowly 25
Composed himself,
Young and holy
Among the Twelve

John as he slept 30
Cried out in grief,
Turned and wept
On the golden leaf

"Peter, Peter,
Stretch me your hand
Across the glitter 35
Of the harvest land!

"Peter, Peter,
Give me a sign!
This was a bitter
Dream of mine— 40

"Bitter as aloes
It parched my tongue
Upon the gallows
My life was hung

"Sharp it seemed As a bloody sword Peter, I dreamed I was Christ the Lord!"	45	Bells were rung Over Galilee	60
Peter turned To holy Saint John His body burned In the falling sun	50	"A silver penny Sealed each of my eyes Many and many A cock crew thrice "	
In the falling sun He burned like flame "John, Saint John, I have dreamed the same!	55	When Peter's word Was spoken and done, "Were you Christ the Lord In your dream?" said John	65
"My bones were hung On an elder tree,		"No," said the other, "That I was not I was our brother Iscaiot "	70

The poems in *Angels and Earthly Creatures* are dignified by an intensity suggested by none of the earlier work. The verse is no less governed than before, but a mystical premonition gives the work the quality of an impassioned valedictory. The longer poems, such as "Hymn to Earth," have the nobility of great odes, they have the essence of thought which is detached and powerful.

This essence is not only in Elinor Wylie's last book, but in several of her posthumous poems. All of her work reveals the taste and temperament of its author, but "The Pebble" is one of her few attempts at inner self-revelation. She had already completed a picture of herself in "Portrait in Black Paint," but since it was done with "a very sparing of whitewash," it was a cross between a commentary and a caricature—as in this stanza, for example:

Sometimes she gives her heart, sometimes instead
Her tongue's sharp side Her will is quick to soften
She has no strength of purpose in her head
And she gives up entirely too often,
Her manners mingle in disastrous ways
"The Lower Depths" and the Court of Louis Seize

"The Pebble" rounds out the picture of one who can "sometimes rage, but never hate," and who sees in every opposite her kin and kind. This is spiritual interpretation, as well as psychological biography.

The outer facts of her life have been written by her sister Nancy Hoyt in *Elinor Wylie: The Portrait of an Unknown Woman* (1935). Her many verses have been issued in a sumptuous *Collected Poems of Elinor Wylie* (1932), her four novels, short stories, and essays have been gathered in an omnibus *Collected Prose of Elinor Wylie* (1933).

THE PEBBLE

<p> If any have a stone to shy, Let him be David and not I, The lovely shepherd, brave and vain, Who has a maggot in the brain, Which, since the brain is bold and phant, Takes the proportions of a giant Alas, my legendary fate! Who sometimes rage, but never hate Long, long before the pebble flieth I see a virtue in Goliath, Yea, in the Philistine his face, A touching majesty and grace, Then like the lights of evening shine The features of the Philistine Until my spirit faints to see The beauty of my enemy If any have a stone to fling Let him be a shepherd king, Who is himself so beautiful He may detest the gross and dull With holy rage and heavenly pride To make a pebble sanctified And feather its course with wings of scorn, But from the day that I was born Until like corn I bow to the sickle, I am in hatred false and fickle </p>	<p> 5 10 15 20 25 </p>	<p> I am most cruel to any one Who hates me with devotion, I will not freeze, I will not burn I make his heart a poor return For all the passion that he spends In swearing we shall never be friends, For all the pains his passion spent In hatred I am impotent, The sad perversity of my mind Sees in him my kin and kind Alas, my shameful heritage, False in hate and fickle in rage! Alas, to lack the power to loathe! I like them each, I love them both, Philistine and shepherd king They strike the pebble from my sling, My heart grows cold, my spirit grows faint, Behold, a hero and a saint Where appeared, a moment since, A giant and a heathen prince, And I am bound and given over To be no better than a lover Alas, who strove as a holy rebel! They have broke my sling and stole my pebble If any have a stone to throw It is not I, ever or now </p>	<p> 30 35 40 45 50 </p>
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IMAGE AND SYMBOL

The poet, intent on expressing an emotion, communicating an idea with the utmost exactness, making a character live, or recording his observations through the uncertain medium of words, is not always conscious of how beauty is attained. The beauty which rises from a poem is sometimes an effect rather than a purpose, it is often an emanation, even an accident, caused by the mixture of sound and sense, or the associations which wake mysterious responses in the reader. Some poets, however, have set out to achieve beauty by exact formulas and, though their theories often lead to exaggerated effects, their influence is salutary and their theories are helpful, if only because they make both creators and readers reappraise their art.

Such a group of reappraisers attracted considerable attention from 1913 to 1919. Although their work was to develop into a movement that was known as typically American, the founders of the group were a few Englishmen and a few American expatriates strongly influenced by the theory and practice of the French symbolists. The chief of these, Ezra Pound, organized the young poets, drew up their first manifesto, collected their experiments, and published them in a volume entitled *Des Imagistes*. Schisms soon developed, and Amy

Lowell "captured" the movement, reorganized the members and published three annual anthologies, illustrating the point of view of the Imagist poets. There was an impressive program—a program that they did not hesitate to violate—and its announcement caused more controversy than the poetry, which was, on the whole, mild and far from revolutionary. The chief items of their creed were

1 To use the language of common speech—a tenet old as Wordsworth—but to employ the *exact* word, not the merely decorative word

2 To create new rhythms as the expression of new moods and feelings—though it was never made clear what "new" moods or emotions had been invented. It was maintained that the individuality of a poet may often be better expressed in free verse than in conventional forms

3 To allow absolute freedom in the choice of subject—a statement which none but a few belated Victorians could dispute

4 To present an image—hence the name Imagist—and thus concentrate on shades of color and motion. The Imagists denied that they were a school of painters, but they insisted that poetry lives by its particularities and that poets should render details exactly and not deal in vague generalities—a conclusion with which none but incompetent poetasters could differ

5 To produce poetry that was never blurred, but always hard and clear

Much of the poetry which was published as a result of these principles was anything but "hard and clear." The emphasis on hardness did, it is true, rob much of the verse of emotional content and succeeded in rendering the mere surfaces of things, but the hope of expressing individuality through the medium of free verse instead of formal patterns brought about a flood of garrulous writing which expressed neither individuality nor poetry. The Imagists themselves turned from their followers and imitators to the construction of traditional forms. The most consistent user of free verse, Carl Sandburg, was never a member of the group, and the three most uncompromising Imagists, Amy Lowell, H. D. (Hilda Doolittle), and John Gould Fletcher, continually broadened their gamut, added emotion to their abstract designs, and finally repudiated the movement altogether. Of the three, the poetic career of Amy Lowell was the most colorful and dramatic.

AMY LOWELL

Amy Lowell was born February 9, 1874, in Brookline, Massachusetts, of a long line of colonists, educators, and poets. James Russell Lowell was a cousin of her grandfather, and her brother, Abbott Lawrence Lowell, was President of Harvard. Already in youth she suffered from a glandular defect, which, later, made her attain an abnormal stoutness ("Lord!" she said, "I am a walking disease") which aggravated her subsequent illness, and finally killed her with a stroke, May 12, 1925.

Clearly Amy Lowell was one of the most vital forces in recent American literature, and it is probable that future historians will appraise her more highly as a personality than as a poet. Her energy was amazing, her battles for the

new tendencies were planned with the skill and thoroughness of a military campaign, she courted editors, cajoled or threatened her antagonists, and lived in the thick of controversy. From the time of her first appearance as an Imagist to the day of her death she was not so much a person as a storm center. She never stopped writing. Including posthumous publications, she wrote a dozen volumes of poetry, three books of criticism, two of translations, an incomplete bibliography occupies fourteen large pages in her biography. As a poet she worked in every possible form and with every conceivable medium, she experimented in free verse, polyphonic prose, orthodox ballads, Peruvian legends, adaptations from the Japanese, dramatic monologues in New England dialect, re-creations from modern French poets, expansions of American Indian myths, and interpretations of artists as different as John Keats and Igor Stravinsky.

Her two most celebrated poems, "Patterns" and "Lilacs," reveal the best qualities of her free verse. The one is rhymed, the other unrhymed, but both are characterized by a recurring stress, by balances and repetitions, which give them an inherently organic rhythm. Thomas Hardy, who admired Amy Lowell, was never won over by her defense of *vers libre*. He wrote to her:

You manage it best, but do you mind my saying that it too often seems a jumble of notes containing ideas striking, novel, or beautiful, as the case may be, which *could* be transfused into poetry, but, which, as given, are not poetry? I could not undergo an examination on why (to me) they seem not. Perhaps because there is no expectation raised of a response in sound or beat, and the pressure of its gratification, as in regular poetry.

Yet both of these poems must be regarded as exceptions to Hardy's strictures. "Patterns" not only evokes a response in clear, if irregular, beat, but adds the musical punctuation of rhyme. Moreover it is a dramatic situation vividly etched. Sara Teasdale, a poet of an entirely different persuasion, wrote, "It reminds me of an exquisitely enamelled old French snuff-box—so fresh and undaunted in the clear color, and the design so firm and so delicate." The drama is intensified by the contrast between the outer precision and the inner turmoil, by the "stiff brocaded gown" and the patterned paths. They emphasize rigidity against the soft flesh, the heart-struck grief, and its final outburst.

PATTERNS¹

I walk down the garden paths,
And all the daffodils
Are blowing, and the bright blue squills
I walk down the patterned garden paths
In my stiff, brocaded gown
With my powdered hair and jeweled fan,
I too am a rare
Pattern. As I wander down
The garden paths

My dress is richly figured,
And the train
Makes a pink and silver stain
On the gravel, and the thrift
Of the borders
Just a plate of current fashion,
Tripping by in high heeled, ribboned shoes
Not a softness anywhere about me,
Only whale bone and brocade
And I sink on a seat in the shade
Of a lime tree. For my passion

¹ From *Men, Women and Ghosts*. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company, publishers.

Wars against the stiff brocade
The daffodils and squills
Flutter in the breeze
As they please
And I weep, 25
For the lime tree is in blossom
And one small flower has dropped upon my
bosom

And the plashing of waterdrops
In the marble fountain
Comes down the garden paths 30
The dripping never stops
Underneath my stiffened gown
Is the softness of a woman bathing in a
marble basin,
A basin in the midst of hedges grown
So thick, she cannot see her lover hiding, 35
But she guesses he is near,
And the sliding of the water
Seems the stroking of a dear
Hand upon her
What is Summer in a fine brocaded gown!
I should like to see it lying in a heap upon
the ground 41
All the pink and silver crumpled up on the
ground

I would be the pink and silver as I ran along
the paths,
And he would stumble after,
Bewildered by my laughter 45
I should see the sun flashing from his sword
hilt and the buckles on his shoes
I would choose
To lead him in a maze along the patterned
paths,
A bright and laughing maze for my heavy-
booted lover,
Till he caught me in the shade, 50
And the buttons of his waistcoat bruised my
body as he clasped me,
Aching, melting, unafraid
With the shadows of the leaves and the sun-
drops,
And the plopping of the waterdrops,
All about us in the open afternoon— 55
I am very like 'to swoon
With the weight of this brocade,
For the sun shifts through the shade

Underneath the fallen blossom
In my bosom, 60
Is a letter I have hid
It was brought to me this morning by a
rider from the Duke
"Madam, we regret to inform you that Lord
Hartwell
Died in action Thursday se'nnight"
As I read it in the white, morning sunlight,
The letters squirmed like snakes 66
"Any answer, Madam?" said my footman
"No," I told him
"See that the messenger takes some refresh-
ment
No, no answer" 70

And I walked into the garden,
Up and down the patterned paths,
In my stiff, correct brocade
The blue and yellow flowers stood up proudly
in the sun,
Each one 75
I stood upright too,
Held rigid to the pattern
By the stiffness of my gown
Up and down I walked,
Up and down 80

In a month he would have been my husband
In a month, here, underneath this lime,
We would have broke the pattern,
He for me, and I for him,
He as Colonel, I as Lady, 85
On this shady seat
He had a whim
That sunlight carried blessing
And I answered, "It shall be as you have
said"
Now he is dead 90

In Summer and in Winter I shall walk
Up and down
The patterned garden paths
In my stiff, brocaded gown
The squills and daffodils 95
Will give place to pillared roses, and to
asters, and to snow
I shall go
Up and down,
In my gown
Gorgeously arrayed, 100

oned and stayed
 nd the softness of my body will be guarded
 from embrace
 y each button, hook, and lace

For the man who should loose me is dead,
 Fighting with the Duke in Flanders, 105
 In a pittern called a war
 Christ! What are patterns for?

"Lilacs" is even more self-revealing. In its careful choice of symbol Amy Lowell created her most autobiographical and, in some ways, her most significant and convincing poem. The lack of rhyme and regular pattern are compensated by the wealth of images, the relation of apparently unrelated things, and the subtly varied repetitions. Amy Lowell had never been particularly sympathetic to the natives of the New England countryside—her *East Wind* (1926) is a set of highly theatrical episodes in great contrast to Robert Frost's quiet characterizations in *North of Boston*—but she loved the backgrounds and cherished its history, and her blood speaks as she identifies herself with all that the old New England implies. It is *arivism*, not *bravado*, which achieves pride and eloquence with a fervor which this poet seldom attained. "Lilacs" was used as the "text" for a tone-poem by Edward Burlingame Hill which has been performed by the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

A careful winnowing of her many volumes was made by John Livingston Lowes and published after her death in *Selected Poems* (1928). Her exhaustive—and, as it proved, exhausting—life of John Keats, published a few months before she died, has already been referred to. For a somewhat detailed exposition of the platform of the Imagist movement, see the preface to Louis Untermeyer's *Modern American Poetry*. For a comprehensive, if uncritical, chronicle of the poet's life the reader is recommended to examine *Amy Lowell* (1935), by S. Foster Damon.

LILACS¹

Lilacs,
 False blue,
 White,
 Purple,
 Color of lilac, 5
 Your great puffs of flowers
 Are everywhere in this my New England
 Among your heart-shaped leaves
 Orange orioles hop like music box birds and sing
 Their little weak soft songs, 10
 In the crooks of your branches
 The bright eyes of song sparrows sitting on spotted eggs
 Peer restlessly through the light and shadow
 Of all Springs
 Lilacs in dooryards 15
 Holding quiet conversations with an early moon,
 Lilacs watching a deserted house
 Settling sideways into the grass of an old road,
 Lilacs, wind-beaten, staggering under a lopsided shock of bloom

¹ From *What's O'clock*. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company, publishers.

AMY LOWELL

1273

Above a cellar dug into a hill	20
You are everywhere	
You were everywhere	
You tapped the window when the preacher preached his sermon,	
And ran along the road beside the boy going to school	
You stood by pasture bars to give the cows good milking,	25
You persuaded the housewife that her dish pan was of silver	
And her husband an image of pure gold	
You flaunted the fragrance of your blossoms	
Through the wide doors of Custom Houses—	
You, and sandal wood, and tea,	30
Charging the noses of quill driving clerks	
When a ship was in from China	
You called to them "Goose-quill men, goose quill men,	
May is a month for flitting,"	
Until they writhed on their high stools	35
And wrote poetry on their letter-sheets behind the propped-up ledgers	
Paradoxical New England clerks,	
Writing inventories in ledgers, reading the "Song of Solomon" at night,	
So many verses before bed time,	
Because it was the Bible	40
The dead fed you	
Amid the slant stones of graveyards	
Pale ghosts who planted you	
Came in the night time	
And let their thin hair blow through your clustered stems	45
You are of the green sea,	
And of the stone hills which reach a long distance	
You are of elm shaded streets with little shops where they sell kites and marbles,	
You are of great parks where every one walks and nobody is at home	
You cover the blind sides of greenhouses	50
And lean over the top to say a hurry word through the glass	
To your friends, the grapes, inside	
Lilacs,	
False blue,	
White,	55
Purple,	
Color of lilac,	
You have forgotten your Eastern origin,	
The veiled women with eyes like panthers,	
The swollen, aggressive turbans of jeweled Pashas	60
Now you are a very decent flower,	
A reticent flower,	
A curiously clear cut, candid flower,	
Standing beside clean doorways,	

Friendly to a house cat and a pair of spectacles 65
 Making poetry out of a bit of moonlight
 And a hundred or two sharp blossoms

Maine knows you,
 Has for years and years,
 New Hampshire knows you, 70
 And Massachusetts
 And Vermont

Cape Cod starts you along the beaches to Rhode Island,
 Connecticut takes you from a river to the sea
 You are brighter than apples, 75
 Sweeter than tulips,

You are the great flood of our souls
 Bursting above the leaf shapes of our hearts,
 You are the smell of all Summers,
 The love of wives and children, 80
 The recollection of the gardens of little children,
 You are State Houses and Charters
 And the familiar treading of the foot to and fro on a road
 it knows

May is lilac here in New England,
 May is a thrush singing "Sun up!" on a tip top ash-tree, 85
 May is white clouds behind pine trees
 Puffed out and marching upon a blue sky
 May is a green as no other,
 May is much sun through small leaves,
 May is soft earth, 90
 And apple blossoms,
 And windows open to a South wind
 May is full light wind of lilac
 From Canada to Narragansett Bay

Lilacs, 95
 False blue,
 White,
 Purple,
 Color of lilac

Heart-leaves of lilac all over New England, 100
 Roots of lilac under all the soil of New England,
 Lilac in me because I am New England,
 Because my roots are in it,
 Because my leaves are of it,
 Because my flowers are for it, 105
 Because it is my country
 And I speak to it of itself
 And sing of it with my own voice
 Since certainly it is mine

COMPLEXITY, CONSCIOUSNESS, AND SUGGESTION

In the first quarter of the twentieth century life grew increasingly complex, with the shock of the World War and the growing bitterness of the ensuing "peace" man's problems increased in number and difficulty. Not only his intelligence but his very position was challenged by the threat of headlong changes, violent revolts. He was assaulted by economic panics, his faith was shattered by a loss of illusions, his political foundations shifted and left him no foothold. Security had gone from the world, leaving him physically bewildered and spiritually dispossessed. Literature, being a mirror of life, faithfully reflected these changes, and it was not unnatural that it, too, should picture the perplexity and confusion of the times.

Poetry showed the effects more rapidly than any other art. It fluctuated from one extreme to another, from evangelism to hopelessness, from self-flagellating emotion to sadistic satire, from brutal reality to remote metaphysics, from a distracted romanticism to oblique unmeaning. T S Eliot's career was significant. Eliot began with a mixture of irony and anguish, became the leading exponent of a literature of despair, and finally escaped into religion. Many of the younger poets turned to the experimenters as their logical models and hoped to find ways of expressing, if not clarifying, the bewilderment about them. It is little wonder that their work was puzzling and often obscure. James Joyce had already tried to show the complexity of man's onrushing emotions and ideas through a "stream of consciousness." In his gigantic novel *Ulysses* he recorded man's multiple conscious thoughts by day, in *Work in Progress* he attempted to make a record of the "night consciousness" or subconscious processes of the mind. Many of the younger poets took their cue from Joyce reinforced by hints from the Symbolist poets. A new intellectuality came into poetry, an intellectuality which the average reader found not only bewildering but, sometimes, baffling. The younger poets had rediscovered the power of suggestion, but in their emphasis on the device they were pushing it beyond the limits of intelligibility. Their work was so full of private implications, remote allusions, and the play of free association that the reader was rarely given a clue to the meaning. Endeavoring to synthesize outer confusion and inner conflict by a series of strange symbols and suggestions—"objective correlatives," as T S Eliot called them—many of the poets were trying to sound states of feeling and shades of awareness beyond common experience. They were, in short, often fashioning something which could be expressed but not communicated.

Yet communication was, as always, the object of art, and poetry had relinquished neither the auditory imagination nor its power of incantation. Many of the opponents accused the newer poets of wilful obscurity, perverseness, and even charlatanry. Max Eastman in *The Literary Mind* (1931) made much of the "cult" of unintelligibility and ridiculed their performance as well as their purpose. Yet Ezra Pound, E E Cummings, Hart Crane, Allen Tate, Robert Penn Warren, John Crowe Ransom, Archibald MacLeish, and T S Eliot were trying devotedly, even desperately, to retain in poetry the elements of

mystery and imagination. Some of them even conceived of a poetry beyond poetry, a poetry clear of rhetoric and ornament, a poetry purged of personal emotion, pure as a melodic phrase or abstract mathematics. In one of his letters, D. H. Lawrence had maintained that "the essence of poetry with us in this age of stark and unlovely actualities is a stark directness, without a shadow of a light, or a shadow of deflection anywhere." Eliot in 1933 enlarged upon these sentences in a lecture saying:

This speaks to me of that at which I have long aimed, in writing poetry, to write poetry which should be *essentially* poetry, with nothing poetic about it, poetry standing naked in its bare bones, or poetry so transparent that we should not see the poetry, but that which we are meant to see through the poetry, poetry so transparent that in reading it we are intent on what the poem *points* at, and not on the poetry, this seems to me the thing to try for. To get *beyond poetry*, as Beethoven, in his later works, strove to get beyond music. We never succeed, perhaps, but Lawrence's words mean this to me.

T. S. ELIOT

T(homas) S(tearns) Eliot was born in St. Louis, Missouri, September 26, 1888. He received his A.B. and M.A. at Harvard (1909, 1910), studied at the Sorbonne, and returned to become an assistant in Philosophy at Harvard in 1913-14. In 1915 he went to England, where, with the exception of a few visits to the United States, he has lived ever since. He taught at a school near London and, a year later, entered Lloyd's Bank. In 1917 he became assistant-editor of *The Egoist*; in 1923 he undertook the editorship of the quarterly *The Criterion*; in 1927 he renounced his American citizenship and became a British subject. He is a director in the publishing house of Faber and Faber, London.

Eliot's first volume, *Prufrock and Other Observations* (1917) and his second, *Poems* (1919), were republished in one volume in the 1920 edition of his poems *The Waste Land*, which won *The Dial* award and caused a controversy whose echoes are still heard, was published in 1922. *Poems 1909-1925* includes all the previous work, as well as the separately published poem "The Hollow Men."

"The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," one of Eliot's best-known poems, was not only his first important work, but was conceived when he was an undergraduate. It caused a sensation when it first appeared in *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse* in 1915. It was especially disturbing to those who understood neither Eliot's origin nor his influences. The fusion of beauty and purposeful banality, the aesthetic shock achieved by following an "elevated" passage with flat or prosaic statements, the linking of the intense and the trivial were new in English poetry. But they were not new to readers of French literature. Eliot had heard the suggestive accents as early as 1908 when he read Arthur Symonds' *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*, and he had investigated the techniques of Rimbaud, Corbiere, and Laforgue. The influence of Laforgue is particularly noticeable in Eliot's earlier work; he was fascinated by resources which had not yet been tried in English verse, especially the surprising verbal shifts and the agility which combined "recondite words and simple phrasing." It was

and it was especially appropriate for such a theme as Eliot was attacking. The very title of "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" prepares the reader for its discordant effects. Eliot in the spirit of Browning, but with far different treatment, is here concerned with the creation of a character. Prufrock is a young old man, a dilettante, inhibited and ultra fastidious, something of a Puritan and something of a prig. He is a haunter of studios, where women come and go "talking of Michelangelo", he can give himself to art, but not to life. What makes Prufrock pathetic rather than comic is his awareness of his own frustrations, he is repelled by actuality, yet longs for the things of earth. He does not dare risk a decision no matter how insignificant, and in his very conflict of desire and futility he is made poignant. All he has are confused memories and the ability to make his plight partly articulate, he recognizes beauty and passion, but he is too repressed to let them possess him.

No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be,
Am an attendant lord, one that will do
To swell a progress, start a scene or two,
Advise the prince, no doubt, an easy tool,
Deferential, glad to be of use,
Politic, cautious, and meticulous,
Full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse,
At times, indeed, almost ridiculous—
Almost, at times, the Fool

By the acuteness of its suggestions, by the grotesque distortions and repetitions, by the very strangeness of the opening lines with its incongruous simile, Eliot has built up and rounded the figure of an individual neither comic nor tragic, but one who is the more defeated since neither comedy nor tragedy will touch him. Eliot's mockery of Prufrock is pointed by being introduced by a quotation from Dante. Concerning this quotation, F. O. Matthiessen, possibly Eliot's most sympathetic interpreter, writes:

Certainly the closed circle of Prufrock's frightened isolation is sharply underlined by inscribing this speech from the *Inferno*. "If I thought my answer were to one who ever could return to the world, this flame should shake no more, but since, if what I hear be true, none ever did return alive from this depth, without fear of infamy I answer thee." Prufrock can give utterance in soliloquy to his debate with himself only because he knows that no one will overhear him.

THE LOVE SONG OF J. ALFRED PRUFROCK¹

*S'io credesse che mia risposta fosse
A persona che mai tornasse al mondo
Questa fiamma staria senza più scosse
Ma perciocche giammai di questo fondo
Non torno vivo alcun s'io do il vero,
Senza tema d'infamia ti rispondo*

Let us go then, you and I,
When the evening is spread out against the sky

¹ From *Poems* 1909 1925 by T. S. Eliot. Reprinted by permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

Like a patient etherized upon a table,
 Let us go, through certain half deserted streets,
 The muttering retreats 5
 Of restless nights in one night cheap hotels
 And sawdust restaurants with oyster shells
 Streets that follow like a tedious argument
 Of insidious intent
 To lead you to an overwhelming question 10
 Oh, do not ask, "What is it?"
 Let us go and make our visit

In the room the women come and go
 Talking of Michelangelo

The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window panes, 15
 The yellow smoke that rubs its muzzle on the window panes,
 Licked its tongue into the corners of the evening,
 Lingered upon the pools that stand in drains,
 Let fall upon its back the soot that falls from chimneys,
 Slipped by the terrace, made a sudden leap, 20
 And seeing that it was a soft October night,
 Curled once about the house, and fell asleep

And indeed there will be time
 For the yellow smoke that slides along the street,
 Rubbing its back upon the window panes, 25
 There will be time, there will be time
 To prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet,
 There will be time to murder and create,
 And time for all the works and days of hands
 That lift and drop a question on your plate, 30
 Time for you and time for me,
 And time yet for a hundred indecisions,
 And for a hundred visions and revisions,
 Before the taking of a toast and tea

In the room the women come and go 35
 Talking of Michelangelo

And indeed there will be time
 To wonder, "Do I dare?" and, "Do I dare?"
 Time to turn back and descend the stair,
 With a bald spot in the middle of my hair— 40
 (They will say "How his hair is growing thin!")
 My morning coat, my collar mounting firmly to the chin,
 My necktie rich and modest, but asserted by a simple pin—
 (They will say "But how his arms and legs are thin!")
 Do I dare 45
 Disturb the universe?
 In a minute there is time
 For decisions and revisions which a minute will reverse

For I have known them all already, known them all
 Have known the evenings, mornings, afternoons, 50
 I have measured out my life with coffee spoons,
 I know the voices dying with a dying fall
 Beneath the music from a farther room
 So how should I presume?

And I have known the eyes already, known them all— 55
 The eyes that fix you in a formulated phrase,
 And when I am formulated, sprawling on a pin,
 When I am pinned and wriggling on the wall,
 Then how should I begin
 To spit out all the butt ends of my days and ways? 60
 And how should I presume?

And I have known the arms already, known them all—
 Arms that are braceleted and white and bare
 (But in the lamplight, downed with light brown hair!)
 Is it perfume from a dress 65
 That makes me so digress?
 Arms that lie along a table, or wrap about a shawl
 And should I then presume?
 And how should I begin?

+

Shall I say, I have gone at dusk through narrow streets 70
 And watched the smoke that rises from the pipes
 Of lonely men in shirt sleeves, leaning out of windows?

I should have been a pair of ragged claws
 Scuttling across the floors of silent seas

+

And the afternoon, the evening, sleeps so peacefully! 75
 Smoothed by long fingers,
 Asleep —tired— or it malingers,
 Stretched on the floor, here beside you and me
 Should I, after tea and cakes and ices, 80
 Have the strength to force the moment to its crisis?
 But though I have wept and fasted, wept and prayed,
 Though I have seen my head (grown slightly bald) brought in upon
 a platter,
 I am no prophet—and here's no great matter,
 I have seen the moment of my greatness flicker,
 And I have seen the eternal Footman hold my coat, and snicker, 85
 And in short, I was afraid

And would it have been worth it, after all,
 After the cups, the marmalade, the tea,
 Among the porcelain, among some talk of you and me,
 Would it have been worth while, 90

To have bitten off the matter with a smile,
 To have squeezed the universe into a ball
 To roll it toward some overwhelming question,
 To say "I am Lazarus, come from the dead,
 Come back to tell you all, I shall tell you all"—
 If one, settling a pillow by her head,
 Should say "That is not what I meant at all,
 That is not it, at all" 95

And would it have been worth it, after all,
 Would it have been worth while, 100
 After the sunsets and the dooryards and the sprinkled streets,
 After the novels, after the teacups, after the skirts that trail along
 the floor—
 And this, and so much more?—
 It is impossible to say just what I mean!
 But as if a magic lantern threw the nerves in patterns on a screen 105
 Would it have been worth while
 If one, settling a pillow or throwing off a shawl,
 And turning toward the window, should say
 "Thit is not it at all,
 That is not what I meant, at all" 110

No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be,
 Am an attendant lord, one that will do
 To swell a progress, start a scene or two,
 Advise the prince, no doubt, an easy tool,
 Deferential, glad to be of use,
 Politic, cautious, and meticulous, 115
 Full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse,
 At times, indeed, almost ridiculous—
 Almost, at times, the Fool

I grow old I grow old 120
 I shall wear the bottoms of my trousers rolled

Shall I part my hair behind? Do I dare to eat a peach?
 I shall wear white flannel trousers, and walk upon the beach
 I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each

I do not think that they will sing to me 125

I have seen them riding seaward on the waves
 Combing the white hair of the waves blown back
 When the wind blows the water white and black

We have lingered in the chambers of the sea
 By sea girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown 130
 Till human voices wake us, and we drown

In Eliot's later work the poet turns from maladjusted individuals to the maladjustments of society "The Journey of the Magi," "A Song for Simeon," and "Ash Wednesday" show a new direction, the poet moves toward religious meditation and a groping faith. The turning point was evidently "The Hollow Men," in which Eliot sounded the depths of despair. It was these depths, undisciplined and often chaotic, a limbo "mixing memory and desire," which Eliot explored as no other poet of his day. Certain commentators, chiefly the sociological critics, believe that Eliot reached a dead end with "The Hollow Men" and that the subsequent poems have indicated nothing except "flight and evasion." Yet the religious poems are a logical consequence, Eliot could go no further along the road of emptiness and desperate fear reiterated in "The Hollow Men", because of its very extremity, he was forced to take an entirely different direction.

Nothing more clearly rises from "The Hollow Men" than a sense of exhaustion and emptiness. It is "The Waste Land" tightened and condensed. Faith and hope have departed from the world leaving it a dead land of stony images, vitality has departed, too, and mankind no longer consists of tender or violent souls, but only hollow men praying to broken stones. The post-war world is only

Shape without form, shade without color,
Paralyzed force, gesture without motion

Men gather in a "valley of dying stars" without vision, they grope together without thought. The confusion and hopelessness are brought to a climax by the juxtaposition of a distorted nursery rhyme and a fragment from the Lord's Prayer. The finale completes the despairing gesture. Civilization, having lost its ideals and religion, has reached an impasse, man cannot even die heroically, the world ends, not with a bang, but with a whimper.

Readers may object that Eliot has depicted confusion only too well, and that he has blurred his lines so effectively that no clear meaning results. But there can be little doubt about the clarity of Eliot's images, and it is a question whether a precise meaning was Eliot's intention or whether that meaning can be fully grasped at first. In the conclusion of *The Use of Poetry* Eliot warned the ordinary reader that the difficulty of poetry may be due to novelty and that such poets as Wordsworth, Keats, Tennyson, and Browning were ridiculed because of their innovations.

The more seasoned reader [Eliot argued], he who has reached, in these matters, a state of greater *purity*, does not bother about understanding, not, at least, at first. I know that some of the poetry to which I am most devoted is poetry which I did not understand at first reading, some is poetry which I am not sure I understand yet for instance, Shakespeare's. And finally, there is the difficulty caused by the author's having left out something which the reader is used to finding, so that the reader, bewildered, gropes about for what is absent, and puzzles his head for a kind of "meaning" which is not there, and is not meant to be there.

Eliot's warning is salutary, the more so since his own poetry has been so much "interpreted" with decidedly queer results. For example, two different admirers have published ingenious "solutions" of Eliot's "A Cooking Egg"—

and the two interpretations are utterly different. Poetry, as Eliot maintained in his amplification of Wordsworth's definition, is not merely the recollection of emotion nor the establishing of hidden meanings, but "a *concentration* and a new thing resulting from that concentration." Certain poets went further and insisted that a poem was not so much a story, or a record of experience, or a suggestive delineation, as a thing complete in itself. In his "Airs Poetica," Archibald MacLeish declared that "a poem should be equal to not true," that it should even be "wordless as the flight of birds," motionless in time—

A poem should not mean
But be

It is with such a background that the poetry of Eliot must be read. Nothing of the period has a richer, though unhappier, suggestiveness, no one has made blankness and aridity so real. Even Eliot's "epigraphs" or mottoes which introduce his poems have a deep significance, although the reader must be aware of their meaning to get the full value of their introduction. Thus F. O. Matthiessen explains the association of the curious "Mistah Kurtz—he dead" at the beginning of "The Hollow Men": "the harrowing climax of Conrad's 'Heart of Darkness,' his full expression of utter horror, epitomizes in a sentence the very tone of blasphemous hopelessness which issues from 'The Hollow Men.'" The other "motto" is a begging phrase of English children on Guy Fawkes' Day.

THE HOLLOW MEN¹

Mistah Kurtz—he dead

A penny for the Old Guy

I

We are the hollow men
We are the stuffed men
Leaning together
Headpiece filled with straw. Alas!
Our dried voices, when
We whisper together
Are quiet and meaningless
As wind in dry grass
Or rats' feet over broken glass
In our dry cellar
10
Shape without form, shade without color,
Paralyzed force, gesture without motion,
Those who have crossed
With direct eyes, to death's other Kingdom

Remember us—if at all—not as lost
Violent souls, but only
As the hollow men
The stuffed men

15

II

Eyes I dare not meet in dreams
In death's dream kingdom
These do not appear
There, the eyes are
Sunlight on a broken column
There, is a tree swinging
And voices are
In the wind's singing
More distant and more solemn
Than a fading star
20
Let me be no nearer
In death's dream kingdom
Let me also wear
Such deliberate disguises
Rat's coat, crowskin, crossed staves
In a field
25
30

¹ From *Poems 1909-1925* by T. S. Eliot. Reprinted by permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

Behaving as the wind behaves No nearer—	35	The hope only Of empty men	
Not that final meeting In the twilight kingdom			v
		<i>Here we go round the prickly pear Prickly pear prickly pear Here we go round the prickly pear At five o'clock in the morning</i>	70
iii This is the dead land This is cactus land Here the stony images Are raised, here they receive The supplication of a dead man's hand Under the twinkle of a fading star	40	Between the idea And the reality Between the motion And the act Falls the Shadow	75
Is it like this In death's other kingdom Waking alone At the hour when we are Trembling with tenderness Lips that would kiss From prayers to broken stone	45 50	<i>For Thine is the Kingdom</i> Between the conception And the creation Between the emotion And the response Falls the Shadow	 80
		<i>Life is very long</i>	
iv The eyes are not here There are no eyes here In this valley of dying stars In this hollow valley This broken jaw of our lost kingdoms	55	Between the desire And the spasm Between the potency And the existence Between the essence And the descent Falls the Shadow	85 90
In this last of meeting places We grope together And avoid speech Gathered on this beach of the tumid river	60	<i>For Thine is the Kingdom</i> For Thine is Life is For Thine is the	
Sightless, unless The eyes reappear As the perpetual star Multifoliate rose Of death's twilight kingdom	65	<i>This is the way the world ends This is the way the world ends This is the way the world ends Not with a bang but a whimper</i>	95

It is this power of "establishing relations between beauty of the most diverse sorts" which is Eliot's own particular gift, and it is this power which makes him an important contributor to the progress of poetry, untraditional and difficult though his expression may be

Besides his poetry, Eliot has published several volumes of prose. Four books of his critical works were combined in *Selected Essays 1917-32*. Eight lectures delivered at Harvard were published under the title *The Use of Poetry* (1933) and three lectures at the University of Virginia were entitled *After Strange*

Gods (1934) The most detailed appreciation of his work as well as its influences is *The Achievement of T S Eliot* by F O Matthiessen (1935) to which reference has been made

ARCHIBALD MACLEISH

Archibald MacLeish was born in Glencoe, Illinois, May 7, 1892 He attended Yale, where he won a reputation on the athletic field as well as in the college publications, and Harvard Law School During the War he served as artilleryman in France Afterwards he became a lawyer in Boston, retired from law to devote himself to literature, made his home in the Berkshires and New York, where he became one of the editors of *Fortune*

MacLeish's early volumes—*Tower of Ivory* (1917), *The Happy Marriage* (1924), and *The Pot of Earth* (1925)—show the poet attempting to find himself, an accent is here, but it is clouded with derivations from E A Robinson, Conrad Aiken, and T S Eliot In *Streets in the Moon* (1926) and *New Found Land* (1930) MacLeish stands free of his influences The poet employs all the modern devices—abrupt contrasts of mood, strange associations and dissonances, experiments in "slant" rhyme and assonance—but the authentic, even traditional, note is here, it is timely, but it reaches beyond timeliness A few critics have classified his poetry as nostalgic and "neo classic," but, though MacLeish belongs to the generation that has revived the past in literature, he is contemporary in mood and manner His best poems breathe native air, and there is no mistaking either his emotional power or his creative significance

"Memorial Run" is a typical MacLeish poem It is built on suggestive parallels, a skillful study in oppositions Two contrasts are immediately established by the backgrounds of bloody Belgium and the quiet American scene where the poet spent his boyhood, the wind on the battle-field recalls the lake winds in northern Illinois But the contrasts in tone are even more pointed, the suave speech of the ambassador is pitted against the turbulent thoughts of the speaker Nothing could be more effective than the way the pompous phrases and glib turns of rhetoric are interrupted by flashes from the mind of the poet remembering his comrade, buried in a foreign country Physical tension is accomplished by these interruptions and reinforced by an overhanging suspense It is the tension felt in the air before a storm—in this poem a most appropriate tension, for the wind begins to rise with the first breath, increases as the poem proceeds, and finally scatters the dry words in a deluge of rain, mocking the stiff ceremony and relaxing the dead man sleeping in a strange land

MEMORIAL RAIN¹

Ambassador Puser the ambassador
Reminds himself in French, felicitous tongue,
What these (young men no longer) lie here for
In rows that once, and somewhere else, were young—

¹ From *Streets in the Moon* by Archibald MacLeish Used by permission of, and by special arrangement with Houghton Mifflin Company, the authorized publishers

ARCHIBALD MacLEISH

1285

All night in Brussels the wind had tugged at my door
 I had heard the wind at my door and the trees strung
 Taut, and to me who had never been before
 In that country it was a strange wind blowing
 Steadily, stiffening the walls, the floor,
 The roof of my room I had not slept for knowing
 He too, dead, was a stranger in that land
 And felt beneath the earth in the wind's flowing
 A tightening of roots and would not understand,
 Remembering lake winds in Illinois,
 That strange wind I had felt his bones in the sand
 Listening

5

10

15

—Reflects that these enjoy
 Their country's gratitude, that deep repose,
 That peace no pain can break, no hurt destroy,
 That rest, that sleep—

20

At Ghent the wind rose
 There was a smell of rain and a heavy drag
 Of wind in the hedges but not as the wind blows
 Over fresh water when the waves lag
 Foaming and the willows huddle and it will rain
 I felt him waiting

25

—Indicates the flag
 Which (may he say) enisles in Flanders' plain
 This little field these happy, happy dead
 Have made America—

30

In the ripe grain
 The wind coiled glistening, darted, fled,
 Dragging its heavy body at Waereghem
 The wind coiled in the grass above his head
 Waiting—listening—

35

—Dedicates to them
 This earth their bones have hallowed, this last gift
 A grateful country—

Under the dry grass stem
 The words are blurred, are thickened, the words sift
 Confused by the rasp of the wind, by the thin grating
 Of ants under the grass, the minute shift
 And tumble of dusty sand separating
 From dusty sand The roots of the grass strain,
 Tighten, the earth is rigid, waits—he is waiting—

40

45

And suddenly, and all at once, the rain!

The people scatter, they run into houses, the wind
 Is trampled under the rain, shakes free, is again

Trampled The rain gathers, running in thinned
 Spurts of water that ravel in the dry sand
 Seeping into the sand under the grass roots, seeping
 Between cracked boards to the bones of a clenched hand
 The earth relaxes, loosens, he is sleeping,
 He rests, he is quiet, he sleeps in a strange land

50

The atmosphere of suspense is utilized even more skillfully in "You, Andrew Marvell" Here, in one of the most eloquent poems of the period, MacLeish has availed himself of the extreme power of symbolism From this it should not be inferred that only the experimental poets used the symbolic device, the most traditional, as well as the most advanced, poets employed concrete images to suggest something abstract In "Mending Wall" (page 1206) Robert Frost describes the ceremony with which two men put a wall together to suggest the need of boundaries or the uselessness of barriers In "Smoke and Steel" (page 1212) Carl Sandburg paints a picture of the metamorphosis of metals to reveal the changing strength and dreams of men In "Lilacs" (page 1242) Amy Lowell shows the lilac to symbolize New England In "The Eagle and the Mole" (page 1234) Elinor Wylie takes two strangely different creatures to express two different, but intense, qualities of the human spirit

But "You, Andrew Marvell" carries the device still further The suspense is uncannily heightened by the phrases depicting the gradual approach of night, it is intensified by the lack of punctuation, it is sustained by the gathering force of the one, long sentence The symbol itself is both plain and impressive twilight creeps inevitably on, and the ever climbing shadow, "the always rising of the night," suggests the deeper, final darkness

A further contrast is achieved by the words themselves Every epithet is precise, neither too vague nor too disturbingly vivid The pale and almost colorless light and the unearthly chill are set off by the warm syllables and colorful associations of *Ecbatan, Persia, Baghdad, Arabia, Palmyra, Crete, and Kermandshah*

But what, the reader may ask, is the significance of the title? Is it designed to suggest the irrelevance of life or, as some have inferred, merely to puzzle or provoke the reader? On the contrary, the title not only makes the meaning of the poem plain, but sheds an added light upon it In the seventeenth century, Andrew Marvell addressed a poem "To His Coy Mistress" In it he declared he would be willing to wait for the fulfilment of his love were it not that the sun refuses to stand still, that the iron gates of life are soon shut and that "all before us lie deserts of vast eternity" Let us not languish, Marvell counselled his beloved, for

at my back I always hear
 Time's wingèd chariot hurrying near

Lying on a hill with his beloved, the twentieth century poet cannot help but remember Here, even "upon earth's noonward height," the shadow of eventual night is already on its way Soon the flooding dark will engulf this hill

and these hearts "You, Andrew Marvell," muses MacLeish, "you, too, felt this almost three hundred years ago"

YOU, ANDREW MARVELL ¹	And through Arabia the edge Of evening widen and steal on	20
And here face down beneath the sun And here upon earth's noonward height To feel the always coming on The always rising of the night	And deepen on Palmyra's street The wheel rut in the ruined stone And Lebanon fade out and Crete High through the clouds and overblown	
To feel creep up the curving east The earthly chill of dusk and slow Upon those under lands the vast And ever climbing shadow grow	5 And over Sicily the air Still flashing with the landward gulls And loom and slowly disappear The sails above the shadowy hulls	25
And strange at Ecbatan the trees Take leaf by leaf the evening strange The flooding dark about their knees The mountains over Persia change	10 And Spain go under and the shore Of Africa the gilded sand And evening vanish and no more The low pale light across that land	30
And now at Kermanshah the gate Dark empty and the withered grass And through the twilight now the late Few travelers in the westward pass	15 Nor now the long light on the sea— And here face downward in the sun To feel how swift how secretly The shadow of the night comes on	35
And Baghdad darken and the bridge Across the silent river gone		

MacLeish's "Conquistador" is a long narrative poem in a modernized *terza rima*, a saga-poem stripped in phrase, beautiful in music. His *Poems 1924-1933* includes the best of his previous volumes together with several poems hitherto uncollected, the volume won the Pulitzer Prize in 1934. *Panic* (1935) is a play in extraordinarily flexible verse, a play which shows MacLeish unable to accept any of the current panaceas, but sensitively expressing the chaotic spirit of his day.

Such work is a proof that poetry has not succumbed to the prevalent despair or to the popular fallacy that art cannot survive the "collapse of a civilization." It is eloquent and moving, and it has something beyond eloquence, it has nobility.

SUMMARY

The foregoing passages must not be considered more than a set of guideposts indicating the progress of poetry. Many reservations must be made and

¹ From *New Found Land* by Archibald MacLeish. Used by permission of, and by special arrangement with, Houghton Mifflin Company, the authorized publishers.

many more details added before they can assume the proportions of a résumé. But, as has been implied, they indicate the shifts in taste and changes in treatment reflected in the poetic art since 1800. In the century and a quarter since Wordsworth's famous preface to *Lyrical Ballads* there have been no fewer than five movements, all of which may not have been of equal significance but which have definitely affected the course of poetry. A study of these fluctuations and an examination of the work resulting from the different tendencies provoke various questions.

When poetry discarded "the grand manner" did it lose eloquence and power of elevation? Are the subjects of present everyday life worthy substitutes for the Greek myths, Arthurian legends, and exotic settings cherished by the nineteenth century? When the twentieth century romantic realists placed the emphasis on common objects and direct language did they sacrifice intellectual subtlety and emotional intensity? Is the function of poetry to state a fact, draw a character, point a moral, or merely to sing? Or is its prime object a combination and heightening of these capabilities? Have sensitivity and suggestiveness been achieved by the newer poets in an unusual degree? And have these qualities been attained at the expense of clarity? Does much of modern poetry make too great a demand upon the responses of the reader? Is poetry fundamentally a piece of self-expression or a communication? Is the end of the enjoyment of poetry, as Eliot maintains, "a pure contemplation from which all the accidents of personal emotion are removed"? Can "pure" poetry ever be accomplished? Can it be an art in itself, a poetry for poetry's sake?

These are questions on which there can be no general agreement. Only the taste and temperament of the individual reader can furnish the answers.

